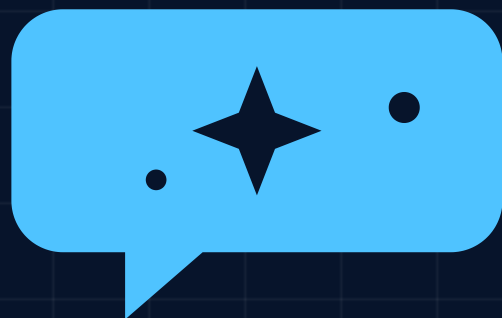
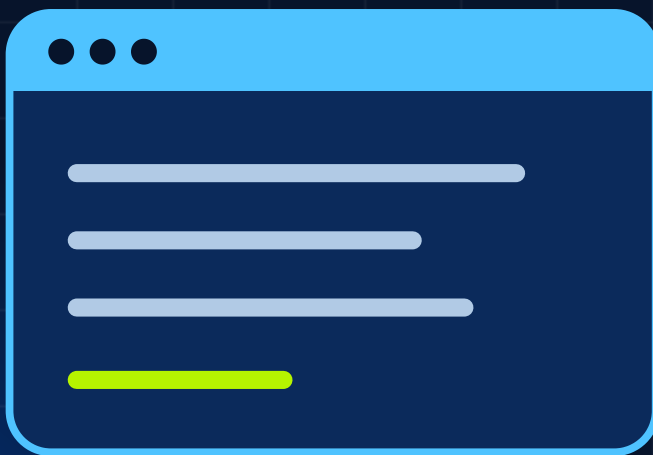


AI at Work

Copilot, ChatGPT and Gemini for email, reports and meetings: save hours every week, safely.



102

ready-to-use
prompts

48

printable prompt
cards

12

job profiles for your
AI

10

day challenge



SkillNugget

AI at Work

Copilot, ChatGPT and Gemini for email, reports and meetings: save hours every week, safely.

2026 edition · Large print · Printable



© 2026 SkillNugget · skillnugget.com. All rights reserved. This book is for your personal use. Print as many copies of the pages as you need for yourself and your household. Please don't share or resell the file.

This is a practical guide to using AI assistants at work. It is not legal, HR, security or compliance advice: always follow your organization's policies and local law. Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT and Google Gemini are trademarks of their owners; this book is independent and not endorsed by them. Features change often and vary by plan. Research findings are summarized in plain English; references are on the Sources page.

FREE SAMPLE

Inside this free sample

The welcome and three full chapters.

This sample includes the Welcome, Chapter 1 (what AI is good at), Chapter 4 (the BRIEF method) and Chapter 5 (email). The full book has 15 chapters, 102 ready-to-use prompts, the safety quiz, the 10-Day Challenge and a toolkit with 48 prompt cards, a desk reference, a copy-and-paste prompt pack and a surprise.

GET THE FULL BOOK

skillnugget.com/course/ai-at-work

WELCOME

Your new colleague

How this book works, in five minutes.

Somewhere in your organization, someone is finishing their email in half the time, walking out of meetings with the notes already written and turning a messy page of notes into a polished report before lunch. This book shows you how to be that person, safely.

AI assistants like **Microsoft Copilot**, **ChatGPT** and **Google Gemini** are now part of everyday work. Most people use them a little: a quick rewrite here, a summary there. A few people use them brilliantly, and the difference isn't technical skill. It's knowing **which tasks to give them, how to brief them and how to check what comes back.**

What's inside

Part 1 • Foundations

What AI is good at (and surprisingly bad at), which assistant to use, the safety rules every employee should know and **BRIEF**, a five-part method for asking for anything.

Part 2 • The work

Eight chapters on the jobs that fill your week: email, meetings, reports, spreadsheets, presentations, research, thinking and your own career, each packed with ready-to-use prompts.

Part 3 • Make it stick

Build your own AI workflows, guide a team, and take the 10-Day AI at Work Challenge.

Your toolkit

Printable prompt cards, a desk reference, a copy-and-paste prompt pack, and a surprise that makes every answer fit *your* job.

How to use the prompts

Every prompt in this book works in Copilot, ChatGPT and Gemini (and most other assistants). Words in **[brackets]** are for you to fill in. Copy the prompt, replace the brackets, and paste in any text the prompt asks for.

AI PROMPT

Rewrite this email so it's shorter, friendlier and ends with a clear request. Keep my meaning: **[paste your email]**

BEFORE YOU PASTE ANYTHING

Read Chapter 3 first. It takes ten minutes and could save you from the most common, and most serious, workplace AI mistakes.

A SURPRISE IS WAITING

Your toolkit includes something that makes your assistant answer like it already knows your job. You'll set it up in Chapter 13, but you can peek now if you can't wait.

