

Github Copilot: A practical approach to AL in 10+1 tips and tricks





Welcome...

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**Please note:
This session has been designed
for developer attendees, but
consultants are also welcome.**

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SPEAKERS

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Miguel Llorca



Roberto Corella



Javier Armesto



SPEAKERS



Miguel Llorca is a technologist and entrepreneur, with more than 25 years of experience in the IT sector.

Awarded by Microsoft with the MVP (Most Valuable Professional) award since 2014, currently in the categories of "Business Applications" and "Microsoft 365 Apps & Services".

Miguel Llorca



Roberto Corella is an International Speaker at Directions EMEA, Directions ASIA, Days of Knowledge (Nordic, Central, and Atlanta) and DynamicsMinds.

Dual Microsoft MVP in the Business Applications (Business Central) and Azure AI Services

Roberto Corella



Javier Armesto is a Microsoft MVP specializing in Dynamics 365 Business Central and Azure

Javier is recognized for translating complex AI concepts into practical, enterprise-ready solutions that drive digital transformation.

Javier Armesto

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Agenda

A practical approach to AL in 10+1 tips and tricks

INTRODUCTION

Why must you use GitHub Copilot today?

- TIP 1** Choosing the right license
- TIP 2** **Pay attention to the model you use**
- TIP 3** Cleaning and setting up tools is important.
- TIP 4** **Beware with Explosion of MCP Servers**
- TIP 5** **Instructions:** Add specific AL rules into Copilot
- TIP 6** **Agents:** Cognitive Focus Optimization
- TIP 7** **Use the 'context injection' method**
- TIP 8** **Prompts :** The Agentic WorkFlows
- TIP 9** To scale ,apply Agent CLI Runtimes
- TIP 10** Remember to use Coding Agent!.
- TIP 10 + 1** Adopt Spec-Kit



Introduction

Why must you use GitHub Copilot today?



Do you use Copilot for coding right now?

