

AI basics:

Keep the human in AI

A plain-English reference sheet | By Greg Trumpfheller

You set the purpose. AI helps with the work. You check the result and decide what happens next.

1 / What is AI?

Artificial intelligence is a broad term for computer systems that perform tasks such as recognizing patterns, making predictions, and generating content. Not all AI is a chatbot.

Generative AI creates text, images, audio, or other content from learned patterns and your input. A **prompt** is the instruction or question you give it. This sheet focuses on everyday generative AI. [1]

2 / Useful starting points

Let AI help with...	Keep this human step
Drafting an email or description	Check facts, promises, tone, and your voice.
Brainstorming options	Choose what fits your purpose and audience.
Explaining an unfamiliar topic	Check the explanation against reliable sources.
Summarizing notes you provide	Compare with the original for missing details.
Organizing a plan or checklist	Confirm priorities, time, and responsibilities.
Practicing a conversation or skill	Use your judgment about real people and context.

3 / Know the limits

AI can invent facts or sources, miss context, and reproduce unfair patterns. Confident wording is not proof. NIST identifies these and overreliance as risks. [1]

Do not assume an answer is current, complete, or based on your files. Check what information the tool actually used. Our recommendation: use qualified human review for consequential decisions, especially those affecting health, money, rights, or safety.

A human-first workflow

Our practical recommendation: direct, review, improve, then approve. UNESCO emphasizes protecting human agency in AI-supported learning. [2]

4 / Before you share information

Use a made-up example for practice. Keep passwords, account numbers, customer details, and confidential work out of unapproved tools. Check the service and account settings before uploading information; privacy practices vary. Share only what the task needs.

5 / Give clear instructions with GCSE

Giraffes Can See Everything: Goal, Context, Source, Expectations.

Goal: Help me prepare a short welcome message for a community workshop.
Context: The audience is beginners. Keep the tone friendly.
Source: Use only these fictional details: Saturday, 10 a.m., community room; bring a notebook.
Expectations: Draft under 100 words. Do not add facts. Flag anything missing. I will review it before sharing.

Clear instructions can help, but they do not guarantee accuracy. In a real task, verify every event detail before sending.

6 / Review before you rely on it

Accuracy: Check names, numbers, dates, quotations, and links against original sources.

Fit: Does it serve the goal and sound like you?

Fairness: Does it stereotype, exclude, or make unsupported assumptions?

Privacy: Is it appropriate to share this information?

Approval: Understand and approve the final result before it is sent, published, or acted on.

7 / Keep learning, not just copying

Try your own answer first. Ask AI to explain an alternative or quiz you. Rewrite the result in words you understand. If you cannot explain it, pause and learn more before using it.

Keep the human in AI. Bring your experience, empathy, curiosity, and responsibility to every task. AI can contribute; it does not take over your accountability.

Sources and scope

[1] NIST, [Generative AI Profile \(2024\)](https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.AI.600-1): doi.org/10.6028/NIST.AI.600-1

[2] UNESCO, [Guidance for generative AI in education and research \(2023\)](#). Sources checked September 12, 2026. Examples and workflow are Practical AI for Real Work recommendations, not guarantees.