



Career Planning

Want to Use AI as a Career Coach? Use These Prompts.

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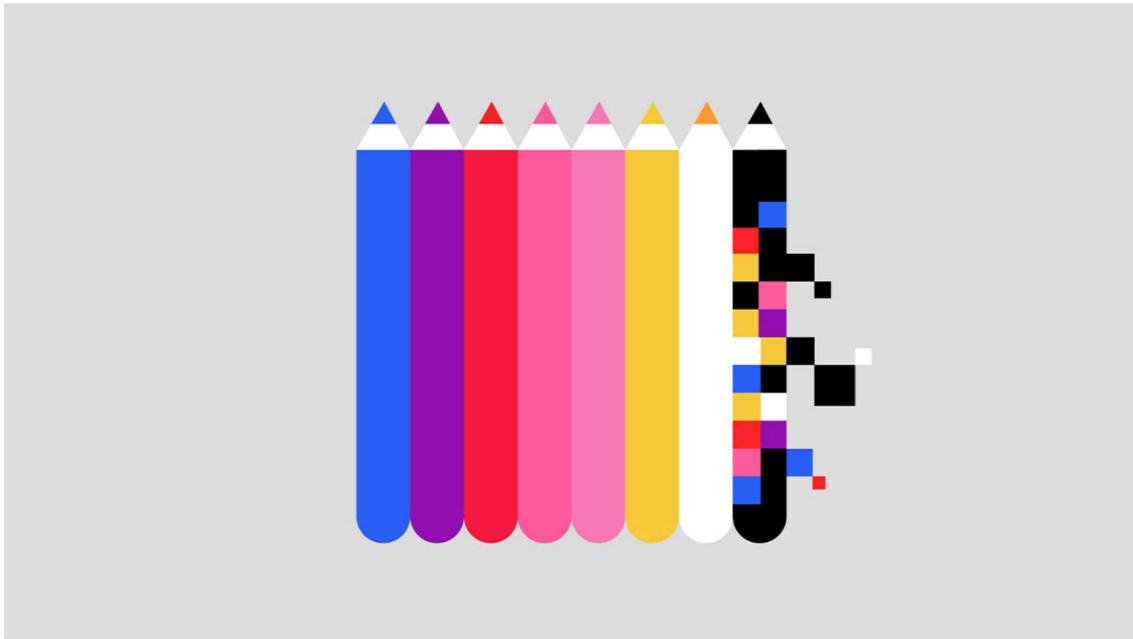


Illustration by Jennifer Tapias Derch

Summary. Traditional career coaching can be expensive and time-consuming. But with the emergence of generative AI platforms such as, many job seekers are turning to AI as an accessible, efficient, and personalized alternative, even if they are already lucky enough to have a great human career coach. Whether you need resume help, interview practice, or leadership coaching, gen AI can be your 24/7 career companion and thought partner. This article shows you how you can use gen AI tools for career coaching, with practical prompts and strategies to maximize your experience, learnings, and success. [close](#)

Whether you're a recent graduate, a mid-career professional seeking a change, or an executive looking to enhance leadership

skills, a career coach can be an invaluable resource. A 2021 [Harris Poll survey](#) of 1,535 adults showed that while only 12% of working adults were currently utilizing a career counselor, nearly two-thirds agreed that it would be helpful to talk to a professional regarding future career moves. This gap may be explained by the fact that traditional career coaching can be expensive and time-consuming—the average hourly rate for a career coach in 2023 was [\\$272](#).



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With the emergence of generative AI platforms such as ChatGPT, Perplexity, DeepSeek, and Claude, many job seekers are turning to AI as an accessible, efficient, and personalized alternative to traditional career coaches, even if they are already lucky enough to have a great human career coach. Quantifying the exact degree to which people are now using gen AI for career coaching is difficult. However, some surveys suggest that as many as [65%](#) of job seekers are using AI for help at some point in their job application process.

In this article, I hope to show you how you can use [gen AI](#) tools as your own personalized career coach, with practical prompts and strategies to maximize your experience, learnings, and success.

7 Ways to Use AI as a Career Coach

The potential uses of gen AI for career coaching (and beyond) are only limited by our imaginations. With that said, here's what my research suggests are some of the most common "use cases," or applications of these platforms that can help to improve your understanding and decision-making in relation to jobs, work, and careers.

1. Gaining Career Clarity & Direction

Where should you take your career? Where could you and should you go from where you are right now? What are the best available options for you?

Before embarking on a job search or career transition, it's crucial to understand your strengths, interests, and values. Gen AI can help guide you through self-reflection exercises and career exploration.

