

The AI Direction Workbook

Free Companion Exercises for The Necessary Evil: AI Prompting for Everyday People

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Use one real, low- or medium-stakes task to practice clearer AI direction while keeping human judgment in charge.

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How to Use This Workbook

Use this workbook with one real task in mind. Do not begin with the most complicated, private, emotional, or high-stakes issue in your life. Choose something useful and low- or medium-stakes enough to practice with.

Privacy reminder

Do not put private, sensitive, confidential, medical, legal, financial, employment, ministry-care, school, or family details into a public AI tool. Remove names, account numbers, addresses, private records, and unnecessary identifying details.

Responsible-use reminder

AI is assistance, not authority. You remain responsible for what you send, publish, teach, decide, buy, believe, or act on.

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1. Starting Self-Assessment

Purpose

Notice how you currently use AI and where your prompts or review habits need the most improvement.

Instructions

Check the statements that fit you. Then choose one area you want to improve first.

Fill-in fields

How I currently use AI:

- ☐ I rarely or never use it.
- ☐ I use it casually when I remember.
- ☐ I use it for writing or rewriting.
- ☐ I use it for summaries or research help.
- ☐ I use it for brainstorming or planning.
- ☐ I use it for work or school.
- ☐ I use it for small business or creative projects.
- ☐ I use it for family, household, or ministry tasks.
- ☐ I use it often, but my results are inconsistent.
- ☐ I avoid it because I am concerned about dependence, deception, or misuse.

What usually goes wrong:

- ☐ I do not know what to type.
- ☐ The answer is too generic.
- ☐ The answer sounds polished but does not fit my situation.
- ☐ The answer is too long or hard to use.
- ☐ I do not know whether the answer is true.
- ☐ I do not know how much context to provide.
- ☐ I do not know how to revise the first answer.
- ☐ I worry I am relying on it too much.
- ☐ I worry it may weaken my thinking or judgment.

One AI habit I want to improve:

Reflection question

Where do I most need to stay more active as the human director?

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2. My Practice Task

Purpose

Choose one task to carry through the rest of the workbook.

Instructions

Choose a task that is real, useful, and low- or medium-stakes. Avoid medical decisions, legal issues, financial commitments, private family conflict, sensitive ministry care, workplace confidentiality, or anything that requires qualified professional judgment.

Fill-in fields

My practice task:

This task matters because:

Who will use or be affected by the result?

Why this is safe enough for practice:

Reflection question

What final decision must remain mine even if AI helps?

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3. Rewrite One Vague Prompt

Purpose

Practice turning a weak prompt into clearer direction.

Instructions

Write the vague prompt you might normally use. Then rewrite it with a clearer goal, audience, context, task, format, and review step.

Fill-in fields

My vague prompt:

My clearer prompt:

I need help with _____
so that _____
for _____.

Here is the context:

Please:

Return the answer as:

Avoid:

After the draft, list:

Reflection question

What did the clearer prompt force me to think through before asking AI to respond?

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4. Six Missing Pieces Check

Purpose

Diagnose why a prompt or AI answer may be weak.

Instructions

Before assuming you need clever wording, check whether one of the six ordinary communication pieces is missing.

Fill-in fields

Piece	Question	My notes
Goal	Did I say what I am trying to accomplish?	
Audience	Did I say who this is for?	
Context	Did I give useful background, source material, constraints, or examples?	
Task	Did I say exactly what I want AI to do?	
Format	Did I ask for a usable structure?	
Review	Did I include a way to check, improve, or verify the result?	

The piece I most often forget:

Reflection question

How would adding this missing piece keep me more in charge of the result?

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5. Task Stakes Classifier

Purpose

Match your review level to the consequences of the task.

Instructions

Classify your practice task before prompting. Do not ask "Can I trust AI?" as if there is one answer for every situation. Ask, "How much review does this task require?"

Fill-in fields

My task:

If AI is wrong, unclear, incomplete, or mishandled, what could happen?