CHAPTER 1

What AI is good at (and what it isn't)

The research, the jagged frontier and where to draw the line.

AI is brilliant at some work tasks and bad at others, and the line between them isn't where most people expect. Knowing where it runs is the most valuable skill in this book.

What the research says

Three of the best-known studies of AI at work point the same way:

STUDY	WHO	WHAT THEY FOUND
Noy and Zhang, <i>Science</i> (2023)	453 college-educated professionals doing writing tasks	With ChatGPT, tasks took 40% less time and quality rose 18% . The weakest writers gained the most.
Brynjolfsson, Li and Raymond, <i>Quarterly Journal of Economics</i> (2025)	5,172 customer-support agents	An AI assistant raised issues resolved per hour by 15% on average. The least experienced agents gained the most; the most experienced barely changed.
Dell'Acqua and colleagues, Harvard and Boston Consulting Group (2023)	758 consultants	On tasks AI was good at, consultants did 12.2% more work, 25.1% faster , with higher quality. On a task just outside its abilities, those using AI were less likely to get the right answer .

The jagged frontier

The researchers in the consultant study gave the problem a name: the **jagged technological frontier**. AI's abilities don't follow a neat line from easy to hard. It can write a polished strategy memo in seconds and then get a simple calculation wrong, or confidently misread a spreadsheet. Some tasks that look hard are easy for AI; some that look easy are hard.

In their experiment, the problem outside the frontier required careful reading of numbers and interviews to avoid a misleading conclusion. Consultants who trusted the AI's confident answer did worse than those who worked without it. The lesson: **AI makes good work faster, and it can make bad work look convincing.**

Inside the frontier (usually great)

- ✓ Drafting emails, letters, posts and documents from your notes
- ✓ Rewriting for a different audience, length or tone
- ✓ Summarizing long documents, threads and transcripts
- ✓ Brainstorming ideas, names, angles and questions
- ✓ Turning messy notes into structure: outlines, tables, checklists
- ✓ Explaining a concept, a formula or a piece of jargon
- ✓ Spotting gaps, unclear sentences and missing steps
- ✓ First drafts of agendas, plans, job ads and FAQs

On the frontier (useful, but check carefully)

- Analyzing data and spreadsheets (check every number)
- Research and facts (check the sources exist and say what it claims)
- Anything involving dates, prices, laws or policies
- Summaries of documents where details really matter

Outside the frontier (keep it human)

- ✗ Final decisions about people: hiring, firing, pay, performance
- ✗ Anything you can't check yourself
- ✗ Legal, medical, financial or safety advice you'll act on without an expert
- ✗ Messages where your personal judgment and relationships matter most
- ✗ Confidential information your organization hasn't approved for AI

AI is a brilliant first-draft machine and a fast thinking partner. You are the editor, the fact-checker and the person accountable.

◆ WHAT WORKERS SAY

In Microsoft's 2026 Work Trend Index, a survey of 20,000 people who use AI at work in ten countries, **86% said they treat AI output as a starting point, not a final answer**. The human skills they saw growing most in importance were quality control of AI output (50%) and critical thinking (46%).

CHAPTER 4

BRIEF: how to ask for anything

A five-part method, and the follow-up toolkit.

The single biggest difference between disappointing AI results and brilliant ones is the quality of the request. The good news: you already know how to write a good one. It's exactly how you'd brief a smart new colleague.

Why short prompts disappoint

"Write an email to a client about the delay" will get you a bland, generic email. The AI doesn't know who the client is, why there's a delay, what you want to happen next or how you usually write. So it guesses, and its guesses are average.

The BRIEF method

Give it five things, and the result transforms:

LETTER	STANDS FOR	ASK YOURSELF	EXAMPLE
B	Background	What does it need to know about the situation?	"I manage a team of six. We missed a deadline because a supplier was late."
R	Request	What exactly do I want it to do?	"Write an email to the client apologizing and proposing a new date."
I	Intended reader	Who is this for, and what do they care about?	"The client is a long-standing customer who values honesty and hates waffle."
E	Example or format	What should the result look like?	"Under 150 words. Three short paragraphs. Subject line included."
F	Fences	What must it avoid or include?	"Don't blame the supplier by name. Offer the new date of 14 March. No exclamation marks."

Put it together:

AI PROMPT

I manage a team of six. We missed a deadline on the Henderson project because a supplier delivered late. Write an email to the client apologizing and proposing a new delivery date. The client is a long-standing customer who values honesty and dislikes waffle. Keep it under 150 words, in three short paragraphs, with a subject line. Don't name the supplier, offer 14 March as the new date, and don't use exclamation marks.

You don't need all five every time. For quick tasks, Request plus one or two others is plenty. For anything important, use all five.

