

# Useful AI Prompts for Arbitrators

A prompting starter kit · CEC training · June 15, 2026

Each prompt below is a starting point. Fill in the bracketed parts with your own details, and expect to revise the model's first answer instead of accepting it.

If you have never done this: open a chat, type a prompt into the message box, and read what comes back. Send your next message in the same conversation so it keeps the context of what you have been doing. Anything in [brackets] is a placeholder you replace with your own words.

## Two ground rules

- **Keep it non-case.** Everything here is low-stakes and non-confidential. No case files, no party data, nothing you wouldn't post publicly.
- **The first answer is a draft.** Start rough, keep revising, and confirm and disbelieve before you rely on anything.

## How to work it, step by step

---

1. Pick a non-case, low-stakes task from the list below.
2. Start simple. Give it one line and see what you get.
3. Add your details. It can only organize what you give it.
4. If the first answer isn't right, tell it exactly what to change. For example:
  - “Make it shorter.”
  - “Lead with a different point.”
  - “Make the tone less formal.”
  - “Drop anything I didn't tell you.”
5. For anything time-sensitive, tell it today's date and ask it to search for current information. It answers from a training cutoff that can be months or years old, so without the date and a search it states stale facts as if they were current.
6. Confirm and disbelieve. Read it against what you know, and check anything that matters.

## One example, start to finish

Say you want a thank-you note for a colleague. Here is the whole loop, four short messages in one conversation:

**Start simple.** “Write a thank-you note to a colleague who filled in for me at a hearing.”

*You get a polite but generic note.*

**Add detail.** “She took it on two days’ notice while I was out sick. Keep it warm, and three sentences.”

**Iterate.** “Less formal, and don’t let it read like a greeting card.”

**Check it.** “Did you add anything I didn’t tell you?”

Each message builds on the one before it. That back-and-forth is the whole skill.

### **Make the model fix your prompt**

You don’t have to be a “prompt engineer.” You can hand that job to the model too.

- “Before you answer, ask me what you need to do this well.”
- “Here’s my rough prompt. Rewrite it to be clearer and more specific, and tell me what you changed.”
- “What are three ways this could be reasonably misread?”

### **Give it a role**

Telling the model who to be changes the answer. Try opening with a role:

- “You are a careful lawyer reviewing this for problems.”
- “You are a web designer with good taste.”

## **Exercises**

---

### **Exercise 1 Letter of recommendation**

---

*Use this when you’re recommending a colleague for a roster, a professional group, or an award.*

1. “Write a letter recommending [NAME] for [PURPOSE or GROUP]. Here’s their bio: [PASTE].”
2. “Here’s how I know them: [3 to 4 short points: how you met, what you’ve seen, the nature of your relationship]. Use only what I’ve given you.”
3. “Two paragraphs. Lead with [the strongest, most relevant point]. Keep the tone collegial; this is a peer group, not a judicial nomination.”
4. “Drop anything I didn’t tell you. No invented credentials.”
5. “Point out any praise here that isn’t backed by a specific example, so I can replace it with something concrete.”

**Note:** Guardrails leak. Even when you tell it to use only what you gave it, or to drop what you didn’t, it will sometimes keep the invented material, or reason its way into why it belongs. Don’t assume the instruction held; check that it did.

**Watch for:** It invents credentials and inflates your relationship past what you gave it. Keep only what you’d put your name behind.

## Exercise 2 Create a training hypothetical

---

*Use this when you need a fact pattern for a CLE, study group, or teaching session.*

1. “Draft a fictional grievance fact pattern for a session on [TOPIC]. Make the contract language [ambiguous or clear]. One page.”
2. “Make the timeline murkier, or add a credibility conflict between two witnesses.”
3. “Introduce a [timeliness or arbitrability] issue.”
4. “Give three plausible outcomes and the best argument for each.”
5. “Now draft a short answer key.”
6. “What’s unrealistic here? Fix anything a practitioner would flag.”

**Note:** Base it on a real case if you want. Strip the identifying and confidential details first, the way you always have, before any of it goes into the tool. Then check it for internal contradictions.

## Exercise 3 Turn an article or reference into a slide deck

---

*Use this when you’re building training slides from a published, non-confidential article.*

1. “Here’s an article: [PASTE]. Turn it into a [N]-slide deck for [AUDIENCE], [conceptual or example-heavy], in a [conversational or formal] tone.”
2. “Before you build, ask me anything you need to tailor this to the audience, including experience level in labor relations or level of education.”
3. “One slide per [key point the author makes], with one example each.”
4. “Now add speaker notes.”
5. “Now redo it for [a different audience].”
6. “For each slide, quote the passage it came from.”