Stakes level:

- ☐ Low-stakes: small consequences if imperfect.
- ☐ Medium-stakes: real consequences, but review can usually catch or correct issues before use.
- ☐ High-stakes: could seriously affect health, money, legal rights, safety, employment, public reputation, spiritual guidance, education, or important relationships.

Help needed:

- ☐ Generation.
- ☐ Summarization.
- ☐ Comparison.
- ☐ Explanation.
- ☐ Verification.
- ☐ Organization.
- ☐ Revision.

Review level needed:

- ☐ Light review.
- ☐ Careful review.
- ☐ Strong review with original sources, qualified people, or slower decisions.

Reflection question

What should AI not be allowed to decide in this task?

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6. Human vs AI Responsibility Mapper

Purpose

Separate what AI may help with from what the human must own.

Instructions

List the parts of your task. Put each part under human responsibility, AI assistance, or both with human review.

Fill-in fields

Task step	Human responsibility	AI assistance	Review needed
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I remain responsible for:

AI may assist by:

AI must not decide:

Reflection question

Where would it be tempting to outsource judgment, and how will I prevent that?

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7. AI Direction Framework Worksheet

Purpose

Map your practice task through the seven moves: Aim, Inform, Direct, Shape, Refine, Verify, and Apply.

Instructions

Answer each question briefly. For a low-stakes task, keep this light. For a more meaningful task, slow down and give each move more care.

Fill-in fields

Move	Question	My answer
Aim	What human outcome do I want?	
Inform	What context, background, source material, examples, or constraints does AI need?	
Direct	What exactly should AI do, and what should it avoid?	
Shape	What should the output look like?	
Refine	How might I improve the first draft?	
Verify	What facts, assumptions, risks, tone, sources, or consequences should I check?	
Apply	How will I use the final result responsibly?	

Reflection question

Which move would most improve my current AI use?

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8. Aim Outcome Statement Builder

Purpose

Define the human outcome before asking AI to work.

Instructions

Use the pattern below to write an outcome statement for your practice task.

Fill-in fields

Pattern:

I need help with [task] so that [human outcome] for [audience or situation], while avoiding [risk or boundary].

My outcome statement:

I need help with _____
so that _____
for _____,
while avoiding _____.

Success would look like:

AI is appropriate for this task because:

AI should be limited because:

Reflection question

How does this outcome statement change what I should ask AI to do?

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9. Context Package Builder

Purpose

Give AI the background it needs without sharing private or unnecessary information.

Instructions

Fill in only what is relevant. Remove, summarize, or anonymize anything private or sensitive. Do not paste confidential material into public tools.

Fill-in fields

Context label	My notes
Goal	
Audience	
Background	
Source material	
Constraints	
Preferences	
Output format	
Privacy check	
Review needed	

Information I should not share:

What I can safely summarize or anonymize:

Reflection question

What context would help AI, and what context should stay out of the prompt?

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10. Prompt Draft Builder

Purpose

Turn Aim, context, task, boundaries, shape, and review into one useful prompt draft.

Instructions

Use this as a flexible starter. Change it to fit your task. Do not fill every bracket mechanically if it does not apply.

Fill-in fields

I need help with _____
so that _____
for _____.

Here is the context:

Please:

Use this tone, level, or style:

Avoid:

Return the answer as:

After the draft, list:

- assumptions you made,
- missing information,
- factual claims or promises,
- and details I should verify before using it.

My final prompt draft:

Reflection question

What part of this prompt protects human responsibility?

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11. Refinement Tracker

Purpose

Treat the first AI answer as a draft, not final authority.

Instructions

Review the first answer before revising it. Name what is working, what is not, and what should change.

Fill-in fields

Round	What worked	What needs to change	My refinement instruction	Result
1. Tone				
2. Clarity				
3. Brevity or completeness				

Useful refinement instruction:

Keep _____.

Change _____.

Do not _____.

Make sure _____.

