



Guide ChatGPT-5

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Introduction

Do you sometimes get brilliant insights from ChatGPT-5, and the next moment, generic filler that wastes your time? If so, you are not alone.

We have learned to treat a large language model like a conversation partner, finding answers through dialogue and iterations. But this approach does not work with ChatGPT-5. We have also learned that we can change direction or build on previous conversations. This simply does not work with ChatGPT-5. Because the model re-reads the entire conversation with each response, and it is also extremely sensitive to contradictions and ambiguities, a loose, conversational style creates noise that degrades the result and unnecessarily consumes resources.

So, if you find that GPT-5 feels harder to control than previous versions, your intuition is correct. You are not facing an upgraded version of a known technology, but a fundamentally new architecture. Where GPT-4 acted as an eager assistant, intuitively filling in the gaps in your requests, GPT-5 operates as a precise, agent-like system. It is no longer one model, but a complex routing system that manages several specialized models. Every single part of your request, from word choice to structure, acts as a signal, directing your task along a specific computational path. This explains the frustrating inconsistency. The solution lies in the right structure, not in more details or more strenuous work on your part.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

This guide fills the void left by the official documentation. It does not offer more tips and tricks, but a systematic framework for translating your human intentions into the precise machine instructions the system is designed to receive. It is the manual for getting GPT-5 to behave predictably. The guide presents The Five Pillars, a simple and reliable method for constructing your requests. By applying this framework, you will be able to transform your interactions from a source of uncertainty into a reliable, strategic advantage. You will learn to speak the system's language and thereby gain control over the results. Welcome to a new way of working.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Chapter 1: Your Toolbox: A Simple Recipe for Consistent Results

Before we explore advanced strategies, we must establish the fundamental craft. To illustrate the power of a well-structured approach, imagine a common leadership task. You ask your assistant: Draft an email about the new policy. The result is predictably a generic, impersonal text, lacking both the right tone and the necessary context. It is technically correct, but practically useless without significant rewriting.

Now consider a different instruction. You specify a role: You are our Head of Communications, known for empathetic and clear communication. You define a goal: Draft an email announcing our new hybrid work policy. You add context: The goal is to explain the rationale, but acknowledge that it is a big change. You set constraints: The tone should be confident, but understanding. Maximum four paragraphs. Finally, you define a structure: End with a clear call to action. The result is a targeted, well-balanced, and usable email, delivered on the first attempt.

This significant difference in quality stems from a simple and reliable method we can call The Five Pillars. It is the recipe that systematically transforms vague requests into precise directives that the system can execute with predictable success.

The first pillar is about defining a Role. By assigning the system a specific expertise, for example, as a financial analyst or an experienced copywriter, you immediately activate the right knowledge, tone, and perspective. This is not just a stylistic choice; it is a way to direct the model's focus so it draws on the most relevant experience for the task.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Once the role is set, the next pillar follows naturally: a clear Goal. An unambiguous formulation of what you want to achieve eliminates guesswork. Strong action verbs like analyze, compare, or draft specify the precise task and ensure that energy is spent creating the desired output, rather than deciphering an unclear intention.

Next comes the third and perhaps most crucial pillar, Context. Here you provide the model with the necessary background information. Who is the recipient of the text? Why is this task important right now? What previous decisions affect the situation? The richer the context you provide, the more nuanced and strategically aligned the answer will be. Context is the bridge between a generic template and a tailored solution.

With a solid understanding of the task, it is time for the fourth pillar, Constraints. Here you define the rules of the game. These could be requirements for length, a specific tone, or topics that should be deliberately avoided. These guidelines act as creative guardrails, ensuring that the final result is not just intelligent, but also fully usable within the framework you have set.

Finally, it all comes together in the fifth pillar, Structure. By organizing your request into logical sections or specifying a particular layout for the output, you help the system process complex tasks systematically. A clear structure ensures that all parts of your request are addressed in the correct order, resulting in a more coherent and thoughtful final product.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

In summary, your template for an effective prompt can look like this. By filling in these fields, even briefly, you force yourself to give the system the clear instructions it needs to deliver a usable result.

ROLE: [Describe the specific expertise or persona the AI should assume]

GOAL: [Formulate the precise task and the desired, measurable result]

CONTEXT: [State the necessary background, target audience, and purpose of the task]

CONSTRAINTS: [Define the boundaries for the task, such as tone, length, and what to avoid]

STRUCTURE: [Specify the desired format and layout for the final output]

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Chapter 2: Strategic Focus

Within strategic work, the pillars of Role and Context become particularly vital for achieving high-value results. By assigning the system a specific, often challenging role and providing it with rich context about your market position, you force it beyond superficial generalizations into a state of sharp, specialized analysis.

This is where technology transforms from a simple information tool into a true cognitive partner, capable of simulating future scenarios and delivering the brutal honesty that genuine strategic insight demands.

A widespread misconception is believing that a single, short prompt can deliver a finished strategic analysis. That kind of hype leads to disappointment. The real value emerges when the leader acts as an intelligent orchestrator of a realistic, multi-stage process.

In this chapter, we examine two central leadership disciplines within strategy through such a two-phase workflow. First, we look at how the system can be used to navigate uncertainty through scenario planning. Then, we explore a more confrontational application, where the AI takes on the role of a merciless critic to uncover uncomfortable truths about your company's competitive position. Both scenarios demonstrate how a well-constructed process is not just a request for information, but a precise calibration of a powerful analytical engine.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Scenario 1: Scenario Planning in Uncertain Times

Scenario Description: As a leader, you and the company, for example, face a potential economic recession. Uncertainty makes long-term decision-making difficult. You need a tool that can help you systematically think through possible futures and prepare the organization for various outcomes. The goal is not to predict the future precisely, but to build organizational resilience by having action plans ready for several probable scenarios. The challenge is that it can take weeks for an internal team to develop these frameworks from scratch.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

The first intelligent step is to use ChatGPT to create a generic, best-practice framework for the analysis. This is done deliberately without using confidential information, leveraging the model's vast knowledge of strategic models and methods. This phase is about saving time and avoiding the "tyranny of the blank page." By letting the system build the analytical skeleton, you and your team can focus your energy on the subsequent, value-creating analysis.

