

Guide to Effective Prompting

This guide shares strategies and tactics to achieve better results with LexisNexis Protégé™, the personalized AI assistant. Even if you have experimented with general purpose AI tools like ChatGPT or Claude, it is worth familiarizing yourself with the best practices unique to Protégé so that you get the most out of the experience.

This guide will cover:

- What prompting is and how it works
- Best practices and prompting techniques
- Examples of prompts to achieve specific outcomes

I. OVERVIEW: WHAT IS AI PROMPTING

Generative AI relies on user instructions and requests, known as “prompts,” to generate responses. These prompts can be simple and straightforward or complex and multi-step, depending on the desired outcome.

When a prompt is received, the AI evaluates the objective instruction, the context provided, and any implicit instructions within the prompt. AI then predicts the most relevant response based on the patterns of information it has been trained on. It’s important to note that while AI can process vast amounts of data, it does not possess human reasoning or the ability to reference experience.

In Protégé, our technologists have mitigated the limitations of AI through grounding in trusted LexisNexis resources, meaning that Protégé responses are based on specific legal references or your organization’s documents. It also means that Protégé is not designed to address prompts that are outside the legal use case.

Key Considerations

Generative AI is a new tool for all of us. It is also constantly changing, so be sure to keep these key considerations top of mind:

- **Always review for accuracy:** All AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy. Unlinked citations in a Protégé response indicate that the sources could not be verified in the LexisNexis database.
- **Not a substitute for judgement:** While effective prompting enhances AI’s utility, it is not a substitute for your legal judgment and experience. The goal is to use Protégé as an accelerant, not a substitute for critical thinking.
- **Time-efficiency trade-off:** Spending significant time crafting the perfect input prompt has diminishing returns. It can be more effective to refine the answer by engaging in conversation than to include everything in a complex initial query.

- **Protégé is not like other AI tools:** Protégé is built specifically for legal work and is not designed to address other use cases. General purpose AI tools can write haikus but cannot reliably draft a legal argument with valid citations.
- **Practice makes perfect:** Effective use of generative AI requires practice. You should experiment with different prompts to refine the responses. Adjusting the wording, adding context, or rephrasing questions can improve AI-generated outputs.

II. BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMPTING

To optimize the use of Protégé, consider the following the best practices for effective prompting:

- › **Be specific in your objective.** State what you need, leaving minimal room for ambiguity.

Some background prompt	Better prompt
Draft a contract for a freelance graphic designer	Draft a contract for a freelance graphic designer based in California who is being hired by a New York-based marketing firm. The contract should include key terms such as scope of work, payment terms, intellectual property rights, confidentiality, and termination clauses. The goal is to ensure compliance with both California and New York laws, but New York law is the controlling law, protect the designer's creative rights, and clearly outline the responsibilities of both parties.

Note: Sample prompts are designed for illustrative purposes.

- › **Provide background information and context.** Protégé performs better with background information. Context that is particularly helpful in creating the best response includes:

- A clear jurisdiction
- Any parties, key terms, or points of law surrounding the matter
- The material facts to consider
- Goal and purpose

Some specificity	Better
Draft a negligence complaint against the driver of a vehicle who T-boned client's car at an intersection in California, after running a stop sign.	Draft a negligence complaint against the driver of a vehicle who T-boned client's car at an intersection in California, after running a stop sign. Client was proceeding legally through the intersection and the at-fault driver had been texting while driving.

Note: Sample prompts are designed for illustrative purposes.

- **Define the desired format.** If needed, indicate if you want a summary, a legal memo, an email to a client, or a specific legal document. Protégé relies on many proven legal formats and templates, but that is not a substitute for your preferences and organizational best-practices.

Some format	Better
How does Florida define residency for tax purposes?	Draft a legal memo explaining how Florida defines residency for tax purposes.

Note: Sample prompts are designed for illustrative purposes.

- **Define the audience.** If needed, indicate who is the reader of your document, such as opposing counsel, a judge, or your client.

Define audience prompt	Better prompt
What are the laws in Illinois about biometric collection in the workplace	I'm giving a presentation on the biometric collection in the workplace in Illinois to a group of HR professionals, explain the law in layman's terms

Note: Sample prompts are designed for illustrative purposes.



QUICK READ: INPUT PROMPT CHECKLIST

A strong prompt consists of key components that enhance clarity and improve AI-generated responses. If you construct a prompt using these components, you are more likely to get a high-quality response.

