

# We Burned **\$8,000** Because Nobody Wrote Good Prompts.

The 8 principles that turned our AI operations from a money pit into a reliable production system.

**SWIPE →**

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## 4 of the 8 Principles

**01** Be explicit and specific

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**02** Structure the prompt: role, task, context, format, constraints

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**03** Break complex tasks into steps

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**04** Define output formats precisely

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# 92%

## Success Rate, Up From 40%

We tried analyse, critique, and draft in one shot — inconsistent garbage. Broken into three chained prompts, success jumped from 40% to 92%.

# 73%

## Cut in AI Costs

Eight principles took our AI operations from "sometimes useful" to production-ready — without touching the underlying model.

# \$8,000

Burned in a single quarter because nobody wrote good prompts.  
Vague requests force the model to guess context — and guessing is expensive.



**We stopped treating prompts like casual conversations and started treating them like the API contracts they actually are.**

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Enterprise AI Strategist

# Vague vs. Precise

## "HELP WITH THIS REPORT"

Model guesses context and intent

Shallow, irrelevant output

Re-run, re-run, re-run

## TASK + AUDIENCE + FORMAT

No ambiguity left to fill

Consistent, usable output

Right the first time

## Treat Prompts Like **Interface Contracts**.

Models respond more predictably when the output format is completely specified — exact bullet counts, exact JSON keys. When that output feeds downstream systems, prompts should be stable, versioned, and tested whenever they change. That mindset, more than any clever wording, is what separates AI that drains your budget from AI that delivers real ROI.

# Iterate Like You **Test Software.**

Start minimal. Observe failure modes. Change one variable at a time. Maintain test sets and revalidate as models change.

All 8 principles, in full:

[terencekok.com/blog/why-prompt-engineering-matters](https://terencekok.com/blog/why-prompt-engineering-matters)

# Prompts Aren't Conversation. They're Contracts.

8 principles. 73% cost reduction. Production-ready output.



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