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**SBDC**  
ILLINOIS



# AI-magine

AI E-GUIDE

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# Generative AI

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Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that can create new content—such as text, images, music, or code—based on the data it’s been trained on. It works by learning patterns from large amounts of data, then generating content that resembles what it has learned. For example, it can write an article, design a picture, or even simulate conversations. It’s widely used in applications like chat bots, creative tools, and language models.

In simple terms, generative AI doesn’t just follow fixed instructions—it generates new things, like a virtual assistant that can come up with ideas or solutions tailored to what you need.



**AI can take over smaller, more menial tasks, helping your team to save time and focus on the bigger picture. It’s a tool that can assist with tasks such as:**

- **Proofreading**
- **Batch content creation**
- **Research (like analyzing vast amounts of data or trends)**
- **Communication**
- **Captioning and other accessibility needs**
- **Basic graphic design help**
- **And more!**



# AI Programs

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The following is a list of popular programs. Explore further, as new versions are constantly released.

## [ChatGPT \(OpenAI\)](#)

(Free with limitations)— Offers detailed responses and content generation with basic free access and premium features available in paid versions.

## [Claude 2 \(Anthropic\)](#)

(Free with limitations)— Focused on delivering safe, human-like dialogue for answering questions, summarizing texts, and engaging in complex conversations.

## [LLaMA \(Meta\)](#)

(Free with approval)— Open-source model available for research and development. Free for research purposes, but requires approval and has usage restrictions.

## [Gemini \(Google\)](#)

(Free with limitations)— Google's AI for advanced language tasks, typically available through subscription or enterprise services.

## [Copilot \(Microsoft\)](#)

(Paid)— Integrated into Microsoft 365 apps with subscription-based access for task automation and document generation.

## [Perplexity](#)

(Free with limitations)— Offers immediate, contextually relevant answers with citations, making it an effective tool for research and information gathering.

## [DALL-E 3 \(OpenAI\)](#)

(Free with limitations)— An AI that generates highly detailed, creative images based on text descriptions.

## [MidJourney](#)

(Paid)— A text-to-image AI that specializes in creating imaginative, stylized artwork from prompts.

## [Stable Diffusion](#)

(Free with limitations)— An open-source AI model that generates high-quality, realistic images from text inputs.

## [D-id](#)

(Free with limitations)— An AI platform that brings still images to life by creating animated talking avatars from photos.

## [Elevenlabs](#)

(Free with limitations)— A state-of-the-art text-to-speech tool known for generating lifelike, expressive voices for content narration.

## [Leonardo](#)

(Free with limitations)— An AI-powered platform for generating detailed digital art, often used for creative projects like game design.

## [Udio](#)

(Free with limitations)— A content management tool that streamlines the process of organizing, editing, and sharing digital content

## [Poe](#)

(Free with limitations)— Allows users to interact with various AI models for conversational exploration and problem-solving.

## [Canva](#)

(Free with limitations)— A versatile design platform offering AI-powered tools for creating professional-quality graphics, videos, and presentations.

## [Flexclip](#)

(Free with limitations)— A video creation tool with AI features to streamline video editing and production for marketing and social media content.



# Tips for Effective Use of AI

AI is a powerful tool that can support small businesses by generating ideas, content, data insights, and aiding in research. However, it is not a replacement for human expertise or creativity. The true value of AI lies in how we guide and teach it, using our knowledge and unique perspectives to shape its outcomes.

## Define Clear Objectives

Before engaging with AI, clearly define what you want to achieve. Are you looking for ideas, drafting content, or analyzing data? Breakdown your objectives into smaller, manageable tasks to guide the AI effectively.

## Provide Detailed Context

The more context you provide, the better the AI can tailor its responses. Include relevant details such as your audience, tone, and key points. If applicable, give examples of what you're looking for to help the AI understand your expectations.

## Experiment and Iterate

Don't hesitate to rephrase or try different prompts or different AIs if the initial response isn't what you expected. Use the AI's suggestions as a foundation and refine them to better suit your needs.

## Review and Edit

Always review AI-generated content for accuracy and relevance. Make necessary edits to align it with your voice and objectives. Verify any factual information provided by the AI, especially if it's being used for professional purposes.

## Leverage Multiple Tools

Different AI tools have unique strengths. Utilize multiple platforms for diverse functionalities—content creation, data analysis, trend research, etc. Combine AI with other software tools (like project management or CRM systems) for enhanced productivity.

## Stay Ethical

If you use AI-generated content in public forums or publications, consider acknowledging its contribution appropriately. Understand that AI can reflect biases present in its training data. Approach outputs critically and ensure they align with your values.

## Keep Learning

The field of AI is rapidly evolving. Regularly educate yourself on new tools, features, and best practices. Engage with online forums or groups focused on AI to share experiences and learn from others.

## Focus on Collaboration

Treat AI as a collaborative partner rather than a replacement for human creativity and insight. Use your unique perspective and expertise to enhance the outputs generated by AI.