Stop refining when:

- ☐ the output serves the original outcome,
- ☐ the tone fits the audience,
- ☐ unsupported claims are removed or marked,
- ☐ the remaining issues require verification or human judgment,
- ☐ more AI revision would not improve the result meaningfully.

Reflection question

Did refinement improve the result, or did it only make the output sound smoother?

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12. Verification Checklist

Purpose

Check truth, usefulness, fit, and risk before using AI output.

Instructions

Use light review for low-stakes tasks, careful review for tasks that affect other people or real obligations, and strong review for high-stakes areas.

Fill-in fields

Verification ladder:

Review level	When to use it	My task needs this?
Light review	Small consequences if imperfect.	[]
Careful review	Affects people, money, deadlines, work/school obligations, public trust, business accuracy, or relationship tone.	[]
Strong review	Involves health, legal rights, finances, employment, safety, reputation, spiritual teaching, major decisions, or serious harm.	[]

Checklist:

- [] Is this true?
- [] How do I know?
- [] What source supports it?
- [] Does the source actually say that?
- [] What assumptions did AI make?
- [] What might be missing?
- [] What could be outdated or disputed?
- [] What happens if this is wrong?
- [] Is this appropriate for the audience and situation?
- [] Does this need a qualified person, original source, Scripture review, policy check, or direct conversation?

Claims or promises to verify:

Claim or promise	Source	Confidence	Action needed
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Reflection question

What must I verify before this output can enter real life?

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13. Apply / Responsible Use Plan

Purpose

Decide what happens after AI gives an answer.

Instructions

Do not let the workflow end at AI output. The workflow ends when the human decides what to do next.

Fill-in fields

My responsible-use plan:

Question	My answer
What output did AI help create?	
What did I revise?	
What did I verify?	
What still needs human review?	
Who could be affected by this?	
What final action remains mine?	

My next action:

- ☐ Use it.
- ☐ Revise it myself.
- ☐ Ask AI for one more specific refinement.
- ☐ Verify more.
- ☐ Ask a qualified person.
- ☐ Talk directly with someone affected.
- ☐ Delay.
- ☐ Reject the output.

Reflection question

Am I using AI to support responsibility, or to avoid responsibility?

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14. My Personal AI Use Rule

Purpose

Write a simple rule that helps you use AI with clarity, confidence, control, and responsibility.

Instructions

Use the pattern below. Keep it plain enough that you can remember it.

Fill-in fields

Pattern:

I will use AI to help with _____,
but I will not use AI to _____.
Before I act, I will verify _____.
The final responsibility remains with _____.

My personal AI use rule:

I will use AI to help with _____,
but I will not use AI to _____.
Before I act, I will verify _____.
The final responsibility remains with _____.

My three non-negotiables:

1. 2. 3.

Reflection question

What would help me keep this rule when AI gives a fast, polished answer?

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Next Step: Use the Online Companion Tools

Planned companion tools may help you keep practicing:

- AI Direction Framework Builder.
- Vague Prompt Fixer.
- Task Risk Classifier.
- Context Package Generator.
- Human vs AI Responsibility Mapper.
- Verification Checklist Tool.
- Practice Thread Worksheet.

- Prompt Improvement Tracker.

These tools are planned or in development. Do not enter private or sensitive information into prototype tools. Future live tools should include approved privacy, consent, storage, and deletion policies before collecting or storing real user data.

Online companion:

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Continue The Necessary Evil Series

Book 1 asks why AI matters and why human dignity must not be surrendered to powerful systems.

Book 2 teaches the practical next step: how ordinary people can direct AI wisely in real life, work, learning, and creativity.

Planned future books continue the path:

- Book 3: *The Necessary Evil: AI for Everyday Christian Life* - planned / in development.
- Book 4: *The Necessary Evil: AI Orchestration for Real Work* - planned / in development.
- Future role-specific AI books - planned future direction.

Join the reader list for future companion resources, book updates, and practical tools as they are developed.

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