- ☐ **Context:** Provide background information to guide the response (i.e. jurisdiction, facts, purpose, goal)
- ☐ **Format:** Specify the desired structure (i.e. legal memo, argument, explanation, draft, summary)
- ☐ **Constraints:** Set any limitations, such as length or scope (e. controlling law, layman's terms, focused or expansive drafting)

Optimizing Your Output

Protégé is conversational and will polish its output with instructions. Ways to easily refine output through follow up prompts include:

- **Ask for clarifications.** If a response is unclear, prompt, "Explain this in simpler terms", select a relevant suggested action button, or start a new conversation with a new prompt.
- **Request refinements.** Modify outputs by requesting, "Make this more concise" or select a relevant suggested action button.
- **Request refinements to drafts.** Modify outputs by selecting a passage in the Drafting Mode window and use the Drafting Tools menu to modify sections.
- **Provide examples.** Prompt Protégé to reference a specific code, case, or case facts to modify a response.

Take note: Repeating the input prompt may yield different responses due to AI's probabilistic nature. Responses are not computed in advance and stored, so Protégé may not give you the same response twice.

Prompt Optimization Features

Protégé has many prompt optimization features to help you get to the highest quality, most comprehensive response as efficiently as possible, such as:

- **Suggested prompts:** To make prompting as quick and intuitive as possible, Protégé will offer you suggested prompts above the prompt bar to get you started. Click on the question to populate the prompt bar and modify the prompt as you see fit before submitting.
- **Suggested action buttons:** After your initial prompt, you will often see purple buttons above prompt bar with options such as “Summarize case law”, “Draft a memo based on this output”, or “Ask the same question with a new jurisdiction.” These are suggested action buttons; they are designed to help you comprehensively complete your goals and get the most out of Protégé. To apply a suggested action, click on the button to prompt Protégé.
- **Suggested follow up prompts:** Protégé will automatically suggest follow up prompts to help users accomplish their goals more completely. To select a follow up question, click on the question for the text to populate in the prompt bar. Then modify the prompt as you see fit before submitting.
- **Generate suggestions:** By clicking the “generate suggestions” button in the prompting bar, you can ask Protégé to generate a relevant prompt for you.

We are always building on these capabilities based on customer feedback. Be sure to check in for updates and experiment with new prompt capabilities.

QUICK READ: 5 PS OF PROMPTING FOR BETTER RESULTS

When constructing a prompt to achieve a specific goal using Protégé in Lexis+ AI, consider the 5 P's to ensure the most comprehensive result.

Step 1: Preparation	Step 2: Prompting	Step 3: Refinement
Before initiating the conversation, gather the information to correctly guide Protégé.	In the input prompt, ensure that the objective is clear and specific, with the supporting information detailed.	Ensure that your output meets your expectations, by adding details to your input prompt or making use of Protégé suggested action buttons.
• Prime: Gather the context, background, and constraints, such as jurisdiction, parties, or key facts. • Persona: Ensure that the perspective is defined, such as the client or addressee.	• Prompt: Write the clear and specific instructions, referencing the Prime and Personal information as needed. See the Input Prompt Checklist.	• Product: Specify the details of the output, such as format or length. • Polish: Refine the details of the output through conversation with Protégé, such “make this more aggressive” or “soften the tone.”

Inspired by [Mastering AI: The 5 P's of Prompting for Game-Changing Results](#) by Susan Guthrie, Esq.

These prompts are for illustrative purposes, intended to help users get started. Ensure that you are modifying any input into Protégé to align with your specific goals and use-case.

III. EXAMPLES OF PROMPTS TO ACHIEVE SPECIFIC OUTCOMES WITH PROTEGE IN LEXIS+ AI

Protégé can be prompted to boost productivity and deliver high quality legal work across legal workflows and practice areas. To help you get started, we have curated a selection of example prompts that an attorney might use to achieve their goal.

Bankruptcy Law

Asking a Legal Question:

Under the bankruptcy code, are claims for restitution dischargeable in Chapter 11 cases of corporate debtors?

Refining the Legal Question:

Find cases in the 9th Circuit where restitution claims were deemed nondischargeable in Chapter 11 bankruptcy for corporate debtors

Litigation

Drafting a Legal Document – Motion for Preliminary Injunction:

Draft a motion for preliminary injunction based on the following facts: We represent the plaintiff, GreenEarth, an organic and eco-friendly food product company. GreenEarth has a trademarked logo: an image of a wicker basket with vegetables and fruits in it. The defendant, EcoGreen, has recently added the market as another organic and eco-friendly food product company. EcoGreen's logo is also a wicker basket with vegetables and fruits in it- the only difference is that the basket is a slightly darker color than GreenEarth's and has a green bow on top. Due to EcoGreen's marketing, several customers have confused their products with GreenEarth's. We filed a lawsuit in this case, but due to the irreparable harm that will occur if EcoGreen continues to use the very similar logo, we are filing a motion for preliminary injunction. | Jurisdiction: California |

Drafting a Legal Document – Motion to Dismiss:

