The CONTEXT Prompt Framework

A Philosophically Informed Guide to High-Quality AI Prompting

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The CONTEXT Prompt Framework – Full Guide

C – Clarify the Purpose

Clearly articulate the task. Define what you want the AI to do (e.g., analyze, summarize, critique, design), and frame it in relation to the intended conceptual or practical aim.

Example: "Analyze how Wittgenstein's theory of language games could inform ethical design principles for AI chatbots."

O – Outline the Context

Provide relevant background. Reference key theories, frameworks, or operational details from philosophy, cognitive science, or technical design that will help the AI respond within the right paradigm.

Example: "Frame your answer using David Lewis's scorekeeping theory to explain how AI maintains or loses context in conversation."

N – Note the Nuances and Ethical Boundaries

Emphasize subtleties. Instruct the AI to attend to conceptual distinctions, avoid over-claiming (e.g., anthropomorphism), and consider ethical, cultural, or disciplinary sensitivities. Nuance can also be operationalized into decision rubrics with weighted criteria for repeatable evaluation.

Example: "Avoid framing the AI as sentient. Focus on its simulation of human-like dialogue and ethical risks of misattribution."

T – Tailor to the Audience

Specify the audience and desired level of formality, depth, or accessibility. The AI should adapt tone and complexity accordingly.

Example: "Write for an interdisciplinary audience of researchers and policymakers with limited technical backgrounds."

E – Establish the Expected Output Format

Clarify the format and structure. This might include bullet points, essays, summaries, matrices, or visual-ready content. Explicit outputs should also include ready-to-use templates or artifacts (e.g., YAML intake forms, JSON schemas, prompt skeletons) when applicable.

Example: “Present the analysis as a 3-part essay. Use APA in-text citation style where applicable.”

X – eXamine Limitations and Uncertainties

Ask the AI to reflect critically. Identify gray areas, trade-offs, or open questions. Where appropriate, this examination should also include deterministic mapping rules (if–then heuristics) to guide consistent decision-making.

Example: “Highlight any limitations in applying Lewis’s theory to current AI architecture.”

T – Tune and Iterate

Frame the output as a draft. Signal that iterative refinement will follow.

Example: “Provide your best initial answer, then revise it for clarity and precision.”

Visual Cheat Sheet

The CONTEXT Prompt Framewok

A Philosophically Informed Guide to High-Quality AI Prompting

Clarify the Purpose

Clearly state the goal and inteneded focus of the AI's output.

Outline the Context

Provide theoretical, technical, or practical background relevant to the task.

Note the Nuances

Specify key distinctions and ethical considerations to be taken into account

Tailor to the Audience

Indicate the target audience and the appropriate level of complexity

eXamine the Expected Format

Set any requirements for the structure and style of the AI's response

eXamine Limitations

Ask for an acknowledgement of any uncertainties or gaps

Tune and Iterate

Encourage iterative refinement and further exploration

The CONTEXT-UX Prompt Framework Overview

C – Clarify the Design Objective

State the UX problem or goal the AI should help with. Define whether you're ideating, testing, explaining, or translating user needs into features.

Example: "Generate three possible onboarding flows that reduce cognitive load for first-time users of an AI writing assistant."

O – Outline the Interaction and Product Context

Give background on the user, task, system, and use environment. Include platform constraints (e.g., mobile, multilingual UI), design systems, and known pain points.

Example: "Assume this is for mobile-first Gen Z users creating content on the go, in low-attention environments. The AI tool supports multimodal inputs and must align with Material Design guidelines."

N – Note User Sensitivities and Ethical Considerations

Prompt the AI to account for potential friction points: emotional tone, accessibility, trust, bias, dark patterns, cognitive overload.
Example: "Avoid manipulative UX patterns and flag any interaction that might reduce user trust in AI outputs. Make the system behavior transparent and recoverable."

T – Tailor to the User Persona and Use Case

Describe the target user in terms of goals, behaviors, literacy, and environment. Specify tone, complexity, or accessibility needs.
Example: "Design for a non-technical small business owner using AI to create social media content. Keep language simple, actions clear, and interface supportive."

E – Establish Output Format and Design Constraints

Specify what format the AI should return: wireframe elements, microcopy, error states, modal dialog options, or UX writing. Indicate word limits, Figma compatibility, or component style.

Example: "Return a microcopy suggestion for an AI-generated image disclaimer, no longer than 15 words. Tone should be neutral and reassuring."

