

AI Context Brief

Better context in. Better output out



HOW TO USE: Fill in the bracketed placeholders below. Copy the entire block and paste it **before** your request. Skip any fields that don't apply, but the more you fill in, the less editing you'll do.

MY ORGANIZATION

MISSION: *one sentence — what we do and for whom*

AUDIENCE: *who we serve (e.g., low-income families in Lancaster County)*

VOICE: *e.g., warm and relational / direct and plain / formal*

SIZE: *e.g., 12 staff, \$2M budget / all-volunteer*

THIS TASK

DELIVERABLE: *what I need AI to produce (e.g., donor email, board update)*

FORMAT: *e.g., 250-word email / 3 bullet points / social post*

OUTPUT AUDIENCE: *who will read or receive this*

CONTEXT: *any deadline, campaign, or framing AI should know*

THE READER

CARES ABOUT: *what matters most to them (e.g., ROI, mission impact, simplicity)*

ALREADY KNOWS: *so AI doesn't over-explain (e.g., familiar with our programs)*

CONSTRAINTS

MUST INCLUDE: *required elements, calls to action, or data points*

MUST AVOID: *off-limits language, topics, tone, or claims*

SOUNDS LIKE: *paste or describe an example you like (optional)*

MISSION CHECK (optional)

CONNECTS TO: *how this ties to our mission or values*

AVOID FRAMING: *language or angles that feel off-mission*

AI Prompt Patterns

Reusable moves that make AI output dramatically better.



01 Role + Task + Audience • Use this for almost everything

PATTERN: You are [role]. Write [deliverable] for [audience] who [what they care about].

EXAMPLE: You are a development director at a food bank. Write a board update on Q3 fundraising for trustees who are concerned about donor retention.

02 The Constraint Stack • When you need tight, usable output

PATTERN: Write [thing]. Keep it under [length]. Use [tone]. Do not include [what to avoid].

EXAMPLE: Write a volunteer recruitment post. Keep it under 120 words. Use a warm, direct tone. Do not use jargon or ask people to “make a difference.”

03 The Example Anchor • When tone or style is hard to describe

PATTERN: Here is an example of [thing] I like: [describe it]. Write something similar that [does X].

EXAMPLE: Here is an email from our ED that I love: [paste]. Write something similar that announces our new program to community partners.

04 Before You Respond... • When your request is complex or ambiguous

PATTERN: Before you write anything, ask me the 3 questions that would most improve your output.

EXAMPLE: Before you write anything, ask me the three questions that would most improve the grant narrative you’re about to draft.

05 The Mission Alignment Check • After getting a draft you’re unsure about

PATTERN: Review. Flag any language that feels off-mission or inconsistent with [our values/voice].

EXAMPLE: Flag any language that feels transactional or inconsistent with our values of dignity and community self-determination. Suggest alternatives.

06 The Iteration Move • When the first draft is close but not right

PATTERN: Keep [what worked]. Change [what didn’t]. Specifically: [precise edit instruction].

EXAMPLE: Keep the opening paragraph. Change the call to action. It’s too passive. Make it specific: tell them exactly what to click and why it matters this week.

The golden rule:

AI outputs are only as clear as your inputs. 5 minutes on context saves 20 minutes of editing.