



Ask AI to write anything...

The AI Prompt Playbook for RFP & Proposal Teams

Copy/Paste Prompts for
Smarter, Faster Responses



Introduction:

Why AI Prompting Matters in Proposals

AI isn't replacing proposal teams—but it's transforming how we work. With clear, structured instructions (often called "prompts"), tools like ChatGPT can help RFP and proposal professionals draft faster, improve clarity, repurpose past content, and reduce last-minute pressure.

This playbook shows you how to write effective prompts that integrate seamlessly into your workflow. No jargon. No AI engineering background required.

One of the most effective ways to improve AI output is to ground your prompt in your own content—such as past proposals, win themes, or capability statements. When AI understands your specific context, its responses become far more relevant and reliable.

1. What Makes a Good Prompt?

A good prompt (or AI instruction) has three parts:

- **Role:** Define who the AI is acting as (e.g., proposal reviewer, analyst).
- **Context:** Provide relevant background or reference material.
- **Task:** Clearly describe the outcome you're seeking.

Example: You are a proposal reviewer. Compare this new draft section to our previous proposal and suggest improvements for clarity and compliance.



2. Key Prompt Types for Proposal Teams

These four prompt types cover most use cases in the RFP lifecycle:

- **Summarizing:** Creating executive summaries or win theme overviews.
- **Rewriting:** Enhancing clarity, tone, and readability.
- **Reviewing:** Providing feedback before submission.
- **Grounding:** Using your own documents to improve output quality.

3. Using AI Before You Bid

AI can support early-stage bid/no-bid decisions by helping teams:

- **Summarize** large RFP sections quickly.
- **Highlight** key themes or risk signals.
- **Identify** milestone dates like submission, Q&A, and award timelines.

It also adds value in **internal planning and communication**—whether drafting status updates for leadership or building internal checklists and pre-bid questionnaires.

Caution: Avoid relying on AI for compliance interpretation or requirement shredding. AI models can hallucinate or misinterpret nuanced language. Always verify key insights through human review.

Prompt Template: Act as a proposal analyst. Based on this RFP section, summarize the key opportunity features and potential risks. Provide a bulleted list for internal discussion.



4. Grounding with Your Own Content

You'll get the best results when AI understands your voice, strengths, and past performance.

Use prompts that reference:

- **Winning past proposals or submissions.**
- **Company capability statements.**
- **Model paragraphs that reflect your preferred tone.**

Prompt Template: You are a proposal writer. Based on the attached past performance summary and capability statement, draft a new section that reflects similar tone and themes.

5. Drafting Sections & Executive Summaries

AI is a powerful assistant for creating content such as:

- **Win themes and value propositions.**
- **Clear rewrites of dense, technical text.**
- **Executive summaries tailored to customer goals.**

Prompt Template: You are a proposal writer. Draft a 3-paragraph executive summary based on these inputs: (1) customer priorities, (2) our differentiators, (3) contract value and past performance.



6. Reviewing & Red Team Checks

AI can help you polish drafts and prep for color reviews by:

- **Providing structured feedback on clarity and completeness.**
- **Highlighting jargon or awkward phrasing.**
- **Assessing alignment with evaluation criteria.**

Prompt Template: Review the following section for clarity, compliance coverage, and customer focus. Suggest improvements and rewrite as needed.

7. Final Checks and Clarifications

Even at the final stages, AI can assist by:

- **Drafting clarification questions to contracting officers.**
- **Improving the tone and clarity of final submission language.**

Note: Avoid using AI to compare different RFP versions. Subtle legal or scope changes may be overlooked.

Prompt Template: ADraft a polite clarification request to the contracting officer regarding the following ambiguous requirement. Use formal tone and cite the relevant section.



8. Building a Prompting Culture

Prompting works best when it's a team habit. Consider:

- **Storing reusable prompts in Notion, Google Sheets, SharePoint—or directly in VT Writer.**
- **VT Writer works in your browser and in Microsoft Word, making it easy to access and reuse prompts inside your actual writing workflow.**
- **Encouraging team feedback and iteration.**
- **Using real examples to train new contributors.**

Conclusion:

You're Closer Than You Think

You don't need to be an AI expert. If you can explain a task clearly to a colleague, you can write a great AI prompt.

Start small. Pick a task. Use your own content. Copy a prompt from this guide. See how it works—then build from there.



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Next Step: See VT Writer in Action

If you're ready to improve the clarity, consistency, and compliance of your proposal content, explore [VT Writer](#).

VT Writer is a Secure AI Writing Assistant designed specifically for proposal and contract teams. It highlights complex language, scans for compliance risks, and helps you write in plain English.

Built for regulated environments, VT Writer works behind your firewall or in the cloud—without compromising security.

See how teams like yours are using VT Writer to streamline reviews, improve readability scores, and boost win rates.

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