Five habits of great AI users

- 1 Paste the real material.** Your notes, the email you're replying to, the data. AI works from what you give it.
- 2 Ask for options.** "Give me three versions: formal, warm and very short." Choosing is faster than rewriting.
- 3 Have a conversation.** The first answer is a draft. Follow up: "Shorter." "More confident." "Make the second paragraph clearer."
- 4 Ask it to ask you.** "Before you start, ask me any questions you need answered to do this well."
- 5 Give it your voice.** Paste an email you've written and say, "Match the style of this."

The follow-up toolkit

WHEN THE RESULT IS...	SAY...
Too long	"Cut this by half. Keep the key points."
Too formal	"Make it sound like a friendly, competent colleague."
Too vague	"Be more specific. Use the details I gave you."
Too generic	"This could be about any company. Use our situation."
Wrong structure	"Use bullet points for the actions and a sentence for the context."
Unsure it's right	"What assumptions did you make? What might be wrong here?"
Close but not quite	"Keep everything, but change [this part] to [that]."

TRY IT: BRIEF A REAL TASK

Choose a task from your actual to-do list. Write a BRIEF prompt for it, run it in your assistant, then improve it with two follow-ups.

B · Background: _____

R · Request: _____

I · Intended reader: _____

E · Example or format: _____

F · Fences: _____

CHAPTER 5

Email

Write, reply, shorten and survive your inbox.

Email is where most people start with AI, and where it saves the most time week after week. Here's how to write, reply, shorten and survive your inbox, without sounding like a robot.

Writing a new email

AI PROMPT

Write an email to **[person/role]** asking for **[request]**. Background: **[situation]**. Keep it under **[number]** words, friendly but professional, with a clear subject line and one specific next step.

AI PROMPT

Turn these rough notes into a clear email to **[audience]**: **[paste notes]**. Put the main point in the first sentence.

AI PROMPT

Write a short, polite follow-up to **[person]** about **[topic]**. I emailed on **[date]** and haven't heard back. Don't sound annoyed.

AI PROMPT

Write an email introducing **[person A]** to **[person B]**. Why they should talk: **[reason]**. Keep it to five sentences.

Replying

AI PROMPT

Here's an email I received: **[paste]** . Draft a reply that **[agrees / declines / asks for more time / answers their questions]** . Keep my reply shorter than their email.

AI PROMPT

Draft three possible replies to this email: one that says yes, one that says no and one that suggests a compromise: **[paste]** .

AI PROMPT

What is this person actually asking me for? List their questions and requests in bullet points: **[paste email]** .

Fixing your own drafts

AI PROMPT

Make this email shorter and clearer without losing anything important: **[paste]** .

AI PROMPT

Make this sound warmer and more human. It currently sounds cold: **[paste]** .

AI PROMPT

Make this more confident. Remove apologies and hedging words like "just" and "I think": **[paste]** .

AI PROMPT

Check this email for anything that could be misunderstood or come across as rude: **[paste]** .

AI PROMPT

Rewrite this for a senior executive who has 30 seconds to read it: [\[paste\]](#).

The inbox

AI PROMPT

Summarize this long email thread in five bullet points: what was decided, what's still open, and who needs to do what: [\[paste thread\]](#).

AI PROMPT

Here are the subject lines and first lines of 15 emails. Sort them into: reply today, reply this week, read later, and no action needed: [\[paste\]](#).

Before and after

INSTEAD OF

Hi John, I just wanted to reach out and see if maybe you had had a chance to look at the proposal I sent over a couple of weeks ago? No worries if not, I know you're super busy! Just let me know if you have any questions or anything. Thanks so much!!

TRY

Hi John, following up on the proposal I sent on 3 March. Could you let me know by Friday whether you'd like to go ahead? If it helps, I'm happy to walk you through it in a 15-minute call. Thanks, Sam

Difficult emails

AI is excellent at taking the heat out of a message you're too annoyed to write well.

AI PROMPT

I'm frustrated with [situation]. Here's my angry first draft: [paste]. Rewrite it so it's calm, factual and firm, focused on what I need to happen next.

AI PROMPT

Help me say no to [request] politely, without over-explaining, while keeping a good relationship with [person].

AI PROMPT

Write a short apology to [customer/colleague] for [mistake]. Take responsibility, say what we're doing to fix it, and don't make excuses.

SOUND LIKE YOURSELF

Paste two or three emails you've written that you're happy with, and say: "This is how I write. Match this style in everything you draft for me in this conversation." The difference is remarkable.

READ BEFORE YOU SEND

Never let AI send emails for you without reading them first. Check names, dates, numbers and promises, and make sure it hasn't invented anything you didn't say.