Phase 1 Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: Strategic advisor specializing in macroeconomic analysis.

GOAL: Develop three scenarios (optimistic, neutral, pessimistic) for our industry over the next year if a recession hits.

CONTEXT: We are a B2B SaaS company. Our customers are sensitive to budget cuts.

CONSTRAINTS: For each scenario, identify potential risks, opportunities, and suggest 2-3 proactive actions. Format as a table.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Analysis of Phase 1 Prompt: Building the Analytical Skeleton

This prompt is an excellent example of an effective initial instruction that creates a solid foundation. Assigning the Role of "Strategic advisor specializing in macroeconomic analysis" is not just role-playing. A precise role definition acts as a direct instruction to GPT-5's internal routing system. The system now activates its knowledge in economics, business strategy, and risk analysis, adopting a professional perspective.

The goal is formulated with a clarity that minimizes the risk of misinterpretation, a crucial principle for interaction with GPT-5. By requesting precisely "three scenarios (optimistic, neutral, pessimistic)," you create a defined and manageable task. This prevents the model from delivering an overwhelming amount of information and ensures that the output is structured and comparable.

The context, though brief, is extremely impactful. The sentences "We are a B2B SaaS company. Our customers are sensitive to budget cuts" are crucial for elevating the analysis from generic to relevant. Without this information, the scenarios would discuss a recession in general terms. With it, the system understands it needs to focus on specific implications such as increased customer churn, longer sales cycles, and renewed pressure on pricing and subscription terms.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Finally, the Constraints transform the output from a passive description into an active management tool. The requirement to identify "risks, opportunities, and suggest 2-3 proactive actions" ensures that each scenario is accompanied by a concrete catalog of actions. The leader receives not just a prediction, but strategic preparedness. The output from this phase is a high-quality, yet still generic, framework. It is an empty canvas, perfectly stretched and ready to be painted with the company's own colors.

Phase 2: Enrichment with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

Now follows the crucial, realistic step. The leader takes the generic framework from Phase 1 and uses ChatGPT (or CoPilot, if that is the internally approved LLM) in a new session as a secure data analysis partner. Here, the skeleton is enriched with specific, confidential company context. It is in this phase that the real, tailored value emerges, and where the leader's role as orchestrator truly comes to light.

Phase 2 Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the scenario framework we just developed. Complete the analysis for our specific company based on the following three attached documents:

'Internal Quarterly Report Q2 2025.pdf': Focus on sales data, customer segmentation, and churn rate.

'Summary from Customer Feedback Survey.docx': Identify the most common concerns and strengths our customers mention.

'Strategy Workshop Notes.txt': Include the growth initiatives and potential threats we identified in our latest meeting.

For each scenario (optimistic, neutral, pessimistic), adjust the generic risks and opportunities to directly reflect the insights from these three documents. Make the proactive actions concrete and relevant to our current product roadmap.

Analysis of Phase 2 Prompt: From Generic Template to Specific Strategy

Guide: ChatGPT-5

This second prompt is what distinguishes a professional, realistic workflow from "influencer hype." It addresses the data gap left by the first prompt and grounds the analysis in reality. By instructing the system to analyze specific documents, the leader utilizes one of GPT-5's core strengths: its massive context window and ability to synthesize information from multiple sources.

The instruction "adjust the generic risks and opportunities to directly reflect the insights from these three documents" is central. Here, the leader does not ask the system to invent new ideas, but to perform a specific synthesis task. The system can now cross-reference information. If, for example, the sales report shows a decline in sales to small and medium-sized businesses, and customer feedback mentions concerns about price, the system can conclude in the pessimistic scenario that the risk of customer churn in this specific segment is particularly high.

Similarly, the instruction "Make the proactive actions concrete and relevant to our current product roadmap" makes the suggestions directly applicable. If the workshop notes mention a planned new product module, the system can suggest that a proactive action in the neutral scenario could be to accelerate the development of precisely this module to strengthen customer loyalty.

This two-stage process demonstrates the leader's role as an intelligent orchestrator. The leader first uses the AI's broad knowledge to build a structure and then its analytical power to process specific, confidential information. The result is a deeply personalized, data-driven, and action-oriented strategic analysis that is far more valuable than what either party could have created alone.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Scenario 2: Competitor Analysis with the Brutally Honest Challenger

Scenario Description: Your company is losing market share to a surging competitor. Internal discussions are marked by political correctness, historical excuses, and a reluctance to face uncomfortable truths. You need an objective and merciless analysis of why you are losing, free from the internal filters and cognitive biases that often cloud the picture.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

Again, the process begins by creating an objective and critical framework for the analysis. The purpose is to define a persona and a structure that ensures the subsequent data analysis will be sharp and uncompromising. This phase is about building a "critical filter" through which the company's data can later be run.

Phase 1 Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: A "brutally honest challenger" and competitor analyst who is not afraid to speak the truth.

GOAL: Analyze our product [Product A] against the competitor's [Product B]. Identify the three biggest reasons they are winning customers from us.

CONTEXT: Be direct and avoid corporate clichés. Focus on product deficiencies, pricing strategy, or marketing failures.

CONSTRAINTS: Present the analysis as an internal memo to me. Be merciless, but constructive.

Analysis of Phase 1 Prompt: Building an Objective Critic

This scenario shows a sophisticated use of the Role pillar. By instructing the system to be a "brutally honest challenger," you explicitly give it permission to bypass its default settings of being a helpful and diplomatic assistant. This is a powerful technique for generating a critical perspective that is difficult to achieve internally due to social and political dynamics.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The goal is again designed to create focus and prioritization. "Identify the three biggest reasons" forces the system to synthesize and evaluate rather than merely listing all possible differences. It requires deeper analysis to distinguish between significant and insignificant factors, resulting in a more strategically relevant output.