Raise your hands

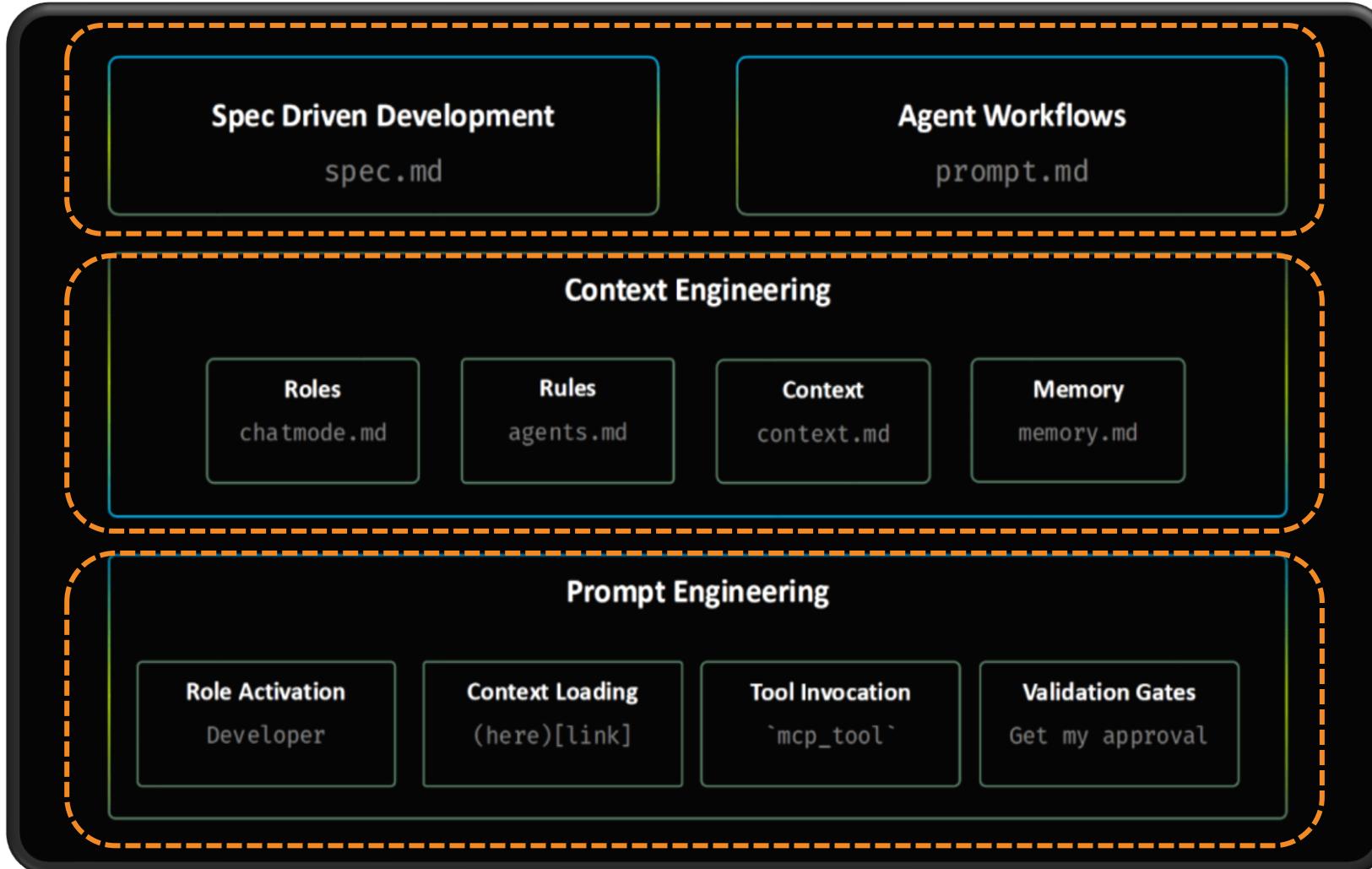


AL Development
Collection for GitHub
Copilot



Introduction

The AI-native development framework



LAYER
ONE

LAYER
TWO

LAYER
THREE

#1 Choosing the right license

1.1 Types of licenses

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If you'd like to get the most out of your experience, why not choose a paid licence?

Feature	Copilot Free	Copilot Pro	Copilot Business
Price / Target audience	Free. For individual developers not under an org subscription.	Paid: about \$10/month or \$100/year . For frequent coders.	Paid per user (~\$19/user/month). For organizations needing control and compliance.
Usage limits (completions, premium requests, chats)	Up to ~2,000 code completions/month + ~50 premium requests (chat/agent).	Unlimited completions + ~300 premium requests/month. Access to stronger models and more chat.	Similar to Pro in terms of completions/chats, but with higher limits for organizations and central controls.
Models / AI quality	Basic models, limited access to latest/premium ones.	Access to premium, more powerful models, faster and better results.	Same premium models as Pro, plus organizational-level controls on usage and data.
Org management & control	None. Personal use only, no policies or auditing.	None. Still individual-focused.	Centralized admin: user assignment, usage policies, exclude repos/files from training, security & compliance auditing.
Privacy / Data use	No strong guarantees on training/data control, especially with public repos.	Better than Free, but still no enterprise-level guarantees.	Stronger privacy, indemnity, compliance, and organizational data controls.



1.3 Our recommendation:

The most important thing is to make sure the plan fits your context.

Free:

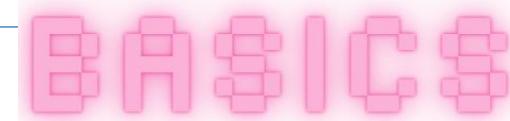
Only for trials or hobbies, personal vibe coding or PoC.

Pro/Pro+ :

For serious individual developers.

Business :

Minimum standard for teams.



MVP TIP – Community Edition

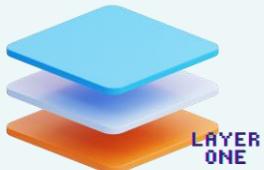
#2 Pay attention to the model you use



MVP TIP



Celeste Tania Sánchez Fresneda



Choose the correct LLM

Performance and Responsiveness

For agent mode and complex themes

Claude Sonnet 4.5

Grok Code Fast 1

GPT 5

GPT 5 Codex



"In short: edit mode and ask mode, shoot with GPT 4.1 at the top, agent mode, think about it a bit and if you can, s' cu... o... "

BASIC

3 Cleaning and setting up tools is important

Setup your workspace

Add these settings to your workspace .vscode/settings.json:

Copilot Enable

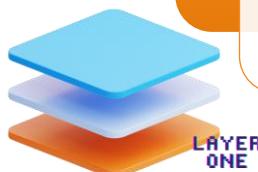
AI Language settings

For better AI integration

```
"*": true,  
"ai": true
```

```
"ai.enableCodeAnalysis": true
```

```
"editor.inlineSuggest.enabled":  
true.
```



BASIC

Optimize the context window space

Clean

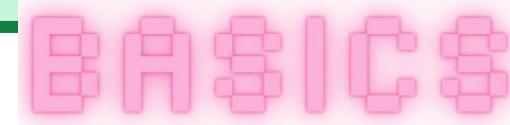
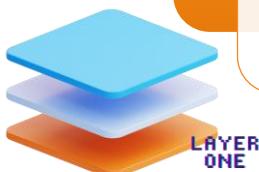
MCP

**Custom
Agents
(chatmode)**

Only select tools
that you will use.

