

CRAFT and TEMPER: how to talk to AI so it *builds* your thinking

By Sean Low · October 2026

CRAFT helps you write one good prompt. TEMPER helps you run the whole conversation. Together they keep your own judgement switched on while AI does more of the work.

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Write it with *CRAFT*. Run it with *TEMPER*.

CRAFT · WHAT YOU SAY

C

 Context

R

 Role

A

 Ask

F

 Format

T

 Tone

One strong prompt

TEMPER · HOW YOU RUN IT

T

 Target

E

 Elicit

M

 Make

P

 Pressure-test

E

 Enhance

R

 Reuse

The whole conversation


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Two frameworks, one habit: CRAFT shapes what you say, TEMPER shapes how you run the conversation.

Most people ask AI once and accept the first answer. The output looks fine. But the thinking happened somewhere else. Repeat that every day and AI slowly moves from support to substitution.

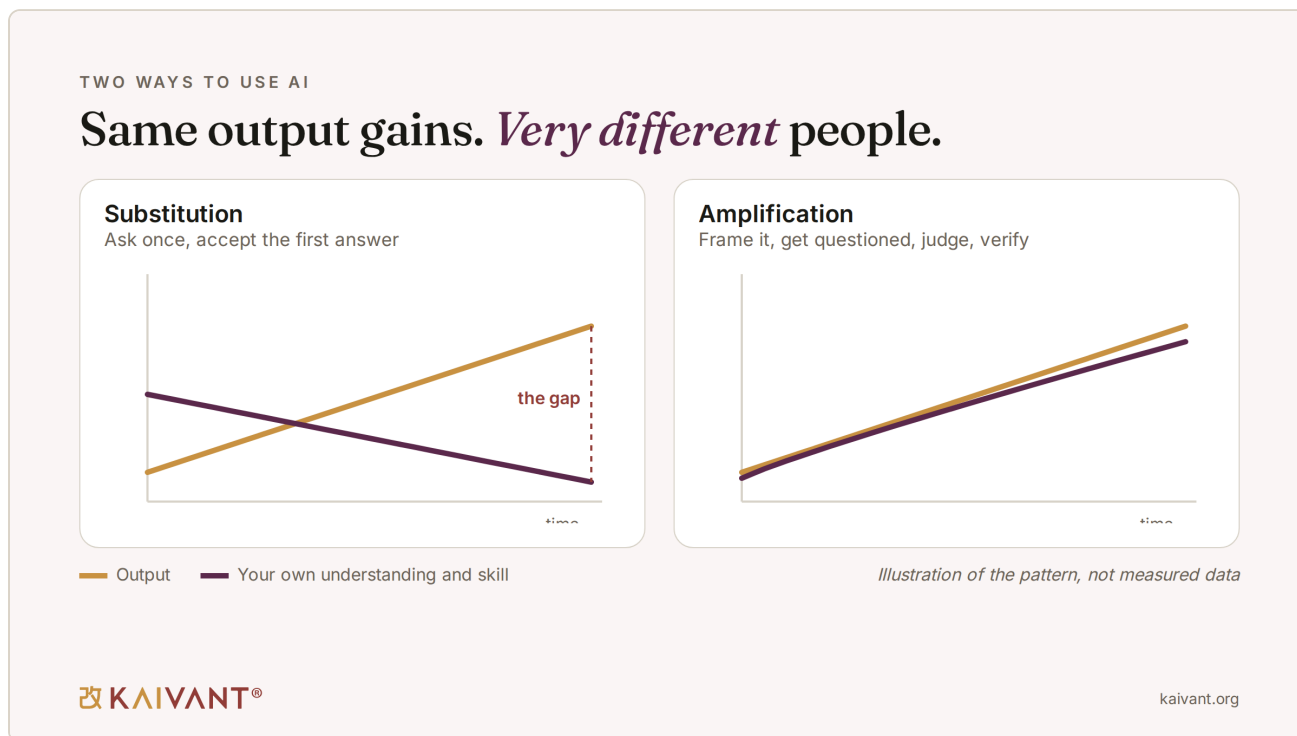
How you talk to AI is not a detail. It decides whether AI is building your skills or quietly replacing them.

