

How to Talk to AI: The T.A.L.K. Method

You don't need 47 prompts or a course. You need four letters and a five-minute conversation.

Most people treat AI like Google. They type “write my cover letter,” get something generic, and decide AI “just isn’t that good.” They’re typing at it instead of talking to it.

Think about how you’d brief a teammate on a group project. You wouldn’t text three words and hope for the best. You’d explain the assignment, say who it’s for, show what a good version looks like, and point out what to avoid. The conversation *is* the briefing. AI works the same way.

You don’t need **47** prompts or a prompt-engineering course. You need four letters: **T.A.L.K.**

AI “slop” is almost never an AI problem. It’s a context problem.

T.A.L.K. method, at a glance

- 1 Step O: Pick one AI.** ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini, whichever one you’ll actually open.
- 2 T: Talk, don’t type.** Tap the mic (or press Win+H) and talk it through.
- 3 A: Add your context.** Paste a three-line “who I am, who it’s for” blurb.
- 4 L: Lead with what “good” looks like.** Show an example, and flag anything unsure with **[VERIFY]**.
- 5 K: Keep what works.** Save the instructions, not just the answer.

Step 0: Pick your AI

ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini are all good. The one that wins isn't the one that benchmarks highest. It's the one you'll actually open tomorrow. Google person? Gemini. Live in Microsoft 365? Copilot. Want the best writing partner? Claude. Easiest start? ChatGPT. Pick one and stick with it for a month.

T: Talk, don't type

This is the single biggest shift you can make. Typing feels like search. Talking feels like a conversation. You riff, push back, and it keeps up in real time.

You can start free today:

- **ChatGPT:** the mic icon dictates your words into text; the waveform icon starts a full spoken conversation. About 2 hours a day on the free plan.
- **Claude:** voice mode is free in the phone app (roughly 20–30 conversations a day). Great for thinking out loud and working through a problem.
- **Windows:** press **Win+H** in any text box and start talking. Free, built in, works everywhere. (On a Mac, Dictation is built in too.)

What I use is [Wispr Flow](#). It works in every app, not just one chat window, and quietly cleans up your “ums” as you talk. It's \$15/month with a free tier to try. Worth it once talking becomes your default.

A: Add your context

Most prompts fail because the AI doesn't know who you are or who you're writing for, so it guesses, and those guesses are generic. Give it three things up front:

- **Who you are:** “COO at [ScaledOn](#).”

- **Who it's for:** "a recruiter skimming 200+ applications."
- **Your rules:** "no buzzwords, keep it to one page, no em dash, sound like a real person."
 - Brand voice rules (active voice, sentence length cap, banned phrases)
 - Style references (link to your brand guidelines)
 - Output conventions (where drafts go, naming format)
 - Review checklists ("before saving, check: hook, evidence, CTA")

Context is the difference between internet generic and *yours*.

L: Lead with what "good" looks like

Describing a task isn't the same as defining a good result. Three moves:

1. **Show an example.** Paste something you liked and say "match this." AI is a great mimic and a poor mind-reader.
2. **Name the outcome.** Not "write a blog post," but "the best listicle on budget places to stay around Portsmouth, NH for car camping families."
3. **Make it flag uncertainty.** Add "mark anything you're not sure about with **[VERIFY]** ." AI states wrong facts as confidently as right ones.

K: Keep what works

Here's what separates people who get better at this every week from people who start from scratch every time: they save the instructions, not just the answer.

When something works, keep the recipe, not just the dish:

- **Easy:** a notes doc with your best context blurbs, ready to paste.
- **Better:** your tool's built-in memory (ChatGPT Projects, Claude Projects, Gemini Gems) via a project. Set it up once with 10-15 examples and it loads every time, so you explain yourself once instead of every session.

- **Best:** Later, once you're hooked, you can turn a task you repeat into a saved "skill," a short file that tells the AI how to do it every time.

Try it in five minutes

1. Open your AI.
2. Hit the voice button (or press **Win+H**) and talk through one real task: a blog post, a cover letter, an email campaign.
3. Add your context: who you are, who it's for.
4. Show it an example, then add "mark anything you're not sure about with **[VERIFY]**."
5. Save what worked.


That's all four letters. You talked to it, added your context, led with what good looks like, and kept what works.

Four letters, not forty-seven prompts.

There is no mastering AI. Only testing and talking.

Alec

Keep reading: To get your 40% better 📌

 [Your Prompts Are Too Short \(The Data Proves It\)](#)

 [Why I Talk to ChatGPT More Than I Type](#)

Keep going.

I write about using AI for real work, minus the hype.

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