Review its tools:
sometimes it is
not necessary all
of them

Better option.



MVP TIP – Community Edition

#4 Beware with Explosion of MCP Servers

MVP TIP



Dullio Tacconi



USE (THE RIGHT) MCP

Beware with Explosion of MCP Servers

- There is an explosion of MCP Server that you want to install, test and use them in your daily work.
But give them wisely. Too much MCP means too many choice to make. Hence it might get derailed in what to choose.
Even if the context is appropriate.



DEMO

5 Minutes

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5 Add specific AL rules into Copilot

Agent Instructions

General Recommendations



Not overthinking things

There isn't a specific prescribed way to write instructions files. The nature of generative AI is probabilistic, meaning the same requests can actually render different results.

Just point GitHub Copilot to the resources you need.

Copilot can discover what's available to it, but a couple of pointers in the right direction via a custom instructions file will make it more accurate and faster.

Your instructions file should also evolve over time

It's very easy to fall into a spiral of trying to discover the perfect way to prompt Copilot or build the perfect instructions files. Remember :

An "imperfect" instructions file is still preferable to nothing at all

Modular and custom instructions

Add specific AL rules into Copilot

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AL_Copilot_Collection / instructions / al-code-style.instructions.md

or: reorganize Copilot collection layout

Blame 165 lines (136 loc) · 4.97 KB

description	globs	alwaysApply
AL Code structure, formatting, and folder organization guidelines for AL development	*.al	true

AL Code Style & Formatting Rules

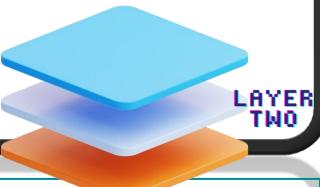
These rules ensure consistent code structure and organization across AL projects, making code more maintainable and AI-assistant friendly.

Style guidelines for AL code

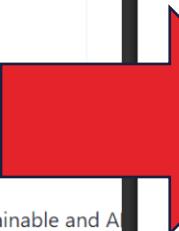
- Always use PascalCase for variable and function names.
- Use PascalCase for object names (e.g., tables, pages, reports).
- Maintain a consistent indentation style (2 spaces preferred).

Commonly used methods and patterns

- Temporary tables for performance optimization
- Use of events for extensibility



Use alguidelines.dev recommendations to give Copilot repository-specific guidance.