Why does the way you talk to AI matter?

Take a typical request: "Help me with my presentation." There is no context, no goal, no shape and no voice. So the AI guesses, and it guesses average. Many people then decide AI is "not that

smart", when it simply had too little to work with.

There is a second, quieter cost. When you hand over a vague task and accept whatever comes back, the AI does the framing, the structuring and the judging. You get an output, but you do not build any understanding. KAIVANT calls this pattern substitution. Repeated over time, it can lead to AI dependency: reasonable outputs today, less capable people tomorrow.



Substitution and amplification can show the same output gains. What differs is what happens to the person. Illustration, not measured data.

The opposite habit uses AI to stretch your thinking instead of skipping it. That is the heart of AI Nateness: the degree to which AI use builds rather than depletes human capability. CRAFT and TEMPER are two simple, practical ways to build that habit.

What is CRAFT?

CRAFT is the anatomy of a good prompt. Five ingredients for one strong message.

ELEMENT	WHAT IT DOES
C • Context	The facts it needs: your situation, goal, audience and limits
R • Role	Who it should be: the expert whose view you want
A • Ask	The exact thing you want, clear enough to check
F • Format	The shape of the answer: list, table, email, length
T • Tone	The voice: direct, friendly, formal, challenging

Same question, *much better* answer

BEFORE

"Help me with my presentation."

No context, no goal, no shape, no voice. So the AI guesses average.



AFTER

- C** I present a new idea to three senior managers next Tuesday. They are busy and careful with budget.
- R** Act as an experienced executive coach.
- A** Give me the three hardest questions they will likely ask, with a short answer for each.
- F** Numbered list. Maximum 60 words per answer.
- T** Direct and practical. No fluff.

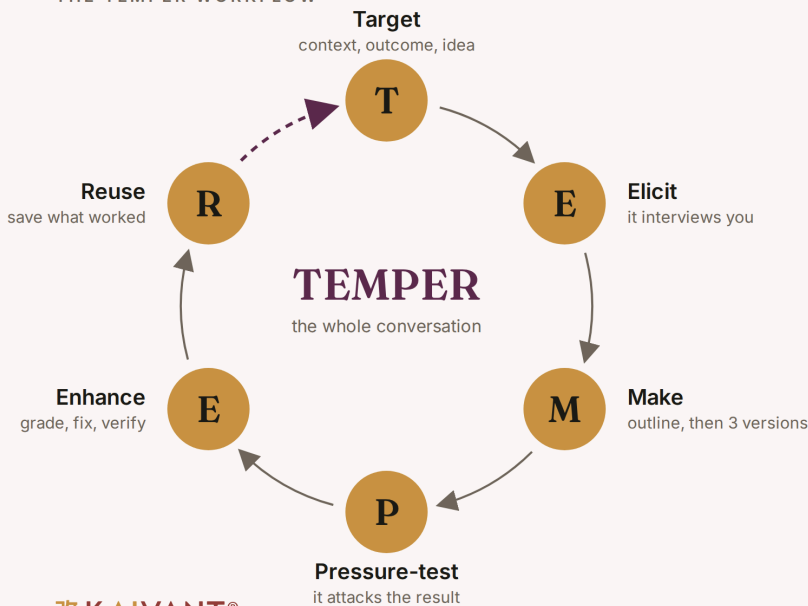
Five short lines replace one vague request, and the answer changes from general tips to usable preparation.

Use all five when the result matters. For quick questions, Ask and Format are often enough.

What is TEMPER?

CRAFT improves what you say. TEMPER improves how you run the conversation. Tempering is what makes metal tough. TEMPER does the same for ideas.

THE TEMPER WORKFLOW



Tempering makes metal tough. *TEMPER* does it for ideas.

Six steps for the whole conversation. Elicit finds the gaps you did not see. Pressure-test finds the weak spots before your audience does.

