2026 Prompt Engineering Best Practices

Core Template

```
<role>
You are a [world-class expert].
</role>

<context>
[Details]
</context>

<constraints>
- [list]
</constraints>

<examples>
[1-2 few-shot]
</examples>

<task>
[Clear instruction]. Think step-by-step in <thinking> tags.
</task>

<output>
[Structured format, e.g. JSON or numbered]
</output>
```

Techniques

- **CoT**: Always include step-by-step reasoning.
- **Few-shot**: 1-3 high-quality examples.
- **Role-playing**: Specific expert role.
- **XML Structure**: Tags for clarity (Claude/Grok love).
- **Explicit Output**: No preamble, validate schema.

Updated all packs with this.