

CHAPTER 7 - YOUR STARTER TOOLKIT

AI Thought-Partner Conversation Starters

Open a real thinking session with AI instead of staring at a blank cursor.

Nearly everything you will use AI for at work falls into one of three buckets. Most people only ever use the first one.

Bucket	What It Covers
Productivity	The everyday drafting and summarizing work most people already associate with AI.
Learning	Using AI to test your own thinking before anyone else does.
Creative Communication	Shaping how an idea gets presented: a proposal, a pitch, a piece of writing.

The Starter Prompt

This single prompt turns AI from an answer machine into a thinking partner. Bring a real, unresolved decision.

Copy and adapt this

“Here is my current thinking: [describe it]. Challenge it. Point out weaknesses. Suggest alternatives. What am I missing? If you disagreed with me, what would you say?”

Read the response slowly. Do not defend your original thinking. Just notice which objections actually land.

Five Ways to Ask for Better Thinking, Not Just Answers

- What assumptions am I making?
- What am I missing?
- What is another perspective?
- What would someone who disagrees with me say?
- If this failed, what would probably be the reason?

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What This Looks Like Across Roles

Role	What It Looks Like There
HR	Drafting a leave policy in plain language, then asking AI to read it back as a confused new employee would.
Sales	Turning messy call notes into a clean opportunity summary before a pipeline review.
Finance	Explaining a budget variance to a non-finance stakeholder in plain terms.
Legal	Running a first pass on a routine vendor contract to flag clauses worth a closer look.
Manufacturing	Turning a week of scattered safety reports into one clear pattern worth raising.
Healthcare Admin	Drafting a patient letter in plain language, then checking it for tone.

Try It Now

Productivity: one real task from the next seven days where AI could help:

Learning: one real task from the next seven days where AI could help:

Creative Communication: one real task from the next seven days where AI could help:

The next time you open an AI assistant, don't ask "Can you solve this for me?" Ask "Can you help me think this through?"