The dashed arrow: Reuse means next time starts from what worked.

The six TEMPER steps. Reuse feeds back into Target, so every conversation starts from what worked last time.

STEP	WHAT YOU DO
T · Target	Give your context, the outcome you want, and your idea in one clear sentence.
E · Elicit	Let the AI interview you, one question at a time, before it answers.
M · Make	Ask for a simple outline first, then three versions.
P · Pressure-test	Let the AI attack the result as a skeptical reader. No softening.
E · Enhance	Grade against your own criteria, fix the weak spots, verify the facts.
R · Reuse	Turn what worked into instructions you can use next time.

TEMPER builds on two existing prompting methods that are both called FORGE. One, from a YouTube video on working with Claude, adds the reverse interview and saving what works. The other, described in Tom's Guide, adds framing, attacking and rebuilding the idea. TEMPER combines the two and adds a verify step.

TEMPER in action: one idea, six moves

Say you are writing an invitation for a workshop you are planning. Here is how the conversation runs.

1. **Target.** "I run weekend workshops for new managers. Goal: 20 sign-ups in two weeks. Here is an invitation that worked last year."
2. **Elicit.** "Before you write, ask me the questions you need. One at a time."
3. **Make.** "First give me a simple outline. Then write three versions."
4. **Pressure-test.** "Now be a busy, skeptical manager. Why would you ignore this? Don't soften it."
5. **Enhance.** "Grade each on: clear benefit, under 120 words, one call to action. Improve the best. List any facts I should check."
6. **Reuse.** "Turn what worked into instructions I can reuse for the next invitation."

Elicit finds the gaps you did not see. Pressure-test finds the weak spots before your audience does. And Reuse means the next invitation starts from what worked, not from zero.

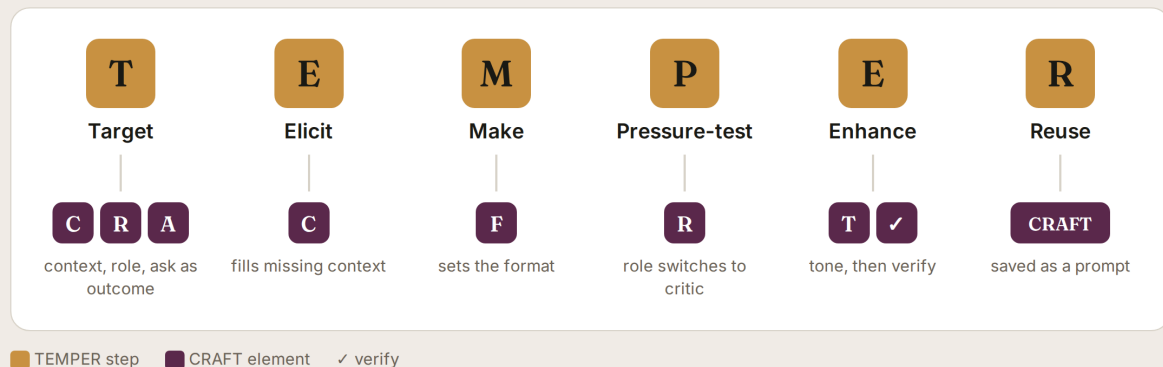
How do CRAFT and TEMPER fit together?

Think of it as TEMPER outside, CRAFT inside. TEMPER is the process. CRAFT tells you what goes into each step.

HOW THEY FIT TOGETHER

TEMPER outside, *CRAFT* inside

TEMPER is the process. CRAFT tells you what goes into each step.



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Each TEMPER step uses one or more CRAFT elements. Reuse saves the result as a CRAFT prompt you can use again.

Why does this build capability, not dependency?

Look at where the thinking happens. In Target, you decide what success looks like. In Elicit, you answer questions that make you clearer about your own idea. In Pressure-test and Enhance, you judge, choose and check. The AI does more of the drafting, but you stay in charge of the framing and the judgement.