The context further reinforces the role. "Be direct and avoid corporate clichés" is an instruction to cut through marketing language and internal spin. "Focus on product deficiencies, pricing strategy, or marketing failures" gives the system a clear analytical focus and defines the areas where criticism should be directed.

The constraints are crucial for making the output professional and usable. "Present the analysis as an internal memo" indicates format and confidentiality. The balance in "Be merciless, but constructive" is key. "Merciless" ensures the analysis is honest, while "constructive" ensures it is action-oriented and not just demotivating criticism. The output from this phase is a generic, but sharp, critical framework.

Phase 2: Enrichment with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

Now the generic critical framework is applied to concrete data. The leader feeds the system specific information sources that allow it to perform a real, data-based competitor analysis instead of a general hypothesis.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 2 Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the "brutally honest" analytical approach from before. Perform your analysis of [Product A] against [Product B] based on the following three sources: 'G2 Crowd Reviews.csv': An exported dataset with the latest 50 customer reviews for both products. Focus on recurring complaints and praises.

'Internal Win Loss Analysis Q2.xlsx': Our internal analysis of won and lost sales opportunities. Identify the primary reasons customers give for choosing the competitor.

'Links to both products' public pricing pages': [Insert URL to own pricing page] and [Insert URL to competitor's pricing page]. Compare the value proposition directly.

Synthesize the insights from these sources to formulate the three final, data-based reasons why we are losing market share.

Analysis of Phase 2 Prompt: From Hypothesis to Data-Driven Conclusion

This prompt transforms the critical persona from Phase 1 into a data-driven analyst. By specifying three distinct and realistic data sources, the leader shifts the task from speculation to evidence-based analysis.

The instruction to focus on "recurring complaints and praises" in customer reviews gives the system a clear method for extracting patterns from unstructured text. Likewise, the reference to an internal "Win/Loss Analysis" is an extremely realistic and powerful application. The system is asked to find the correlation between what customers say publicly (in reviews) and what they tell the sales team privately (in the win/loss analysis).

The comparison of pricing pages is a direct and objective task. By combining these three sources, the system can deliver a far more sophisticated conclusion. For example, it might identify that a specific missing feature (mentioned in reviews and the win/loss analysis) makes a 10% price difference (from the pricing pages) intolerable for customers.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

This two-stage process shows how the leader can use AI to perform a complex synthesis task that would be time-consuming manually and potentially colored by internal opinions. The system becomes a neutral third party, compiling evidence and presenting it within the critical framework established in the first phase. The result is honest, data-driven, and highly action-oriented strategic insight.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Chapter 3: Relationships and Engagement

Leadership is, at its core, a human discipline. The ability to build trust, navigate team dynamics, and communicate with precision forms the heart of effective leadership. It is understandable, then, that many leaders hesitate to introduce artificial intelligence into this domain.

The thought of using a machine to assist with human relationships can seem counterintuitive, perhaps even inappropriate. This hesitation is justified, for the goal must never be to automate sincerity or to outsource empathy. To do so would undermine the very trust one seeks to build.

Instead, as we will show in this chapter, the real value lies in using ChatGPT as a private, preparatory tool. The system serves as an objective sparring partner, helping you structure your thoughts, decode complex emotional data, and prepare your communication before you step into that crucial human interaction.

By letting technology handle the initial analysis and structuring, you free up your own cognitive capacity to be fully present, listening, and empathetic when it truly matters.

In this chapter, you will see how the Constraints and Goals pillars, in particular, are used to create the necessary neutrality and focus. By setting a clear constraint to ignore specific names, the system can provide an objective analysis of team feedback, free from personal bias and organizational noise.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Scenario 1: Analyzing Feedback Patterns

Scenario Description: You have just finished an anonymous well-being survey or received a series of unsorted, anonymous emails with feedback from your team. The texts are a mix of frustrations, constructive suggestions, personal concerns, and praise. Your task is to cut through the noise and identify the real, overarching themes that demand your attention. The challenge is twofold. First, it is time-consuming to manually read and categorize large amounts of text. Second, it is difficult as a leader to remain completely objective. You can unconsciously be influenced by single, emotionally charged comments or overlook patterns because you are too close to the daily life of the organization.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

The first step in a professional workflow is to use ChatGPT to create a neutral and objective analysis framework. In this phase, you deliberately avoid inserting the specific, confidential feedback. The purpose is to instruct the system on how to think and what role to adopt, so it is ready to process the data systematically and impartially.

Phase 1-Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: A neutral organizational psychologist.

GOAL: Analyze the attached feedback. Identify 3-5 recurring themes (both positive and negative).

CONTEXT: Focus on patterns in concerns, frustrations, and suggestions.

CONSTRAINTS: Ignore specific names and departments to maintain anonymity. Summarize each theme with a de-identified quote as an example. Do not provide solutions; only analysis.

Analysis of the Phase 1-Prompt: Creating an Objective Lens

This prompt is an excellent example of how to use precise instructions to calibrate GPT-5 for a sensitive task.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The role of "neutral organizational psychologist" is a decisive instruction to the system's router. It signals that the output should be analytical, theoretically grounded, and free from personal opinions or an overly helpful tone. The system activates its knowledge of organizational behavior and psychological patterns instead of merely acting as a text summarizer.

The goal is clear and delimited: "Identify 3-5 recurring themes." This is an important control mechanism. Without this specification, GPT-5's agentic nature might lead it to produce an unmanageable list of dozens of minor points. By setting a range, you force the system to synthesize and prioritize, which is a higher-level analysis task.

