Course 1: AI & Prompt Engineering for SMEs

A Foundational One-Day Workshop for Business Leaders

Course Prerequisite: None. This is the foundational course for all other AI modules.

Primary Resource: *PROMPT ENGINEERING FOR SMEs: An AI Handbook for Business Leaders*

1. Course Overview

This intensive one-day workshop is the essential starting point for any SME looking to harness the power of Artificial Intelligence. The day is designed to demystify AI, moving beyond the hype to provide a solid, practical understanding of what AI is, how it works, and how it can be immediately and **safely** applied to business challenges. Participants will get hands-on experience with leading AI tools and master the critical skill of **prompt engineering**—the art and science of communicating effectively with AI to get desired results. By the end of the day, every attendee will not only understand AI's potential but will have the confidence and skills to begin using it responsibly to enhance productivity and drive innovation.

2. Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- **Remember & Understand:**
  - Define Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Generative AI and explain their relevance to SMEs.
  - Identify the key opportunities and strategic risks associated with AI adoption, including data privacy, intellectual property, and data sovereignty (e.g., GDPR).
  - Recognize the core components of an effective prompt.
- **Apply:**
  - Construct well-defined prompts using established frameworks to generate specific outputs (text, ideas, summaries).
  - Utilize at least three different publicly available AI tools for practical, non-sensitive business tasks.
  - Apply iterative prompting techniques to refine and improve AI-generated outputs.
- **Analyze:**
  - Compare and contrast the capabilities and limitations of different AI models (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini).

     ○ Deconstruct complex business requests into a series of logical prompts.
- **Evaluate & Create:**
  - Assess the quality, relevance, and potential bias of AI-generated content.
  - Evaluate the high-level privacy implications of using a public AI tool for business purposes.
  - Create a personalized "Prompt Library" of effective prompts tailored to their specific job role and business needs.

3. Course Schedule & Modules

Total Duration: 8 hours (including breaks)

Time	Module	Topics & Sub-topics	Trainer Activity	Trainee Activity
9:00 - 9:30	**Module 1: Welcome & The AI Revolution**	- Welcome & Icebreaker- Course Objectives- Why AI now? The Tipping Point for SMEs	- Facilitate introductions- Present agenda- Set the stage with compelling stats & case studies	- Introduce themselves & their business- Share one hope/fear about AI
9:30 - 10:45	**Module 2: Demystifying AI**	- **What is AI?** (Analogy-driven explanation)- **Key Concepts:** Machine Learning, LLMs, Generative AI- **The SME Opportunity:** Beyond the hype	- Lecture with interactive Q&A- Use simple analogies (e.g., AI as an intern)- Show examples of AI in everyday life	- Participate in Q&A- Take notes- Group discussion: "Where do we see AI in our business already?"
10:45 - 11:00	Coffee Break			
11:00 - 12:30	**Module 3: The Art of the Prompt (Part 1)**	- **Introduction to Prompt Engineering**- **Core Components:** Role, Task, Context, Format, Examples (RTCFE)- **Hands-on Lab 1:** Your First "Perfect" Prompt	- Introduce the RTCFE framework- Live demo: Deconstruct a bad prompt vs. a good prompt- Provide a worksheet with business scenarios	- Follow the live demo- **Activity:** Write and test prompts for 3 different scenarios (e.g., "Draft a marketing email," "Summarize this article")

12:30 - 13:30	Lunch Break			
13:30 - 15:00	**Module 4: The Art of the Prompt (Part 2)**	- **Advanced Techniques:** Zero-shot vs. Few-shot, Chain of Thought, Personas- **Iterative Refinement:** How to "talk back" to the AI- **Hands-on Lab 2:** The Iteration Challenge	- Explain advanced prompting strategies- Live demo: Refining a vague request into a high-quality output- Facilitate a group challenge	- **Activity:** In pairs, take a complex task (e.g., "Create a social media content calendar") and refine prompts iteratively.
15:00 - 15:15	Coffee Break			
15:15 - 16:15	**Module 5: The SME's AI Toolkit**	- **Tool Showcase:** Deep dive into ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity.ai, and an image generator- **Use Cases:** Content creation, data summary, brainstorming- **Hands-on Lab 3:** Tool Rotation	- Present a comparative overview of the tools- Live demo of each tool's unique strengths- Provide a "scavenger hunt" list of tasks	- **Activity:** Rotate through stations/tabs to complete tasks with the best-suited tool.
16:15 - 16:45	**Module 6: Responsible AI: Privacy, Data & Governance**	- **Data Privacy:** What happens to your prompts?- **Data Sovereignty & GDPR:** Keeping data local- **Intellectual Property:** Who owns the output?- **Bias & Accuracy:** Trust but verify	- Lead a critical discussion using real-world examples- Explain consumer vs. enterprise AI versions- Provide a checklist for evaluating AI tool privacy policies	- Group discussion: "What sensitive data should we NEVER put in a public AI?"- Analyze the terms of service for one tool.
16:45 - 17:00	**Module 7: Wrap-up & Action Plan**	- **Building Your Prompt Library**- **Action Plan:** Your first week with AI- Final Q&A and Course Feedback	- Guide participants in creating their personal action plan- Summarize key takeaways from the entire day	- **Activity:** Document 3-5 high-value prompts for their role- Set a personal goal for responsible AI use.

4. Resources & Materials

- **Required Reading:** *PROMPT ENGINEERING FOR SMEs: An AI Handbook for Business Leaders* (provided to all participants).
- **Hardware:** Participants must bring their own laptops with Wi-Fi capability.
- **Software/Accounts:** Participants should create free accounts on Agentyk.me ChatGPT (OpenAI), Claude (Anthropic), and Perplexity.ai before the course begins.
- **Handouts:**
  - Prompt Engineering Cheat Sheet (based on the handbook).
  - Business Scenario Worksheet for hands-on labs.
  - **NEW:** Checklist for Evaluating AI Tool Privacy.
  - Personal Action Plan template.