How to Take Control of AI

When people hear about artificial intelligence for the first time, they often imagine complex technologies reserved for programming experts or algorithm specialists. In reality, the situation is quite different. Getting started with AI does not necessarily require advanced technical knowledge. The most useful skill is actually the ability to communicate clearly with the tool.

Taking control of AI does not mean learning how to code or understanding the internal mechanisms of complex models. What matters most is knowing how to interact with it effectively. In most modern AI systems, the user writes an instruction or asks a question, and the AI generates a response based on the information it receives. The quality of that response largely depends on how the request has been formulated.

This process can be compared to a conversation between two people. If a request is vague, the answer may not be very helpful. On the other hand, a clear and detailed request greatly increases the chances of receiving a relevant response. AI works in a similar way: it analyzes the instructions it receives and tries to respond as accurately as possible. The more precise the instruction is, the more appropriate the result will be.

The process of writing instructions for AI is commonly known as **“prompting.”** A prompt is simply the message sent to the AI in order to ask it to complete a task. According to documentation published by OpenAI, the way prompts are written directly influences the quality of the responses generated by AI systems.

The first principle to apply is **clarity**. When an instruction is too vague, the AI lacks the information it needs to produce a useful result. For example, asking “Write a text” gives no indication about the topic, the intended audience, or the expected style. In contrast, an instruction such as “Write a 500-word article explaining climate change to high school students using simple and educational language” clearly defines the topic, the audience, the length, and the tone. These details allow the AI to produce a far more relevant response.

The second principle is **context**. AI systems generally perform better when they understand the situation in which the content will be used. For instance, if you ask the AI to write a speech, it is important to specify the setting. A speech prepared for a professional conference will not have the same tone as a speech intended for a school ceremony. Context may include information about the audience, the purpose of the content, where it will be presented, or the level of complexity that is expected. These elements guide the AI toward results that better match the user’s needs.

Format is also a key factor. AI is capable of producing many different types of content: articles, summaries, scripts, emails, social media posts, reports, or creative narratives. However, to obtain the desired outcome, it is necessary to clearly indicate the format expected. For example, if a scientific explanation is meant to serve as a

podcast script, it is helpful to specify this. Podcast scripts typically use more conversational language and include transitions designed for spoken communication. Without this detail, the AI may generate a formal and academic text that is suitable for reading but less effective when spoken aloud.

Another fundamental principle is **tone**. Tone refers to the style or attitude used in communication. A text may be formal, informative, persuasive, humorous, motivational, or narrative. By specifying the tone, the user helps the AI align its response with the intended style. A professional report requires a structured and serious tone, while educational content for a younger audience may benefit from a more engaging and accessible approach.

Researchers studying interactions between humans and AI systems, particularly at the Stanford University Human-Centered AI Institute, have emphasized that clear and detailed instructions generally lead to more reliable results when working with large language models.

It is also important to understand that working with AI is rarely a single-step process. In most situations, users gradually refine their requests. After receiving an initial response, they may ask the AI to adjust the content, add information, simplify certain sections, or adapt the text for a different audience. This continuous improvement process, known as an **iterative approach**, allows the final result to be refined over several interactions.

With practice, users become more skilled at structuring their instructions. They naturally learn which details should be included to obtain the type of response they are looking for. This ability develops through experimentation and experience.

This highlights an important point: mastering AI is not only about understanding the technology itself. It is also about developing a clear and effective method of communication with the tool.

Before writing an instruction, it can be helpful to ask four simple questions:

• What is the objective of the task?
• Who is the intended audience?
• What tone should be used?
• What format is expected?

By answering these questions, users can structure clearer instructions and guide AI toward more relevant results.

In the end, the message is simple: using artificial intelligence effectively does not begin with advanced technical knowledge. It begins with communication. And as in any form of communication, the clearer the message, the more useful and relevant the response will be.

Vocabulary :

Artificial intelligence – Intelligence artificielle

AI tool – Outil d’IA

User – Utilisateur

Instruction – Instruction / consigne

Request – Requête / demande

Response – Réponse

Prompt – Prompt / message à l’IA

Prompting – Rédaction de prompt

Clarity – Clarté

Context – Contexte

Format – Format

Tone – Ton

Audience – Public / destinataire

Objective – Objectif

Task – Tâche

Communication – Communication

Iterative approach – Approche itérative

Refinement – Affinement / amélioration

Guidance – Orientation / guide

Content – Contenu

Style – Style

Professional – Professionnel

Educational – Éducatif

Conversational – Conversationnel

Informative – Informatif

Persuasive – Persuasif

Motivational – Motivationnel

Experimentation – Expérimentation

Experience – Expérience

Effective – Efficace