The constraints are the most critical in this scenario. The instruction "Ignore specific names and departments to maintain anonymity" is an ethical and practical necessity. But the instruction "Do not provide solutions; only analysis" is a sophisticated control of the model's behavior. GPT-5 is designed to be proactive and solution-oriented. Without this constraint, it would very likely start suggesting actions based on incomplete information. By prohibiting solutions, you force the model to remain stringent in its analytical role and deliver a pure, uncontaminated dataset of insights that you, the leader, can then act upon. "Summarize each theme with a de-identified quote" is an instruction that ensures the analysis is grounded in the actual data without compromising anonymity.

Phase 2: Enriching with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

With the analytical framework in place, it is time to apply it to the actual, confidential data. The leader now takes the concrete feedback and feeds it into a new session with ChatGPT, where the precise task is to execute the analysis defined in phase one.

Phase 2-Prompt (With Internal Context):

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Now apply the neutral, organizational psychological approach we have defined. Here are five attached excerpts of anonymized employee feedback.

[Insert here 5-10 concrete, anonymized feedback excerpts, e.g., "I don't feel my results are recognized unless I work overtime," or "Communication around the new strategy has been unclear, and I don't know what's expected of my team."]

Perform your analysis on these specific texts. Identify the 3-5 recurring themes you find in this material and support each theme with a direct, but anonymized, quote. Remember to adhere to the constraint of analyzing exclusively and not suggesting solutions.

Analysis of the Phase 2-Prompt: From Framework to Concrete Insight

This second prompt demonstrates the professional workflow in practice. By providing specific data excerpts, the leader uses GPT-5's large context window and its advanced ability to recognize patterns in unstructured text. The task is now no longer theoretical; it is a concrete data analysis task.

The instruction "Perform your analysis on these specific texts" is a precise delimitation of the task. The system understands that it should not draw on its general knowledge of workplaces but should base its conclusions solely on the material you have provided. This is crucial to ensure that the result is a valid analysis of your team's feedback, and not a generic hypothesis.

When the system processes this request, it will be able to identify linguistic and thematic overlaps. It will recognize that "my results are not recognized" and "unclear communication about strategy" might point to an overarching theme of "Lack of Clarity and Recognition from Leadership." By synthesizing several individual comments into a unified theme, the system performs a cognitive task that is both time-consuming and emotionally draining for a human leader.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

This two-step process positions the leader as an intelligent orchestrator. You first use the system to build an objective, scientifically founded analysis model and then to apply this model to your specific, sensitive data. The result is a quick, impartial, and in-depth analysis of the organizational mood, giving you a solid, data-based foundation for making decisions.

Scenario 2: Preparing for Difficult Conversations

Scenario Description: Two of your most valuable department heads, the head of sales and the head of development, are in a locked conflict over the allocation of critical resources. Both have legitimate and business-critical arguments. The sales manager needs the resources to meet a crucial quarterly goal. The development manager needs the same resources to complete a strategically important product that is already delayed. Your task as a mediator is not just to find a compromise, but to communicate it in a way that both parties feel heard and respected, and so that both can commit to the solution.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

Again, the first step is to build a strategic framework. Here, it's about using ChatGPT to generate an objective and well-structured proposal for conflict resolution and communication, based on generic best practice principles for negotiation and leadership.

Phase 1-Prompt (Public Model):

Guide: ChatGPT-5

ROLE: An experienced conflict mediator and leadership coach.

GOAL: Model a compromise proposal in a classic conflict between a sales department and a development department over resources.

CONTEXT: Sales is focused on short-term revenue goals. Development is focused on long-term product goals.

CONSTRAINTS: Draft a proposal that recognizes the legitimate needs of both parties and suggests a solution where both concede a little. Explain how the proposal should be presented to each of the two parties using different narratives that appeal to their respective motivations.

Analysis of the Phase 1-Prompt: Building a Communication Strategy

This prompt goes a step further than mere problem-solving; it asks the system to develop a communication strategy. The role of "experienced conflict mediator and leadership coach" is again an instruction to GPT-5's routing system. It activates knowledge of negotiation techniques, stakeholder management, and leadership communication.

The most sophisticated part of the prompt is found in the Constraints. The instruction to "draft a proposal that recognizes the legitimate needs of both parties" ensures that the solution does not become a simple zero-sum game. But it is the last sentence that elevates the prompt to a strategic level: "Explain how the proposal should be presented to each of the two parties using different narratives that appeal to their respective motivations." This is a complex task that requires the system not only to find a solution but also to reflect on how this solution should be "sold" to two different audiences with different interests. It requires GPT-5 to activate its deeper reasoning abilities to model empathy and persuasion.

Phase 2: Enriching with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

Now the generic communication framework is applied to the specific, confidential context of the current conflict. The leader provides the system with the actual arguments and necessary background information.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 2-Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the conflict-mediating approach. Here is the specific context for the conflict between our sales manager, Anna, and our development manager, Bo.

Anna's Position (Sales): [Insert a short, objective summary of Anna's arguments, e.g.: "We are 20% under budget for the quarter and need development resources to make three specific integrations for our largest customers, otherwise we will lose the deals. This is a 'here and now' revenue crisis."]

Bo's Position (Development): [Insert a short, objective summary of Bo's arguments, e.g.: "The product is already three months late. If we move the same resources to sales integrations now, we will delay the main launch by another two months, which harms our long-term competitiveness and team morale."]

Based on these specific positions, tailor your compromise proposal. Make the two different communication narratives completely concrete. Write what I should say to Anna, focusing on securing her quarterly goals. And write what I should say to Bo, focusing on protecting the long-term product vision.

Analysis of the Phase 2-Prompt: From Generic Mediation to Tailored Leadership Script

This second prompt transforms the theoretical exercise into concrete preparation. By providing the specific arguments from both parties, the leader gives GPT-5's agentic nature a clear and defined task. The system should now no longer imagine a conflict; it should resolve a real, albeit hypothetical, situation.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The great value lies in the instruction to make the two narratives "completely concrete." The system can now prepare specific talking points. For Anna, it might suggest a phrasing like: "Anna, I fully recognize the pressure on this quarter's revenue. Therefore, I propose that we dedicate one developer full-time to build the most important of the three integrations immediately. This will secure the largest deal, and we can..." For Bo, it might suggest: "Bo, the product's long-term vision is our absolute priority. To protect that, while also recognizing an urgent business crisis, I propose that we temporarily allocate one developer..."

