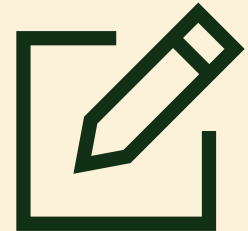# How to Create Effective Prompts for Generative AI in Legal Work

Using effective prompts is essential to obtain appropriate information and helpful drafts of documents from GenAI. A prompt can be a sentence, paragraph, or a series of examples giving instructions for GenAI to produce a response. The better the prompts counsel input, the better the information or document GenAI produces in response. When creating GenAI prompts, counsel should:

Describe the task

For example, when prompting GenAI to create a first draft of a letter, counsel should describe the type of letter needed (such as a firmly worded, persuasive letter to opposing counsel indicating why they must adhere to an upcoming deadline and what the consequences will be if they fail to adhere to it).

Include specific parameters

Include as many details as possible to obtain the most accurate result. For example, when asking GenAI to assist with legal research, include specific information in the prompts, such as the desired:

- **jurisdiction and court;**
- **date range;**
- **claims;**
- **defenses; and**
- **holdings**

Provide context

For example, counsel can include in the prompt the target audience, whether counsel seeks a response from a plaintiff's or defendant's perspective, and the desired outcome.
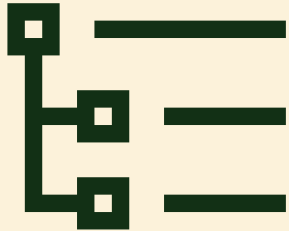
Specify the desired format

Counsel should instruct GenAI what form the response should take (for example, an outline, bulleted list, letter, chart, table, or brief).

Supply examples

Because GenAI platforms can learn from examples a user provides, counsel should consider copying and pasting templates (for example, a brief, pleading, or deposition outline that is appropriately redacted, if necessary) and telling GenAI to respond to the prompt using the style, format, or tone in the example.
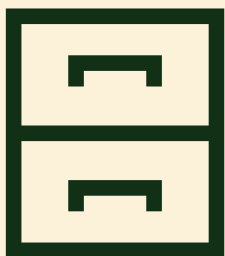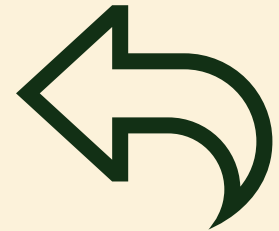
Request sources

Counsel can ask GenAI to provide citations for the sources it uses, which counsel can then check to confirm accuracy.

Follow-up

If GenAI's first response is not adequate, counsel can create another prompt, or series of prompts, with a rephrased question, more specific information, the types of revisions desired, or additional examples on which to model a subsequent response.

Save prompts for future use

Creating high quality prompts often takes many attempts. After creating a prompt that elicits a good response, counsel should consider saving it as a template for future use.

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