**Watch for:** Anything it adds to “modernize” or illustrate is its own invention, not the source. The quote-the-passage step is how you catch it.

## Exercise 4 Tailor your bio for a specific purpose

---

*Use this when you need to shorten or refocus a long bio for a particular purpose, like a conference program or a speaking slot.*

1. “Here’s my long bio. I need a shorter version for [a particular purpose]. What’s worth emphasizing for it, and what matters less?”
2. “Which lines are generic, or don’t fit this purpose, and could go?”
3. “Cut it to [N] words for conference materials, keeping what we agreed matters most.”
4. “Now make a version for [a speaking slot, e.g., a federal sector conference or an RLA training], emphasizing what fits there.”
5. “Here’s my CV (or my full narrative bio). Check this version against it and flag anything it added or overstated that the source doesn’t support.”

**Watch for:** When you tell it to emphasize something, it may inflate or invent experience you don’t have. Keep it to what’s actually in your bio.

## Exercise 5 Review your professional website

---

*Use this when you want feedback on how your public website looks and reads.*

**Note:** To judge design, it has to see the site. Paste a screenshot, or use a browsing-capable model and give it the URL.

1. “You are a web designer with good taste. Critique the design and layout of my site [screenshot or URL], not just the words: what looks dated, what a visitor sees first, whether it works on a phone.”
2. “If the design looks dated, suggest a more current layout and a better order for the sections.”
3. “Now tighten the wording. Keep my voice; don’t make it generic.”
4. “Here’s my CV. Compare it to my website and flag any claim on the site that my CV doesn’t support.”
5. “What’s the one change that would help most?”

**Watch for:** It will “improve” you by inventing claims about your practice. If it adds a credential or claim about you that you can’t back up, delete it.

## Exercise 6 Plan a multi-city hearing-week itinerary (driving)

*Use this when you're driving between back-to-back hearings and want a plan.*

**Note:** This is for planning the drive, not for booking. Don't trust it on prices, and don't use it to book or pay for anything. Price, book, and pay for everything yourself.

1. "It's [current month and year]. Search for current information; don't rely on your training. Plan my driving week: I leave from [home], have hearings in [city A] Monday, [city B] Wednesday, and [city C] Thursday, and drive home Friday. Give me routes and drive times, a hotel near each hearing site, and good places to eat on the road that fit my diet: [for example, kosher, vegetarian, or gluten-free]."

*Naming the month and year and telling it to search forces it to check current information. Otherwise it answers from stale training and gives you hours and restaurants that closed months ago.*

2. "Get me to each hearing city the evening before, so I'm not driving the morning of."
3. "Hotels with [parking, gym, or late check-in]. Food stops no more than [X] minutes off the route."
4. "If a hearing ends early or cancels, or there's a gap between hearing days, what's worth seeing near [city A], [city B], or [city C]?"
5. "Make me a packing list for the week. First ask me what I need for a hearing day versus a travel or downtime day."
6. "List every place you named so I can confirm it's open and actually on my route."

**Watch for:** It invents hours, closures, and restaurants that don't exist. Confirm every place yourself, especially any meal stop that has to fit your diet, before you rely on it.

## Exercise 7 Instant tech support

---

*Use this when you come across a technology problem that you can't solve on your own.*

**Note:** Your devices have personal, confidential, or other sensitive information. Be careful, when trying to solve your technology problem, to guard against sharing this information with the LLM.

1. "It's [current month and year]. Search for current information; don't rely only on your training. My iPhone is frozen and will not shut off. What are the steps for a soft reset?"
2. "It's [current month and year]. Search for current information; don't rely only on your training. Microsoft Word is showing an error. Here is a screenshot of what I am seeing. How can I fix this?"

**Watch for:** LLMs are also unjustifiably confident in their proposed solutions, with the potential for electronic disaster. When in doubt, ask a person.

## Exercise 8 Turn an agenda into calendar events

---

*Use this to take a conference schedule and make it easy to add to your calendar.*

**Note:** Your devices have personal, confidential, or other sensitive information. Be careful, when trying to solve your technology problem, to guard against sharing this information with the LLM. LLMs are also unjustifiably confident in their proposed solutions, with the potential for electronic disaster. When in doubt, as a person.

1. "Can you help me turn this agenda into a set of calendar files? All events are Pacific Time. [Copy and paste agenda information]"
2. "Clean up the event titles, text, etc."

**Watch for:** Errors in labeling, time, or date.