By doing this, the leader uses AI as an advanced communication coach. The system helps to find the precise words and the right framing that can de-escalate a conflict and bridge different perspectives. It is a powerful demonstration of how the leader as orchestrator can use technology to prepare for the most demanding human aspects of their job. The process ensures that the leader enters the mediation meeting not only with a solution but with a well-thought-out and empathetic communication plan.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Chapter 4: The Adaptive Zone

Welcome to the adaptive zone, the crucial domain where strategy meets daily reality. If strategic focus is about drawing the map, and engagement is about gathering the team for the journey, then the adaptive zone is the journey itself, with all its unforeseen obstacles, process bottlenecks, and the constant need to adjust course.

This is where grand visions are tested against the harsh realities of execution. In this zone, the leader's primary task is to create clarity, remove friction, and ensure the organization's engine runs as efficiently as possible. Within our framework, the pillars of Structure and Goal become your most important tools.

By demanding a strictly structured output and formulating a crystal-clear goal, you can use ChatGPT-5 as a powerful operational instrument. The system can transform messy, unstructured data into transparent analyses and help anticipate errors before they happen.

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how, through a professional and realistic two-phase workflow, you can apply the system to optimize your processes and strengthen your decision-making, precisely as the CoPilot guide's pattern prescribes: summarize, decide, and act.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Scenario 1: Identifying Patterns in Successes and Failures

Scenario Description: As a leader, you sit on a mountain of data from past projects. Each completed initiative leaves a digital trail of project evaluation reports, meeting minutes from status updates, and final debriefings. Some projects were unequivocal successes, others disappointing failures. Your challenge is that these valuable learnings often remain buried in separate documents. It is an overwhelming manual task to read hundreds of pages and systematically compare factors across projects to find the real patterns. What exactly distinguished success from failure? Was it communication, resource allocation, or something else entirely? Without a systematic analysis, you are doomed to repeat past mistakes.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

The first step is to create an analytical framework that can serve as a template for your investigation. In this phase, you use ChatGPT-5's broad knowledge of process analysis and project management to define a structure for the comparison. You deliberately avoid sharing the specific, confidential project documents yet. The goal is solely to build a robust and objective analysis model.

Phase 1 Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: A process analyst.

GOAL: Analyze the attached project evaluation reports for Project A (success) and Project B (failure). Identify the 3 most important factors that distinguished them.

CONTEXT: Look at factors such as communication, resource planning, risk management, and stakeholder engagement.

STRUCTURE: Present the result as a comparison table.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Analysis of Phase 1 Prompt: Forcing the System into Comparative Analysis

This prompt is a prime example of how to use the Structure pillar to guide GPT-5's behavior. The most crucial instruction here is the requirement to present the result as a "comparison table."

GPT-5 tends to deliver narrative, sometimes superficial, summaries if not given a tighter framework. By requiring a table, you force the system's routing system to choose a more logical and stringent computational path.

It can no longer simply summarize each report separately. It is now forced to find parallel data points and directly compare them side by side, for example, the communication strategy in Project A versus the communication strategy in Project B.

This simple instruction transforms the task from a simple summary to a real comparative analysis and mitigates a known pitfall of the model's default behavior.

The role of "process analyst" is also an important calibration. It signals to the system that the focus should be on workflows, systems, and causal relationships, rather than just the final results.

The context provides the system with a checklist of areas to investigate, ensuring a comprehensive analysis.

Finally, the Goal defines a clear and delimited output: find the "3 most important factors." This forces the model to prioritize its findings, which is a higher-level analytical action than simply listing all differences.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 2: Enrichment with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

With the analytical framework in place, it is time for realistic execution. The leader now takes the actual, confidential project documents and asks the system to apply the defined analysis model to them.

Phase 2 Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the process analytical framework. Here are the two complete project evaluation reports I want you to analyze:

'Project_Evaluation_Project_Phoenix_SUCCESS.pdf'

'Project_Evaluation_Project_Icarus_FAILURE.docx'

Read and analyze both documents in their entirety. Then fill in the comparison table we have defined and identify the three most crucial factors that distinguished success from failure, based solely on the content of these two documents.

Analysis of Phase 2 Prompt: AI as a Tireless Data Analyst

This second prompt demonstrates the professional workflow that creates real value. By providing the complete reports, the leader utilizes one of GPT-5's most significant improvements: its enormous context window. The system can now act as a tireless junior analyst, capable of reading, remembering, and cross-referencing information across potentially hundreds of pages in seconds.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The instruction "based solely on the content of these two documents" is crucial for controlling the system's agentic nature. You delimit the universe of information and prevent the model from hallucinating or drawing conclusions based on its general knowledge. The task becomes a pure synthesis of the provided data. The system can now find concrete patterns. For example, it might discover that the Phoenix report mentions weekly stakeholder meetings seven times, while the Icarus report only mentions a single initial meeting. This becomes a concrete data point in the comparison table under "stakeholder engagement."

This two-step process is a perfect illustration of "summarize -> decide -> act." GPT-5 performs the "summarize" part at an elite level by transforming a large, unstructured data set into a clear, structured comparison. This output gives the leader a crystal-clear basis for "deciding" which process improvements to implement and then "acting" by rolling them out in the organization.

