

YOUR ACTION PLAN

Build a Brief That Works

Create, test, and save one reusable CRISP brief for a routine task.

A polished draft can still leave you doing all the work. Let's fix the assignment before fixing the sentences. The useful test isn't whether AI produces one good answer; it's whether changing an important fact makes it ask the right question instead of guessing.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ ChatGPT or an AI chat approved for your work
- ☐ One low-risk task you understand, such as a routine email or meeting agenda
- ☐ Confirmed source facts you're permitted to share with that tool
- ☐ A blank document for your brief and checked draft

STEP 1

1 Set the task and boundaries

Choose work where you can recognize a wrong answer without outside expertise.

1. Title your document with the task name. Write what the reader should do afterward, such as approve an option or confirm a next step.
2. Add one visible pass/fail check: for example, the approval request must appear in the first two lines.
3. List three things: confirmed facts and approved commitments; low-risk choices AI may make; and important unknowns. Subject-line wording can be a choice. An unapproved delivery date is an unknown.
4. Name the mistake that would cause the most repair work and turn it into a boundary, such as not offering an unapproved discount. You now have a goal and limits you can inspect.

Heads up: Skip legal, medical, personnel, and other high-stakes tasks for this exercise. Don't upload protected or confidential information unless your organization permits it in that tool; privacy settings alone aren't permission.

STEP 2

2 Build the CRISP brief

These five sections tell the AI what matters and where its freedom ends.

1. Copy the template into your document and replace every bracketed field using your task notes.

2. Choose a useful perspective and say what it should notice. A writing coach focused on a clear request is more useful than an impressive imaginary résumé.
3. Read the goal and sequence together. Resolve any conflict by naming which requirement wins, and remove background that wouldn't change the output.

COPY THIS PROMPT

Help me complete this task. Unknown means missing information, not permission to guess.

CLEAR

Problem: [What needs fixing.]

The reader needs to: [Action or decision.]

Pass/fail check: [Visible requirement.]

ROLE-SPECIFIC

Use this perspective: [Useful role.]

Focus on: [What it should notice.]

INCLUSIVE OF CONTEXT

Audience and relevant history: [Only context that matters.]

Confirmed facts and approved commitments: [List.]

Important unknowns: [List, or none known.]

SPECIFIC ABOUT OUTPUT

Produce: [Deliverable, destination, and length.]

Practical limits: [Boundaries, including forbidden promises.]

PRESCRIPTIVE ABOUT PROCESS

Required sequence: [What comes first, next, and last.]

Tone requirements: [Only what matters.]

You may choose: [Low-risk choices.]

If instructions conflict, prioritize: [Top requirement.]

Before drafting, ask one focused question at a time if missing information could change the recommendation, a commitment, or the format. Wait for my answer. Don't invent facts, dates, numbers, policies, or promises. Otherwise, draft the output and list remaining uncertainties separately.

STEP 3

3 Run it and check the substance

1. Paste the completed brief into your AI chat. Answer questions with confirmed information only; leave undecided matters unknown rather than accepting assumptions hidden in a question.
2. If a missing decision blocks the task, pause. Request a clearly marked working draft with placeholders only if that would help you move forward.
3. Compare the draft with your brief and source records. Check each name, date, number, policy, and promise; then locate the reader's next action and check your output requirements.

4. For any miss, tell the AI what is wrong, the required correction, and what must stay unchanged. Check the revision against the same records. Save the checked draft beside your brief.

Heads up: The AI saying it followed instructions isn't evidence that it did. You make the factual check; fix the brief or finish manually if revisions still need rebuilding.

STEP 4

4 Test one changed condition

1. Duplicate the brief and label it TEST ONLY. Remove one fact that genuinely affects the task, such as a required approval deadline, and mark it unknown everywhere.
2. Write your prediction outside the brief: the AI should ask for that missing fact before drafting.
3. Paste only the test brief into a fresh chat, without the original draft. Check whether it asks rather than inventing or restoring the missing fact.
4. If it guesses, add an explicit stop rule for that unknown to the original brief and test copy, then retest in a fresh chat.

Heads up: This tests one boundary, not overall reliability. A fresh chat can reduce carryover, but remembered information may still affect the result.

STEP 5

5 Save instructions, not old facts

1. Return to the original brief, add useful corrections, and save a reusable copy named for the task type.
2. Replace changing details with labels such as [AUDIENCE] and [APPROVED DEADLINE]. Search examples for old names, dates, amounts, and commitments too.
3. Add a reminder to replace every field, confirm commitments, and mark unknowns before reuse. Keep today's checked draft separate from test outputs.

YOU'RE DONE WHEN...

You're done when today's draft passes your visible check with no unsupported commitments or unresolved placeholders, and the changed-condition test triggers the expected question. Use the checked draft, then reuse the brief with fresh facts on the next similar task.

OFFICIAL SETUP & HELP

[OpenAI Help: Data Controls FAQ](#)

[OpenAI Help: Does ChatGPT tell the truth?](#)