Prompt Engineering 101: How to Use AI Effectively — Learning Handout

What Is Prompt Engineering?

Prompt engineering is the skill of crafting clear, structured instructions (prompts) that guide AI tools like ChatGPT to produce accurate and useful outputs.

Why It Matters

- Better prompts = better results
- Saves time and boosts productivity
- Helps you communicate effectively with AI

Core Components of a Good Prompt

1. **Role** – Tell AI who it should act as.
2. **Task** – What you want AI to do.
3. **Context** – Background information.
4. **Format** – How you want the answer delivered.
5. **Constraints** – Limits like word count, tone, etc.

Universal Prompt Formula

Role + Task + Context + Format + Constraints Example: "You are a marketing expert. Create a 150-word social media caption about eco-friendly travel in bullet points, using a friendly tone."

Strong Prompt Examples

- "Explain blockchain in 100 words for a 12-year-old."
- "Act as a career coach. Help me write a professional resume summary for a software engineer with 5 years of experience."
- "Rewrite this paragraph to be more engaging and conversational."

Common Prompt Mistakes

- Too vague
- Asking multiple unrelated tasks at once
- Not specifying tone, length, or format

Useful Prompt Types

- **Role-based prompts**

- **Step-by-step prompts**
- **Creative prompts**
- **Analysis prompts**
- **Refining prompts**

Advanced Techniques

- **Few-shot prompting** – Provide examples
- **Chain-of-thought prompting** – Ask AI to reason step-by-step
- **Persona locking** – Maintain a consistent tone

Quick Templates

- "Teach me `[topic]` using simple language and examples."
- "Summarize the following text in bullet points: `[paste text]`."
- "Create a structured lesson plan about `[topic]` for beginners."

Final Tip

Specificity beats length. Clear, well-structured prompts consistently produce the highest-quality AI responses.

This handout is designed for quick learning, classroom use, or onboarding teams to effective AI communication techniques.