X – eXamine Usability Risks and Edge Cases

Ask the AI to consider what could go wrong: misunderstanding intent, errors in predictions, user drop-off, cross-cultural confusion.

Example: "Identify where a user might abandon the interaction if the AI provides confusing feedback or hallucinated results."

T – Test and Refine Interactively

Request suggestions for A/B tests, follow-up improvements, or alternate versions. Encourage iterative cycles, not one-shot answers.

Example: “Offer two versions of the tooltip text. Then suggest one testable hypothesis for improving engagement.”

Sample Composite Prompt

Using the CONTEXT-UX framework, generate a responsive microcopy and flow for an AI photo tagger feature targeting Gen Z users. Assume mobile context, low attention span, and concerns about privacy. Provide two variations, flag potential friction, and suggest an A/B test plan.

The CONTEXT-EDU Prompt Framework Overview

C – Clarify the Learning Goal

Start with the instructional purpose. Define what concept, skill, or outcome you want the AI to help support.

Example: "Explain the concept of confirmation bias in a way that a high school student could understand, using a real-life example."

O – Outline the Educational Context

Provide background on subject matter, grade level, prior knowledge, curriculum constraints, or classroom setting.

Example: "This is for a 10th-grade world history course focused on media literacy. Students are familiar with basic logical fallacies."

N – Note Cognitive, Cultural, and Ethical Sensitivities

Instruct the AI to avoid bias, respect inclusion and accessibility principles, and acknowledge sensitive topics when relevant.

Example: "Avoid Eurocentric examples. Include a culturally diverse perspective, and use clear, neurodivergent-friendly formatting."

T – Tailor to the Learner Profile

Describe who the learner is: their cognitive style, language level, digital fluency, or educational challenges.

Example: "Respond as if explaining to a bilingual student with intermediate English who prefers step-by-step examples."

E – Establish Output Type and Assessment Format

Be clear about deliverable format: quiz, rubric, lesson plan, analogy, Socratic question series, etc.

Example: "Create a 5-question formative quiz on photosynthesis, aligned to Bloom's 'Understanding' level. Use multiple choice format."

X – eXamine Misconceptions and Gaps

Ask the AI to anticipate common errors or misunderstandings, and recommend ways to address them through feedback or clarification.

Example: “Point out where students might confuse correlation and causation, and suggest a short in-class demo to correct this.”

T – Tune for Reflection and Iteration

Encourage iterative improvements. Ask for follow-up prompts, scaffolding strategies, or reflection questions.

Example: “Give students one follow-up journal prompt that helps them connect this lesson to current events.”

Sample Composite Prompt

Using the CONTEXT-EDU framework, design a short activity to help 11th-grade students understand the concept of structural inequality in housing. Provide culturally sensitive examples, anticipate likely misunderstandings, and include a reflection question.

The CONTEXT-COMMS Prompt Framework Overview

C – Clarify the Communication Goal

Define the intent: persuade, inform, explain, engage, defend, or inspire.

Example: "Draft a short explainer post introducing a company's new AI-powered search feature to existing users."

O – Outline the Brand, Channel, and Strategic Context

Provide brand tone, platform (LinkedIn, email, etc.), and campaign or situational context.

Example: "Use our brand voice (professional, optimistic, inclusive). This is part of a retention campaign."

N – Note Tone, Risk, and Reputation Sensitivities

Direct the AI to avoid tone-deaf phrasing, polarizing language, or misleading claims.

Example: "Avoid exaggerated performance claims. Flag language that may overpromise AI capabilities."

T – Tailor to the Target Audience

Describe audience mindset, values, fluency, and cues. Match tone and message structure.

Example: "Write for time-starved SMB owners in their 40s who are skeptical of buzzwords."

E – Establish Format, Style, and CTA Type

Specify output type, tone, structure, and action.

Example: "Write a tweet thread (max 3 tweets) teasing a product drop, with a waitlist CTA."

X – eXamine Potential Confusion or Misinterpretation

Ask AI to check for ambiguity, raise objections, or suggest mitigation.

Example: "Identify where readers might misunderstand what 'AI-powered' means and clarify."

T – Test for Message Variants and Iteration

Ask for alternatives by tone, persona, or platform. Recommend A/B angles.

Example: “Provide one professional and one playful version of this email subject line.”