Scenario 2: Pre-Mortem Analysis

Scenario Description: You are about to launch a new, strategically important, and resource-intensive initiative. Although planning has been thorough, you are aware that optimism often blurs the view of potential risks. You want to use the "pre-mortem" technique, where the team imagines that the project has already failed catastrophically, and then works backward to identify the probable causes. The human challenge with this exercise is that it can be socially and psychologically difficult for an engaged team to think creatively and honestly about failure.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

The first step is to use ChatGPT-5 to create a safe and creative space for this pessimistic brainstorming. You ask the system to adopt a specific persona and generate a wide spectrum of potential failure causes, free from the usual organizational optimism.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 1 Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: A pessimistic, yet highly competent risk management expert.

GOAL: Conduct a "pre-mortem" analysis for our new [Initiative Name]. Imagine we are six months into the future, and the project is a total failure.

CONTEXT: Brainstorm all possible causes of the failure. Be creative and think of both internal (team, technology) and external (market, competitors) factors.

CONSTRAINTS: List the 10 most probable causes of failure, ranked by likelihood.

Analysis of Phase 1 Prompt: Programming Creative Pessimism

This prompt is a sophisticated example of controlling GPT-5's persona and reasoning processes.

The role of "pessimistic, yet highly competent risk management expert" is designed to counteract a known behavior of the model. GPT-5's default persona is helpful and solution-oriented. By explicitly instructing it to be pessimistic, you force it to adopt a critical perspective essential for a pre-mortem analysis.

The instructions in the Context field are equally important. "Brainstorm all possible causes" and "Be creative" are direct commands to the system's divergent reasoning abilities.

You ask it to generate a wide range of ideas without filter. But this is immediately balanced by the Constraints: "List the 10 most probable causes... ranked by likelihood."

This second instruction forces the system into a subsequent convergent analysis. It must now evaluate and prioritize its own brainstorm.

This two-step process, first to diverge and then to converge, is a highly effective method for obtaining in-depth and well-considered results from GPT-5 and avoids the pitfall of simply getting a long, unprioritized list of ideas.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 2: Enrichment with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

The generic pre-mortem framework is now applied to the specific project. The leader provides the system with the actual project plan as the basis for its risk analysis, making the exercise far more concrete and valuable.

Phase 2 Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the pessimistic, risk-managing approach. Perform a pre-mortem analysis on our new initiative, as described in the attached document:

'Business_Case_Global_Expansion_Initiative.docx'

Read the document thoroughly. Identify the central assumptions, goals, and dependencies in the plan. Then brainstorm all the ways these specific elements could fail. Rank the 10 most probable and potentially damaging reasons why this specific initiative could become a failure.

Analysis of Phase 2 Prompt: From Generic Fear to Targeted Risk Management

By providing the actual business case, this prompt transforms the exercise from a general brainstorm about project failures to a targeted stress test of a specific strategic plan. This is where realism and great value arise. GPT-5 no longer has to guess what might go wrong; it must actively look for weaknesses in the specific assumptions and plans you have presented.

This is a perfect way to control GPT-5's agentic nature. You give it a clear goal, "find failure causes," and a delimited universe of information to operate within, "this business case." The system can now deliver far more relevant and plausible failure scenarios.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

For example, if your business case assumes you can recruit ten specialized engineers in three months, the system can use its general knowledge of the current job market to identify this as a high-risk assumption and suggest "Inability to recruit key personnel in time" as one of the primary causes of failure.

This process makes the pre-mortem analysis a dynamic and data-driven risk management tool. The output the leader receives is not a generic checklist, but a tailored list of the most probable threats to this particular initiative. It is a perfect basis for adjusting the plan, building contingency plans, and ultimately increasing the likelihood of success.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Chapter 5: New Ideas

We now step into the final, and perhaps most exciting, leadership domain: the creation of what is new. Where the adaptive zone is about optimizing what already exists, innovation is about imagining and building what does not yet exist.

This is often the most challenging and ambiguous leadership work, but it is the source of future growth and relevance. It requires a willingness to experiment and a discipline to move from a promising idea to a viable concept.

In this chapter, you will see how the pillars of Goal and Constraints can be applied in a surprising and creative way. Instead of defining and narrowing the system's output, we can use them to deliberately force ChatGPT-5 out of its predictable, optimized thought patterns and into innovative and unexpected directions.

We will explore two scenarios. First, we look at how to use the system to systematically break habitual thinking in a stuck team. Then, we investigate how to transform a dry, abstract strategy into a living, inspiring future narrative that can engage an entire organization.

Scenario 1: Generating Radically Different Solutions

Scenario Description: Your team faces a persistent and complex problem. You have held countless workshops and brainstorming sessions, but you always end up discussing the same two or three familiar solution proposals. A form of intellectual fatigue or habitual thinking has set in, and you are unable to see the problem from new angles. You need a method to break this stagnation and force the team to explore a broader spectrum of possibilities, including those that might initially seem unrealistic or crazy.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

The first step is to design a process that forces ChatGPT-5 to engage in divergent thinking. Instead of asking it to find the "best" solution, which would activate its convergent and optimizing functions, you instruct it to generate a portfolio of categorically different ideas. This creates an idea catalog that can serve as a rich starting point for the team's further work.

Phase 1 Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: A creative innovation facilitator using "divergent thinking."

GOAL: Generate five radically different solutions to our challenge with [specific challenge].

CONTEXT: The challenge is [brief description]. Current solutions have not worked.

CONSTRAINTS: Solutions must be different from each other. One should be technology-based, one process-based, one customer-focused, one economic, and one "wild card" idea that seems crazy.

Analysis of Phase 1 Prompt: Programming Divergent Thinking

This prompt is an excellent example of how to use Constraints as a creative tool. The crucial instruction lies in the last sentence. By imposing a constraint that the solutions must be categorically different and fit into specific boxes like "technology-based" or "process-based," you prevent GPT-5's agentic nature from locking onto a single, seemingly optimal solution.

The model's default behavior is to find the most probable or effective answer. This prompt forces its routing system into a completely different state. It must now actively search different domains of its knowledge and deliver output that is deliberately inconsistent with each other.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The addition of a "wild card" that "seems crazy" is a particularly sophisticated technique. It is a direct permission to the model to lower its probability filters and suggest ideas with low probability but potentially high originality.

