

Anatomy of a Watchman's Prompt

The five-part structure that turns a vague ask into a sharp answer.

Most men get mush out of AI because they put mush in. The fix is structure, and there are five parts to it. Learn them once, and the same thirty-minute task starts taking eight — because you're not re-rolling the dice on every prompt, you're giving an order a competent subordinate could actually execute.

THE ACTION

- Learn the five parts of a complete prompt:
 - Role — who you want the AI to be ("a CPA reviewing a small-business P&L").
 - Context — what it needs to know that it can't guess.
 - Intent — the actual outcome you want.
 - Constraints — length, tone, what to avoid, what's off-limits.
 - Format — bullets, table, draft email, outline.
- Take three of your real prompts from this week and rewrite each one using all five parts.
- Run the old version and the new version side by side. Read the difference out loud.
- Save your three best rewrites as templates — that's the start of your prompt library.

WATCHMAN'S NOTE

A sloppy prompt isn't a small thing. It's the difference between a tool that serves you and a slot machine you keep feeding. Give the order clearly the first time.

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 18:13 — "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him." The same is true in reverse: ask before you've thought it through and you'll get folly back. Structure is how you think before you ask.