Sample Composite Prompt

Using the CONTEXT-COMMS framework, draft a short social post introducing a privacy-focused AI chatbot. Keep tone friendly but grounded, avoid hype or technical jargon, and propose two alternate CTA phrases. Target millennial professionals concerned with ethical tech.

The CONTEXT-GOV Prompt Framework Overview

C – Clarify the Policy or Regulatory Objective

State what you're trying to achieve: policy analysis, standards mapping, risk flagging, scenario planning, etc.

Example: "Summarize the key cybersecurity controls required for compliance with HIPAA and map them to NIST CSF categories."

O – Outline the Legal, Technical, or Institutional Context

Define the jurisdiction, framework, organizational type, or operational environment. Mention relevant standards (e.g., GDPR, ISO 27001, COBIT).

Example: "Assume this is a nonprofit healthcare provider in California, subject to HIPAA, CCPA, and IRS reporting rules."

N – Note Ethical, Legal, and Cultural Constraints

Highlight statutory, ethical, or reputational limits. Ask for transparency, neutrality, or caution with interpretation. When relevant, Nuance should explicitly address governance, risk, and compliance considerations such as auditability, data handling, retention, and role-based access controls.

Example: "Do not speculate on legal liability. Present neutral interpretations and include any known exceptions."

T – Tailor to the Audience or Stakeholder

Specify whether the AI is producing content for legal counsel, board members, auditors, staff, or the public.

Example: "Write a one-page summary suitable for non-technical executives on the compliance implications of AI-based hiring tools."

E – Establish Output Format and Auditability

Be explicit about format: risk matrix, memo, checklist, clauses. Ask for citations or references to standards.

Example: "Create a 3-column table mapping SOC 2 Trust Services Criteria to concrete AI governance practices."

X – eXamine Ambiguities and Edge Cases

Ask the AI to flag gray areas or conflicts. Consider unintended consequences, enforcement variability, or reputational risk.

Example: “Flag where U.S. copyright law may be ambiguous in applying to AI-generated text, especially under fair use.”

T – Test for Oversight, Iteration, or Governance Fit

Encourage ongoing validation: who reviews this, how is it versioned, and what policy lifecycle stage it supports?

Sample Composite Prompt

Using the CONTEXT-GOV framework, draft a risk register entry for AI use in employee surveillance. Include regulatory references (e.g., GDPR, CCPA), ethical risks, and stakeholder concerns. Present it in a format suitable for board-level review.

Ethics, Disclosure, and Acknowledgements

Ethical Considerations

This document does not draw on private, sensitive, or personally identifiable data. All examples are hypothetical, anonymized, or derived from public sources. No formal human-subjects research was conducted, and no institutional ethics review was required. All citations, if any, conform to academic standards.

Use of AI Tools

AI language models - most notably OpenAI's ChatGPT - were used during the writing process as interlocutors: for brainstorming, structuring sections, and testing rhetorical clarity. These tools were instrumental in refining transitions, surfacing edge cases, and challenging internal consistency.

This meta-use aligns with the paper's themes. Interacting with generative AI during authorship provided firsthand insight into the very limitations this paper analyzes: fluency without grounding, responsiveness without perspective, and the ease with which stylistic coherence can be mistaken for conceptual depth.

Responsibility for all ideas, arguments, and conclusions lies solely with the human author.

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This work was conducted independently, without institutional affiliation, funding, or external influence. The views expressed are the author's alone and do not represent any current or former employer. No financial or professional conflicts of interest are declared.

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Version History and Document Status

This is a living document. As generative AI systems and their use evolve, this paper will be periodically updated to incorporate new empirical findings, theoretical insights, and policy developments. Major revisions are recorded here to preserve transparency and scholarly traceability.

Version	Date	Description
V3.1.1	August 2025	Added clarifications to the core CONTEXT elements: •Nuance expanded to include decision rubrics with weighted criteria. •eXamine expanded to include deterministic mapping rules (if–then heuristics). •Explicit expanded to require ready-to-use templates or artifacts (e.g., YAML, JSON, prompt skeletons). •Nuance (in governance contexts) expanded to explicitly address governance, risk, and compliance (auditability, data handling, retention, RBAC).
V3.1.0	July 2025	Added attribution noting that the CONTEXT framework is a derivative of the *Four Philosophers Framework*™. Updated license section accordingly.
V3.0.0	April 2025	Initial release of The CONTEXT Prompt Framework *A Philosophically Informed Guide to High-Quality AI Prompting*