Sample Prompts:

- I'm unsure about my career path. Can you ask me some reflective questions to help me identify my strengths and interests?
- Can you suggest career options that align with my skills in [list your skills] and my interest in [mention industries or fields]?
- I enjoy problem-solving, creativity, and working with people. What career paths might fit these interests?

Personalization Tip:

Provide as much detail as possible about your experiences and preferences. The more context you give, the more tailored gen AI's responses will be.

Consider uploading your resume or CV to gen AI. (Most platforms enable you to attach Word or PDF files.) Let the tool review it and give you feedback on your hard and soft skills, potential, and general employability. A sample prompt might be: “If I upload my CV, can you review it and give me an overall assessment of my hard and soft skills, and feedback on my potential and employability?”

While the accuracy of the results may be inferior to that of a highly qualified human coach (armed with science-based assessments), it is probably superior to a typical or average coach. In line, [academic reviews](#) have long shown that a low barrier to entry, idiosyncratic personal factors linked to the coach, and a general lack of training all contribute to making effective, science-based coaching the outlier rather than the norm.

2. Resume & LinkedIn Optimization

A strong resume and LinkedIn profile are critical to standing out in a competitive job market. Gen AI can help you craft compelling application materials, including optimizing your CV for specific jobs or careers, and suggesting improvements to your LinkedIn profile. The goal is not to lie or deceive, but rather to help you find the right tone, style, and approach to maximize the impact of your profile and achievements on relevant recruiters and hiring managers.

Sample Prompts:

- Can you help me write a professional summary for my resume based on my experience in [industry/role]?
- Please review my LinkedIn profile [you can paste the link/URL] summary and suggest improvements for better engagement.

- How can I quantify my achievements in my resume to make them more impactful?

Personalization Tip:

Feed gen AI bullet points of your work history and achievements. If you're targeting a specific job, include the job description so it can tailor responses to the role. If you want gen AI to customize or curate the messaging tone to reflect certain personality or character traits, you can include that in your prompts, too: "Please re-write this in a tone that expresses X personality trait [e.g., creativity, conscientiousness, curiosity, ambition, emotional intelligence, etc.]"

3. Job Search Strategy

A job search can be daunting, but gen AI can assist in making it structured and strategic. For instance, you could ask AI to help you identify groups or classes of jobs, or industries that are hiring and growing, or to refine the initial search of databases by preferences, location, or fit with your own background and skills.

Sample Prompts:

- What are the best job search strategies for someone in [industry/role]?
- What are the best job or career opportunities available in X area [include city, country, region, etc.] for someone with my background and interests?
- Can you help me craft a personalized networking message to reach out to a recruiter on LinkedIn?

- What are some creative ways to find job opportunities beyond traditional job boards?

Personalization Tip:

If you have specific companies in mind, ask gen AI for networking strategies tailored to them. Also, request advice on how to use LinkedIn, industry events, and informational interviews to enhance your job prospects. For example, gen AI can provide tips on how to find relevant contacts and connections; how to get more visibility on social media; how to curate your LinkedIn feed to get real-time alerts on vacancies; and how to craft a first-time message to a potential employer or recruiter.

4. Interview Preparation & Salary Negotiation

Interviews can be nerve-wracking, but preparation is key. Gen AI can simulate interview questions and provide feedback on your answers.

Sample Prompts:

- Can you conduct a mock interview for a [role] position and provide feedback on my answers? [Ask follow-up prompts that make gen AI analyze your answers, suggest better answers, and tell you what interviewers may make of your and other answers.]
- How should I answer the question “Tell me about yourself” in a way that highlights my strengths?
- Can you help me craft a response to “What’s your expected salary?” for a negotiation?

- What are good questions to ask when interviewers offer me a chance to ask them questions?
- What are critical do's and don'ts when it comes to basic interview behaviors/etiquette and so on?

Personalization Tip:

Give gen AI the job description and company name so it can tailor customized questions. If you have precise information about the interviewers, feed this background to gen AI so it can make granular recommendations. For salary negotiation, provide market research data and your desired range to get more precise advice. If you don't have this, prompt gen AI to get this data.

5. Leadership & Career Growth

If you're aiming for career advancement, gen AI can provide guidance on leadership skills, workplace visibility, and professional development. In most organizations, your career advancement will at some point require you to manage or lead people and gen AI can give you advice on how to emerge as a leader.

Sample Prompts:

- What are the key leadership skills I should develop to move into a managerial role?
- Can you help me draft an email to request a promotion discussion with my manager?
- How can I build executive presence in meetings and presentations?

- What behaviors should I avoid if I'm interested in being perceived as a leader?
- Where can I learn more about what it takes to be a good manager?