The role of "creative innovation facilitator" supports this process by signaling that the purpose is idea generation, not a final, pragmatic solution.

The goal of "five radically different solutions" is clear and measurable. This prompt is designed to produce a rich, but generic, idea catalog.

Phase 2: Enrichment with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

Now, the generic innovation framework is applied to a concrete and specific business challenge. The leader provides the system with the necessary context, enabling it to transform the creative exercise into a relevant and potentially value-creating brainstorm.

Phase 2 Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the divergent thinking approach. Our specific challenge is that "our customer support team spends 60% of their time answering the same 10 simple, repetitive questions, which delays their ability to handle complex customer cases."

Generate five radically different solutions to precisely this problem, according to the five categories we defined: technology-based, process-based, customer-focused, economic, and a "wild card." Make the suggestions concrete and relevant for a software company.

Analysis of Phase 2 Prompt: From Abstract Creativity to Targeted Innovation

By providing a specific, data-driven problem statement, "60% of time is spent on the same 10 questions," this prompt transforms the exercise from a theoretical brainstorm into a targeted innovation sprint. GPT-5 no longer has to come up with generic solutions; it must solve a specific, operational problem.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The agentic nature of GPT-5 can now be applied productively. For the "technology-based" solution, it might suggest implementing an AI chatbot specifically trained on those 10 questions. For the "process-based" solution, it might suggest a new triage process for support tickets. For the "customer-focused" one, it might suggest a proactive onboarding sequence that answers the questions before they arise. For the "economic" one, it might suggest a model with a lower price for self-service and a higher price for personal support. And for the "wild card" idea, it might suggest something unexpected, like transforming the 10 questions into a gamified training module where customers earn points for finding the answers themselves.

This two-step process shows how the leader can use ChatGPT-5 to facilitate a structured innovation process. Phase 1 creates the creative framework, and Phase 2 fills it with relevant, business-critical content. The result is a rich catalog of concrete, varied, and potentially groundbreaking ideas that the team can take directly into a subsequent evaluation and prioritization process.

Scenario 2: Creating a Future Story (Vision Story)

Scenario Description: You have just completed a new, ambitious three-year strategy. It is well-substantiated, data-driven, and full of strategic imperatives and KPIs. The challenge is that it is dry and abstract. It speaks to the brain, but not to the heart. To create genuine engagement and ownership within the organization, you need to translate the strategy from a piece of paper into a living, inspiring narrative about the future you are moving towards.

Phase 1: Developing the Framework (The Open Phase)

The first step is to define the narrative template. In this phase, you ask ChatGPT-5 to take on the role of a storyteller and define the stylistic and structural framework for the visionary story you want to create. This happens without revealing the specific strategy yet.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 1 Prompt (Public Model):

ROLE: A visionary storyteller and futurist.

GOAL: Write a future story that shows how our organization has succeeded under new premises in three years.

CONTEXT: The story should be told from the perspective of a happy customer. It should illustrate how our new strategy has transformed their experience and solved a deeply felt problem for them.

CONSTRAINTS: Write it in "dinner party style" a story one can share to inspire. Length: approximately 400 words.

Analysis of Phase 1 Prompt: Programming a Visionary Narrator

This prompt is an excellent example of how to use Context and Constraints to guide GPT-5's creative and stylistic output. The instruction to tell the story from "a happy customer's perspective" is a powerful narrative device. It forces the system to shift focus from internal process to external value, which is the core of a good vision.

The most unique instruction is the constraint to write in "dinner party style." By referring to the "Dinner Party" technique, you give the system a rich and specific stylistic template. It now understands that the story should be personal, engaging, told in the present tense, and designed to create inspiration, not just to inform. This is a far more effective instruction than simply asking for an "inspiring story." It gives the model a concrete, narrative pattern to follow and guides its routing system towards a creative writing state rather than an analytical report state.

The role of "visionary storyteller" further supports this. It signals that the language should be vivid and forward-looking. The goal is clear, and the length constraint ensures that the story becomes a short, impactful vignette.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Phase 2: Enrichment with Specific Data (The Closed Phase)

Now, the narrative template is fed with the specific, and often dry, strategic information that needs to be transformed into a living story.

Phase 2 Prompt (With Internal Context):

Now apply the visionary storyteller approach. Here are the core elements of our new three-year strategy: "Our goal is to reduce customers' administrative burden by 50% by implementing a proactive, AI-driven compliance engine that automatically updates itself according to new legislation."

Translate this dry strategy into a living future story of approximately 400 words. Tell it from the perspective of a happy customer (e.g., a compliance manager named Mette) in "dinner party style," as if it has already happened. The story should illustrate the feeling of relief and freedom Mette experiences thanks to our new system.

Analysis of Phase 2 Prompt: From Strategy to Storytelling

This second prompt is where the magic happens. By providing the dry strategic goal, "reduce administrative burden by 50% through an AI-driven compliance engine," you give GPT-5 the raw material it needs to transform. This is a perfect task for the system's advanced linguistic capabilities. It now does not just have to invent a story; it has to perform a creative translation.

This is an excellent way to use GPT-5's large context window and narrative abilities. The system can now build a coherent story. It can imagine Mette's previous work life, filled with manual updates and fear of overlooking legal changes. Then, it can contrast this with her current reality, where the system proactively handles these tasks, giving her time to focus on more value-creating work.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

The leader here acts as a creative director. You have defined the vision (the strategy) and the artistic direction (the storytelling style). You then let the system perform the creative craft: finding the right words, creating the right images, and building the emotional bridge between an abstract strategy and a concrete, human benefit. The result is a powerful communication tool, a story that can be told in meetings, in newsletters, and at dinner parties to make a complex vision easy to understand, remember, and engage with.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Conclusion: You are the Conductor

We started this guide with a recognizable frustration, the feeling of randomness that arises when interacting with a tool that swings between brilliant insight and generic mediocrity. The guide has shown that the root of this frustration is not a flaw in the technology, but a fundamental misunderstanding of its new nature.