Draft a Motion to Dismiss for the case of Smith v. Greenfield Corporation. The motion requests dismissal of the case on the grounds of lack of jurisdiction, failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or other applicable reasons. Greenfield Corporation, the defendant, argues that the court does not have the authority to hear the case and that the plaintiff's complaint is legally insufficient. The motion should include the following sections:

- *Introduction: Briefly introduce the case and the purpose of the motion.*
- *Background: Provide a summary of the relevant facts and procedural history of the case.*
- *Legal Standard: Explain the legal basis for a motion to dismiss, referencing the applicable rules of civil procedure.*
- *Argument: Present the defendant's argument for why the case should be dismissed, including:*
 - *Lack of Jurisdiction: Argue that the court lacks personal or subject matter jurisdiction over the case.*
 - *Failure to State a Claim: Explain why the plaintiff's complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, citing relevant case law and legal standards.*
 - *Other Grounds: Include any other grounds for dismissal, such as improper venue or insufficient service of process.*
- *Conclusion: Summarize the request for the court to grant the Motion to Dismiss and dismiss the case.*

Real Estate Law

Drafting a Legal Document – Easement:

Draft an easement with the following terms: Grantor grants a non-exclusive easement to Grantee for a term of years, 20 feet wide, except for the most southerly 1,000 feet of Beach Lane, where it covers the full width of Beach Lane. Easement is for ingress, egress, access, and use of the Easement Area for constructing, installing, repairing, maintaining, operating, inspecting, patrolling, decommissioning, and removing a 138-kilovolt transmission line and associated equipment. Grantee must provide an as-built survey within 120 days after installation. Lenders have the right to perform acts required by Grantee to prevent default. Grantor must notify Lenders before terminating the Easement Agreement due to Grantee's default. Grantee must pay fees to Grantor as per the Host Community Agreement. Notices must be in writing and delivered personally, by courier, or by registered/certified mail. The Easement Agreement is governed by New York State law and is binding on successors and assigns. Grantee must comply with federal, state, and local laws unless deemed unreasonably restrictive by the PSC. Grantee must obtain all necessary permits before construction. Grantee must clear debris and restore the Easement Area post-construction. Construction must commence within 18 months after receiving all permits. Construction activities must be completed within 30 months, excluding force majeure events. Construction activities are restricted to specific hours and months. Grantee must install the Cable at least three feet below the ground and ensure it does not exceed 138 kilovolts. Grantee must comply with electric and magnetic field guidelines. Grantee must notify authorities of any hazardous chemical presence and comply with hazardous waste plans. Grantee must prepare and follow a Soil Handling and Erosion Control Plan. Grantee must restore the Easement Area post-construction to pre-construction conditions. Grantee must conduct an EMF study and comply with decommissioning plans.

Employment Law

Drafting a Legal Document – Independent Contractor Agreement:

Draft an independent contractor agreement between XYZ Rideshare Company and John Doe for his driving services. The agreement should clarify the relationship in accordance with applicable laws, define responsibilities, payment terms, work schedule and flexibility, liability and insurance, and termination clause.

Artificial Intelligence Law

Drafting a Legal Document – Licensing Agreement:

Draft an AI Licensing Agreement that Governs the licensing of generative AI technology, outlining terms of use, restrictions, intellectual property rights, and payment structures between two technology companies.

Analyzing a Legal Document – Licensing Agreement:

What are the potential gaps in this agreement for a system for a generative AI system for licensee?

AI License Agreement

1. Grant of License

The Licensor hereby grants the Licensee a non-exclusive, non-transferable license to use the AI software ("Software") for personal and commercial purposes. The scope of use is subject to limitations as defined by the Licensor.

2. Restrictions

The Licensee shall not reverse engineer, decompile, or modify the Software. The Licensee may not use the Software for any purpose not explicitly permitted by the Licensor.

3. Term and Termination

This Agreement shall commence on the date of acceptance and continue until terminated. The Licensor may terminate this Agreement at any time without notice if the Licensee breaches any terms.

4. Warranty Disclaimer

The Software is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind. The Licensor disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose.

5. Liability

Limitation In no event shall the Licensor be liable for any damages arising from the use or inability to use the Software, including but not limited to direct, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages.

6. Support and Maintenance

The Licensor may provide support and maintenance at its discretion. The Licensee acknowledges that the Licensor is under no obligation to provide updates or improvements to the Software.

7. Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of [Jurisdiction]. Any disputes arising from this Agreement shall be resolved in the courts of [Jurisdiction].

8. Entire Agreement

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes all prior agreements or understandings.

IV. FURTHER READING

This guide provides a foundational understanding of AI prompting and prompting for LexisNexis solutions, which is purpose-built for legal and professional work. That said, there are additional resources for mastering effective prompting and deepening your knowledge of general AI.

You may find the following resources from our technology partners helpful as you continue your AI journey:

[Amazon Web Services](#), [OpenAI](#), [Anthropic](#).