That is the difference between AI that amplifies your judgement and AI that substitutes it. It also explains why the benefits grow over time. Each conversation you reuse makes the next one better, and each round of judging sharpens your own standards. KAIVANT calls this pattern compounding advantage.

A fair warning: frameworks are habits, not guarantees. They point your AI use in the right direction. Whether your AI use is actually building capability is something you can measure.

When should you use which?

Match the effort to the stakes. Two questions decide it: how much does it matter, and will you do it again?

WHEN TO USE WHICH

Match the effort *to the stakes*

MATTERS A LOT

Full CRAFT + Elicit + Pressure-test

Write it well, get questioned, get challenged, verify.

A difficult email, a big decision, a job application

Full TEMPER, CRAFT inside

Run all six steps once, then reuse.

A monthly report, a regular newsletter

QUICK AND LIGHT

Light CRAFT

Ask and Format are often enough.

Summarise an article, fix the grammar in a text

CRAFT, then Reuse

Get it right once, save it as a template.

Weekly planning, standard replies

ONE TIME

AGAIN AND AGAIN

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Light CRAFT for quick one-off questions. The full TEMPER loop for work that matters and comes back.

Seven phrases worth keeping

Treat AI as a thinking partner, not a search box. These lines work in any AI assistant.

1. **Start with context:** "Here is my situation, my goal and my limits..."
2. **Let it interview you:** "Before you answer, ask me the questions you need. One at a time."
3. **Ask for options:** "Give me three different approaches and the trade-offs of each."
4. **Invite a challenge:** "What am I missing? Argue against my idea."
5. **Grade the result:** "Score this against my criteria and improve the weakest part."
6. **Check the facts:** "List every fact and number you used, so I can verify them."
7. **Save the win:** "Turn this into instructions I can reuse next time."

And one rule that always applies: keep private and confidential data out of tools your organisation has not approved.

Craft the prompt. *Temper* the result.

CRAFT · WHAT YOU SAY

- C** Context your situation
- R** Role the expert
- A** Ask the exact task
- F** Format the shape
- T** Tone the voice

TEMPER · HOW YOU RUN IT

- T** Target context + outcome
- E** Elicit let it ask you
- M** Make structure, 3 versions
- P** Pressure-test let it attack
- E** Enhance grade + verify
- R** Reuse save the win

Quick question: **Ask + Format**. Matters a lot: **CRAFT + Elicit + Pressure-test**. Again and again: **TEMPER, then Reuse**. Always: **keep private data out**.


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Cheat sheet. Save it, print it, or pin it next to your screen.

Common questions

What is the CRAFT framework?

A checklist for writing one strong prompt: Context, Role, Ask, Format and Tone. Use all five when the result matters, and two or three for quick questions.

What is the TEMPER framework?

A six-step workflow for the whole AI conversation: Target, Elicit, Make, Pressure-test, Enhance and Reuse. It builds on two existing FORGE prompting methods and adds a verify step.

Do I need to use both every time?

No. For a quick question, Ask and Format are often enough. Use full CRAFT when the result matters, and the full TEMPER loop for important or recurring work.

Which AI tools do they work with?

Any chat-based AI assistant. Neither framework depends on a specific product or feature.

Will this make AI answers correct?

No. It makes them better aimed and better tested. AI can still sound sure and be wrong, which is why TEMPER includes a verify step inside Enhance. You stay the decision maker.

Is AI making you *more valuable*?

CRAFT and TEMPER change how you use AI. The free individual assessment shows whether your AI use is building your capability or wearing it down. It takes ten minutes. Start at kaivantscore.com/start.

Sources. TEMPER builds on the FORGE method in the YouTube video “Stop Prompting Claude. (Use This 1% System Instead)”, youtube.com/watch?v=YbrrHwwBv1o, and the FORGE method in the Tom’s Guide article “I use the FORGE method with Claude to turn rough ideas into finished work”, tomsguide.com. CRAFT as taught in MindMagine workshops; similar prompt frameworks exist under other names. Key terms such as AI Nativeness, substitution and compounding advantage are defined in the KAIVANT glossary at kaivant.org/glossary.