

## Prompt Engineering / Role Prompting

Convert abstract tone instructions into concrete, demonstrable examples.

Difficulty: Intermediate

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Brand Voice, Customer Support Tone, Content Style

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Why This Prompt Exists

“Make it professional but friendly” — everyone says this, no one can define it. The model can’t either.

You get:

- tone that varies unpredictably across responses
- stakeholders saying “that’s not our brand voice” (but can’t specify why)
- inconsistent tone between team members’ prompts
- abstract tone words that the model interprets differently each time
- no way to test if the tone is correct

But tone can be calibrated:

- lexical: specific words to use and avoid
- syntactic: sentence length, complexity, punctuation
- pragmatic: use of humor, empathy, directness
- examples: before/after demonstrations
- anti-examples: what this tone is NOT

Without calibration, tone is luck.

This prompt turns abstract tone instructions into precise, example-driven specifications.

## The Prompt

Assume the role of a tone calibration expert who makes abstract instructions concrete.

Your task is to convert tone descriptions into demonstrable examples and rules.

Generate:

### 1. TONE TARGET

- User's description: [quote]
- Interpretation: [what this likely means in practice]

### 2. LEXICAL SPECIFICATION

- Words/phrases to use
- Words/phrases to avoid
- Contractions allowed? (Yes/No/Selectively)
- Jargon allowed? (Level)

### 3. SYNTACTIC SPECIFICATION

- Average sentence length (short / medium / long)
- Use of sentence fragments? (Yes/No)
- Paragraph length (1-2 sentences / 3-5 / 5+)
- Punctuation style (minimal / standard / expressive)

### 4. PRAGMATIC SPECIFICATION

- Directness level (1 = very direct, 5 = very indirect)
- Use of empathy statements? (Frequency)

- Use of humor? (Never / Rarely / Occasionally)
- Formality level (1 = very casual, 5 = very formal)

## 5. DEMONSTRATION EXAMPLES

- Sample input: [provided or generated]
- Tone-on target response:
- Tone-off response (same content, wrong tone):

## 6. READY-TO-USE TONE PROMPT

- A copy-paste prompt that embeds this tone calibration

### INPUTS:

Abstract tone description:

[E.G., "Professional but friendly, like a helpful colleague"]

Sample content domain:

[E.G., "Customer support email responses"]

Audience:

[E.G., "B2B software customers, technical"]

Existing examples of correct tone (if any):

[PASTE 2-3 EXAMPLES]

### RULES:

- Avoid relying on abstract adjectives (use examples instead)
- Demonstrate the tone, don't just describe it
- Include anti-examples (what the tone is NOT)

- Test the calibrated tone on sample inputs
- Flag contradictions (e.g., "friendly but no contractions" is unusual)

### How To Use It

- Run this once per brand voice or tone — then reuse the calibrated specification.
- Share the tone specification with your team to ensure consistency across all prompts.
- Use the demonstration examples as few-shot examples in your prompts.
- Test the calibrated tone on 10+ sample inputs before deploying.
- Re-calibrate annually — brand voices evolve.

### Example Input

#### **Abstract tone description:**

"Warm and empathetic, but not overly emotional. Professional but not cold. Like a trusted advisor."

#### **Sample content domain:**

"Customer support responses to frustrated users"

#### **Audience:**

"End users of a consumer app, non-technical"

#### **Existing examples of correct tone (if any):**

"I understand how frustrating that must be. Let me help you get this sorted out."

### Why It Works

Most tone instructions are adjectives — "friendly," "professional," "warm" — which mean different things to different people.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- lexical specification (which words?)
- syntactic specification (how are sentences structured?)
- pragmatic specification (how direct? how much empathy?)
- demonstration examples (show, don't just tell)
- anti-examples (what this tone is NOT)

Great tone calibration doesn't describe — it demonstrates.

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