## Manage Your Time

Allocate specific time slots for working with AI to avoid getting sidetracked or overwhelmed by possibilities. Focus on high-impact tasks where AI can save you time or enhance your output significantly.

## Embrace Creativity

Use AI to brainstorm unconventional ideas that you might not have considered. Experiment with different formats (e.g., lists, narratives) and styles (e.g., formal vs. casual) to discover what resonates best with your audience.



# AI PROMPTS

Prompts are the inputs provided to AI to guide its output. They are simply natural language—everyday speech patterns—which makes using them straightforward. However, crafting effective prompts is a skill that significantly impacts the quality of the AI's responses. Just simply replace your [info] within the brackets for your tailored needs.

## CONTENT GUIDE

### Persona – Who am I?

Let's describe who's writing the content. A business owner, marketing manager, educator, HR, professional

### Task – What do I need to accomplish?

More specific the better (500 word blog post, SEO keywords, sales copy, email, list

### Audience – Who is this for?

Educators, students, business owners, etc

### Context – Why am I doing this?

Provide relevant information, such as event details, holidays, or deadlines, that shape the content

### Framework - How should it be structured?

Choose the format that best fits the message (informal, paragraphs, tables, or syllabus-style)

**Descriptors:** Funny, informative, analytical, inspiring, persuasive, reflective, heartfelt, brainstorming

Draft a case study showcasing how [company or individual] successfully implemented [strategy or product]. Use a narrative style that highlights challenges faced and measurable outcomes achieved. Target this towards [specific audience or industry].

### Social Media Prompts

Develop a series of three social media posts aimed at promoting [event or product]. Use an enthusiastic and engaging voice. Include questions like '[engaging question related to the topic]' to encourage audience interaction.

Write a thread of 5 tweets explaining [complex topic] in simple terms for [target audience]. Use an approachable and friendly tone, ensuring each tweet is concise and easy to understand.

Generate 10 hashtag ideas for a Twitter campaign about [specific topic]. Ensure they are catchy and relevant to [target audience], aiming for a mix of popular and niche hashtags.

Act as a marketing manager and create an engaging social media post about [topic] that follows the problem, agitate, and solution copy writing framework.

Acting as a growth expert, create an engaging [social media] post to increase brand awareness about [business]. Include a CTA to encourage engagement with the brand.

Develop an in-depth social media calendar for the next month, outlining daily posts [about] for each platform (including Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter). Incorporate diverse content themes, specify post formats (such as images, videos, and articles), and suggest optimal posting times. Ensure that the content aligns seamlessly with the objectives and resonates with the unique vibe of each platform.

## EXAMPLES

### Blog and Article Prompts

Generate a list of engaging blog post ideas about [specific topic] that appeal to [target audience]. Aim for a conversational tone that is [adjective, e.g., friendly, authoritative].

Create a detailed how-to guide on [specific process or skill] for [target audience]. Use a clear and instructional voice, breaking down each step into manageable parts. Include tips on [common pitfalls or best practices]."

Write a listicle titled 'Top 10 Benefits of [specific topic]' that provides concise explanations. The tone should be [adjective, e.g., informative, entertaining], and each point should include a practical example relevant to [target audience].

# AI Prompts Continued

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## Email Content Prompts

Compose an attention-grabbing email to announce our new product [product name]. The tone should be [adjective, e.g., urgent, exciting], highlighting its unique features. Include a limited-time discount offer and a clear call-to-action like '[specific action, e.g., 'Shop Now!']'.

Create a monthly newsletter outline that includes [company updates, recent blog posts, and upcoming events.] Maintain an engaging and informative tone suitable for [target audience], ensuring it feels personal by using phrases like '[personalized greeting or closing]'.

Draft an email requesting feedback from customers who recently purchased [product]. Use a polite and appreciative tone, emphasizing the importance of their opinions in improving our services. Include specific questions like '[specific feedback question]'.

## Research and Analysis Prompts

Summarize the latest trends in [industry] for an audience of [target audience type]. Focus on emerging technologies and consumer behavior shifts. Use an analytical yet accessible voice that conveys authority without jargon.

Create a report comparing our [offerings] with those of our top three competitors. The tone should be professional and straightforward, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and potential market opportunities clearly for stakeholders in [specific industry].

## Additional Prompts

Check this for grammar - [insert copy]

Check for clarity - [insert copy]

Help me write a press release for an upcoming [event]. Ask me questions one at a time, advancing to the next question after I answer it.

## IL SBDC AT SIU

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The Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers no-cost, confidential, one-on-one business advising services, along with training opportunities and resources, to small businesses in southern Illinois. Certified Business Advisors support entrepreneurs at every stage, providing expert guidance on key areas such as funding, business planning, marketing, financial analysis, e-commerce, and more. Funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the SBDC has long been a trusted resource for small business owners in southern Illinois.

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