

# Chapter 6

## Asking Better Questions to Get Better Answers



### Good Questions Lead to Great Results

One of the biggest secrets to using AI successfully is learning how to ask good questions.

The good news is that you don't need to be a computer expert or know any special technical language. In fact, the best questions are often simple, clear, and written in your own words.

Think of ChatGPT as a helpful assistant. The more information you give it, the better it can help you.

Instead of worrying about asking the "perfect" question, simply explain what you want to achieve.

## **A Simple Example**

Imagine you walk into a library and say:

"I want a book."

The librarian would probably ask:

- What kind of book?
- Fiction or non-fiction?
- History or cooking?
- For adults or children?

The more information you provide, the easier it becomes to find exactly what you need.

ChatGPT works in much the same way.

## **Compare These Two Questions**

### **Question 1**

Tell me about dogs.

You will probably receive a general answer covering many different breeds and topics.

### **Question 2**

I am thinking about getting a small dog that is easy to care for and suitable for a retired couple living in a townhouse. What breeds would you recommend?

This answer will be much more useful because you've explained

your situation.

The more helpful information you provide, the more personalised the answer becomes.

## **Give AI Some Context**



Whenever possible, include information such as:

- Who is the answer for?
- What are you trying to achieve?
- How much detail do you want?
- Should the answer be simple or detailed?
- Is there a deadline?
- Do you have any special requirements?

For example:

Instead of saying:

Write a letter.

Try saying:

Write a friendly thank-you letter to my neighbour for helping me with my garden. Keep it to about 200 words.

That small amount of extra information makes a big difference.

## **Tell AI the Style You Want**

ChatGPT can write in many different styles.

You can ask for writing that is:

- Friendly
- Professional
- Formal
- Casual
- Encouraging
- Humorous
- Simple
- Detailed

For example:

Explain this in simple English for someone who has never used a computer before.

Or:

Write this as a professional business email.

## **Tell AI How Long the Answer Should Be**

Sometimes the answer is too long.

Sometimes it's too short.

Simply tell ChatGPT what you prefer.

Examples include:

- Summarise this in one paragraph.
- Explain it in five simple points.
- Keep the answer under 300 words.
- Give me a detailed explanation.
- Create a step-by-step guide.

Remember—you are in control.

## **Ask for Examples**



Examples often make new ideas much easier to understand.

If something isn't clear, simply ask:

- Can you give me an example?
- Show me how this works.
- Can you use a real-life example?
- Explain it as if you were teaching a beginner.

Many people find that examples help them understand more quickly than long explanations.

## **Build Better Answers Step by Step**

You don't have to ask everything in one question.

Here's an example.

You:

Help me plan a vegetable garden.

ChatGPT gives you a basic plan.

You then ask:

Make it suitable for South Africa.

Next:

I only have a small garden.

Then:

Include vegetables that are easy for beginners.

Finally:

Create a shopping list of everything I'll need.

One conversation can produce a complete project.

## The Five-Part Formula



Whenever you're unsure what to ask, remember these five questions:

1. What do I want?
2. Who is it for?
3. How should it sound?
4. How much detail do I need?
5. Is there anything special ChatGPT should know?

This simple formula works for almost every task.

## Try It Yourself

Open ChatGPT and try this exercise.

Start with:

Help me plan a weekend trip.

Then ask:

Make it suitable for retirees.

Next:

Keep the budget under R3,000.

Then:

Include places that are easy to walk around.

Finally:

Create a packing checklist.

Notice how each question improves the answer.

## **Quick Tips**

- ✓ Be clear about what you want.
- ✓ Give helpful background information.
- ✓ Ask for the style you prefer.
- ✓ Tell ChatGPT how long the answer should be.
- ✓ Ask for examples if something isn't clear.
- ✓ Improve the answer one step at a time.

# Chapter Summary

In this chapter, you learned that asking better questions leads to better answers. By giving ChatGPT more context, explaining your goal, and asking for the style and level of detail you need, you'll receive responses that are far more useful. Remember, you don't need perfect wording—just explain what you're trying to achieve, and continue refining the conversation until you're happy with the result.

## Senior Tip

**Think of ChatGPT as a helpful guide, not a mind reader. The more you share about your situation and what you hope to achieve, the more useful its answers will become. Even adding one extra sentence to your question can make a remarkable difference.**



**Asking good questions is the first step to getting helpful answers from AI**