We have moved from seeing ChatGPT-5 as a simple conversational partner to understanding it as an advanced, agentic system that responds not to conversation, but to precise instructions.

The solution we have explored, The Five Pillars and the professional two-phase workflow, is not just a collection of tips. It is a new language, a systematic framework for translating human intention into machine-readable clarity. By mastering this method, you have moved from being a passive user hoping for a good result to becoming the architect of an intelligent and reliable process.

Through the four leadership domains, we have seen how this single, fundamental method can be applied with astonishing versatility.

In the work with Strategic Focus, we saw how the two-phase approach transformed the system into a sharp analyst, first building an objective framework and then enriching it with specific data to create realistic, data-driven future scenarios.

Within Relations and Engagement, the method was used as a discreet and objective preparation tool. By creating a safe space to analyze sensitive feedback and model complex conflicts, it strengthened the leader's ability to navigate the most demanding human interactions with greater clarity and empathy.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

In the hectic everyday life of The Adaptive Zone, the same systematic approach was used to create operational order. Here, the AI became a tireless process analyst, able to identify patterns in successes and failures and proactively uncover risks in new initiatives.

Finally, in the domain of New Ideas, we saw how the method could be turned on its head. By using constraints creatively, we could force the system out of its predictable paths and into a state of divergent thinking, where it generated radically new solutions and transformed dry strategies into inspiring, living narratives.

The common thread should be clear. In every scenario, it is the leader's ability to structure their request that determines the outcome. You are no longer someone who merely asks questions. You are a conductor. You stand before one of the most powerful orchestras in history, a system with almost infinite capabilities. Without a conductor, this orchestra can produce chaotic and disharmonious noise. But with a clear score, with precise instructions on tempo, dynamics, and focus, you can make it create works of incredible complexity and beauty. Mastering The Five Pillars is learning to write this score. It is the ability to move from being a passive listener to being the active architect of an intelligent process.

This is more than just a technical skill. The ability to collaborate effectively with advanced, agentic AI systems is becoming one of the most crucial leadership competencies in the 21st century.

The principles you have learned in this guide are not just about mastering ChatGPT-5. They are about helping to future-proof your leadership. They are the foundation for a new way of thinking, analyzing, and creating, where your experience and intuition are exponentially amplified by the machine's analytical power. The competitive advantage that yesterday lay in data, tomorrow will lie in the ability to have intelligent and productive collaboration with the systems that can interpret this data.

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Your development, however, has only just begun. Understanding is valuable, but experience is paramount. If the examples in this guide have not quite matched you, here is an advanced two-step method for using the system to improve itself.

First, run step 1, and then run the step 2 prompt optimizer. Or if you already have a prompt, just use the prompt optimizer.

Step 1:

Transform my request into a prompt, and wait for confirmation before executing it.

First, interpret what I'm really asking for:

What type of output would actually help me? (analysis, plan, draft, solution, etc.)

What expertise would be most relevant?

Who is the reader?

What is the intended use of the output?

What format would be most useful?

What level of detail makes sense?

What to focus on, and what not to focus on

Then restructure and execute as:

ROLE: [Infer appropriate expertise]

OBJECTIVE: [Make my vague request specific]

CONTEXT: [Interpret the audience and the use]

METHODOLOGY: [Choose methodology that fits]

OUTPUT FORMAT: [Deliver in most useful format]

CONSTRAINTS: [Focus on this]

VALIDATION: [Align with this]

My request:

Guide: ChatGPT-5

Step 2 Prompt Optimizer

PROMPT ARCHITECT ROLE: You are a GPT-5 prompt engineering specialist who designs domain-optimized prompts.

GENERATION OBJECTIVE: Create a specialized prompt template for [user's specific domain/use case].

REQUIREMENTS ANALYSIS:

- Domain: [specific field, industry, function]
- Task type: [analysis, creation, problem-solving, etc.]
- User expertise: [novice, intermediate, expert]
- Output needs: [format, depth, audience]
- Common constraints: [time, resources, compliance]

TEMPLATE DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

- GPT-5 optimization: [leverage routing, precision, agentic capabilities]
- Domain specificity: [relevant frameworks, terminology, standards]
- Error prevention: [common failure modes in this domain]
- Scalability: [reusable across similar tasks]

META PROMPT STRUCTURE:

1. Role definition [domain-specific expertise]
2. Objective framework [goal-setting template]
3. Context requirements [essential background elements]
4. Process methodology [domain-appropriate workflow]
5. Output specifications [format, quality standards]
6. Constraint handling [common constraints]
7. Quality control [validation, error handling]

Guide: ChatGPT-5

CUSTOMIZATION VARIABLES:

- [Specific field] terminology and concepts
- [Domain] best practices and standards
- Common [task type] requirements
- Typical [output format] expectations

VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Template addresses common domain challenges
- Structure optimizes GPT-5's capabilities
- Instructions are clear and actionable
- Error handling prevents common mistakes

DELIVERABLE: A complete, ready-to-use meta prompt template with:

- Clear instructions for each section
- Domain-specific examples
- Customization guidance
- Usage recommendations

Your mission with ChatGPT-5 is hopefully made easier with this guide. Start by choosing a single, recurring task from your own daily life. It could be preparing for a weekly status meeting, drafting a monthly email to your team, or analyzing a weekly sales report. Build your first, fully structured prompt for this task using The Five Pillars. Follow the two-phase process that permeates the entire guide. Experience for yourself the noticeable difference between the randomness of the old world and the reliability of the new world. Welcome to a new way of working.

If you have questions or anything else, please write to me via [LeadershipAnd.AI](#), where you can also find other guides and many articles on leadership and AI.

Tom Hansen, September 2025.