Personalization Tip:

Describe your current challenges and workplace dynamics. Gen AI can offer strategies specific to your industry, role, and corporate culture. Be specific about where you think you need to improve vis-à-vis management and leadership skills. For example, you might say you're navigating a fast-paced startup where you're expected to lead without formal authority, or that you're in a legacy organization struggling to gain traction for innovation. You could point to challenges like influencing senior stakeholders, managing burnout on your team, or developing confidence in high-stakes decision-making settings.

6. Personal Branding & Thought Leadership

Establishing yourself as a thought leader can open doors to new opportunities. Gen AI can assist in content creation, networking, and brand positioning. In fact, precisely because gen AI can answer every possible and imaginable question about any topic better than most humans, it is key to display some "social proof", and persuade others that you are a credible expert or source of knowledge in a given field, which will probably imply that you are also using gen AI, just better than most people.

Indeed, AI has redefined the meaning of expertise, which used to be about knowing the answer to lots of questions, and is now more about asking the right questions of AI, knowing how to vet AI's insights on accuracy and utility (and detect when it is "hallucinating"), and coming up with a creative story that

combines both your own knowledge and the wisdom you extract from AI. In simple terms, the more you know, the more you know how to use AI to persuade others that you know!

Sample Prompts:

- Can you suggest what I could share on social media to establish myself as a credible expert in X area?
- How can I structure a professional blog post/newsletter/Substack on [topic]?
- What are the best ways to increase my visibility and credibility in my industry?
- Help me write an [X number of words] article on [X topic] and provide references and sources to follow-up and cross-check.

Note that it is perfectly OK to report that you have prepared your thoughts and ideas with the support of gen AI. Many people do so, but few admit it. Second, it will show you are honest and have integrity. Third, the real value will come not from what everybody else can produce with gen AI, but from the human touch you provide by injecting your expertise, experience, and creativity.

Personalization Tip:

Share your unique insights, experiences, and writing style. For example, you can record yourself talking about your career history, or write a one-page summary of your skills and interests, and then get AI to upgrade and refine that into a compelling story. Gen AI can help refine your voice and structure your thoughts into compelling narratives. Don't just copy-paste what you get, but take the time to edit, refine, curate, and above all vet

and check the info. Errors are common, and your ability to spot them is itself a strong indicator of expertise.

7. Dealing with Everyday Work Problems

Workplaces can be full of challenges—difficult colleagues, unclear expectations, overwhelming workloads, or miscommunications. Gen AI can help you navigate these issues by offering practical strategies, email drafts, and structured responses to common workplace dilemmas.

Sample Prompts:

- My manager constantly checks in on my work and doesn't trust me to make decisions. How can I professionally push back and gain more autonomy?
- A coworker keeps taking credit for my ideas in meetings. How can I address this without coming across as confrontational?
- I have a colleague who frequently interrupts me and dismisses my input. Can you help me craft a diplomatic but firm way to address this?
- My boss and team expect me to respond to emails late at night and on weekends. How can I professionally set boundaries without damaging my reputation?
- I'm struggling to manage my workload because my manager keeps piling on more tasks. Can you suggest a polite but effective way to ask for prioritization or push back?
- I just found out that a colleague with the same role and experience as me is making more money. How should I bring this up with my manager?

- There are cliques and favoritism in my workplace, and I feel like I'm being left out of important opportunities. How can I improve my visibility and position myself for growth?

Personalization Tip:

When asking gen AI for advice, be specific about your role, company culture, and what outcome you're hoping for. If you need to send a difficult email, consider sharing a draft and asking for refinements. For particularly tricky conversations, ask gen AI to generate different versions of a response, from assertive to diplomatic, so you can choose the best approach.

Final Thoughts

Gen AI can be a powerful tool for career coaching, offering personalized advice and practical strategies. Whether you need resume help, interview practice, or leadership coaching, gen AI can be your 24/7 career companion and thought partner. Try these prompts today and take proactive steps toward your career goals.

Fundamentally, treat these prompts as simply a guide, and hopefully an incentive to start practicing and experimenting, which will significantly improve gen AI's utility and impact for you. They should not be taken as definitive or proven solutions to your problems, but rather as suggestions or tips to equip you with a broader range of alternatives and options.

Importantly, in a world in which most people are likely to use gen AI to optimize their career success, the key difference and advantage will come not from what AI automates, but from your ability to interact with AI better than your competitors. It is often said that you're less likely to lose your job to AI than to another human who uses AI, especially if you don't. This is probably true.

Just like it's true that your unique creativity, expertise, and experience—not to mention your curiosity and the time you invest experimenting with AI—will make you a better AI user than others.

So the most important advice is to experiment and invest time in interacting with the different tools and platforms. By using well-crafted prompts and providing detailed context, you can maximize its effectiveness to help you navigate your career journey with confidence.



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