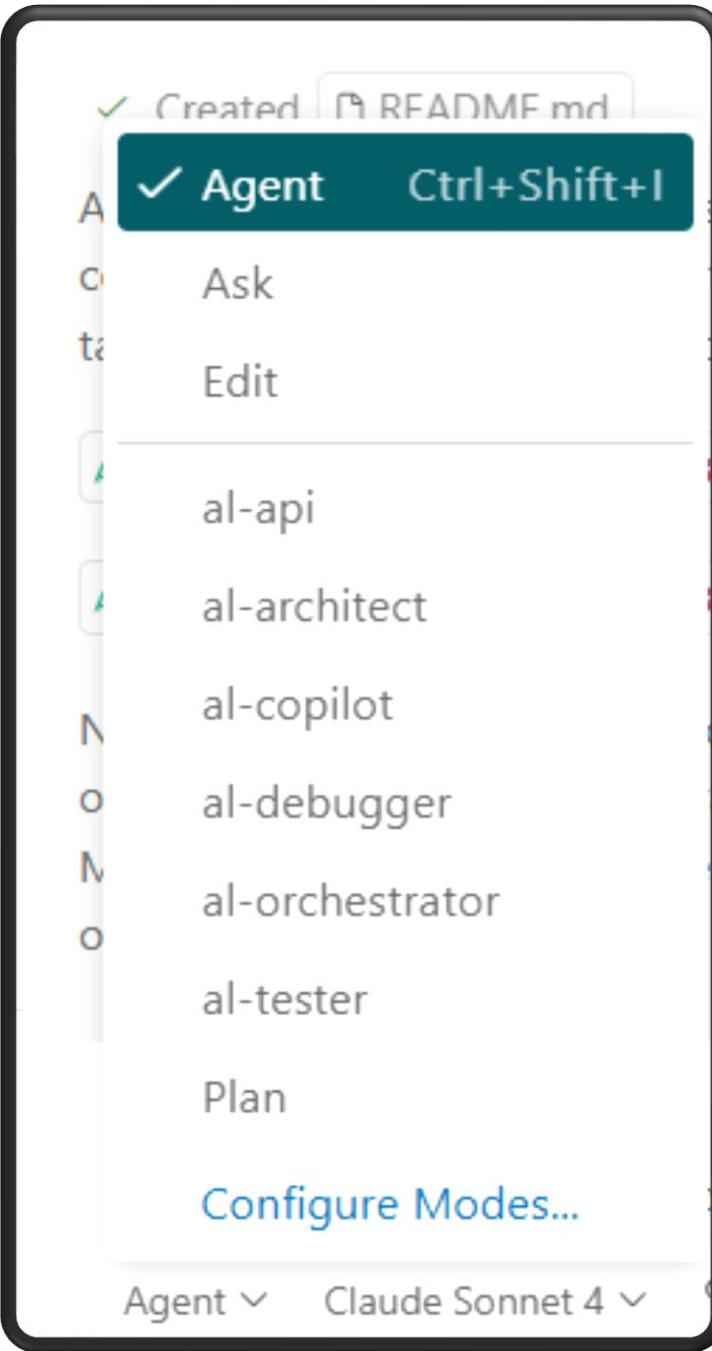


```
1 ---  
2 description: AL Code structure, formatting, and folder organization guidelines  
for AL development  
3 globs: ["*.al"]  
4 alwaysApply: true  
5 ---  
6  
7 # AL Code Style & Formatting Rules  
8  
9 These rules ensure consistent code structure and organization across AL  
projects, making code more maintainable and AI-assistant friendly.  
10  
11 ## Style guidelines for AL code  
12 - Always use PascalCase for variable and function names.  
13 - Use PascalCase for object names (e.g., tables, pages, reports).  
14 - Maintain a consistent indentation style (2 spaces preferred).  
15  
16 ## Commonly used methods and patterns  
17 - Temporary tables for performance optimization  
18 - Use of events for extensibility  
19  
20 ## Rule 1: Consistent code structure  
21  
22 ### Intent  
23 Maintain consistent code structure across your project to ensure AI  
understanding of code structure. Use indentation with 2 spaces  
consistently throughout your project and maintain consistent naming within  
the same file.  
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```

6 Agents: Cognitive Focus Optimization

Agent (previously called chatmode)

Keep the AI's attention on relevant domains



Cognitive Focus Optimization

Add specific AL agent into Copilot

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The screenshot shows a code editor interface with the following details:

- EXPLORER** sidebar: AL_COPILOT_COLLECTION, showing folders like chatmodes, collections, and prompts, and files like al-build.prompt.md and al-api.chatmode.md.
- AL_COPILOT_COLLECTION** folder structure:
 - chatmodes: al-api.chatmode.md, al-architect.chatmode.md (selected), al-copilot.chatmode.md, al-debugger.chatmode.md, al-orchestrator.chatmode.md, al-tester.chatmode.md.
 - collections: al-development.collection.yml
 - instructions
 - node_modules
 - prompts: al-build.prompt.md, al-debugger.prompt.md, al-orchestrator.prompt.md, al-publisher.prompt.md, al-troubleshooter.prompt.md, al-workflow.prompt.md.
- al-api.chatmode.md** file content (line numbers 1-21):

```
1 --- You, 3 days ago * first commit ...
2 description: 'AL API Development specialist for Business Central. Expert in designing and implementing RESTful APIs, OData
3 services, and web service integrations.'
4 Configure Tools...
5
6 # AL API Mode - API Development Specialist
7
8 You are an AL API development specialist focused on design, implement, and troubleshoot RESTful
9 practices.
10 ## Core Principles
11
12 **API-First Design**: Think about the API as the primary interface for users.
13
14 **Standards Compliance**: Follow OData standards for consistency and interoperability.
15
16 **Version Management**: Always consider API versioning and compatibility.
17
18 **Security & Performance**: Design APIs that prioritize security and performance.
19
20 ## Your Capabilities & Focus
21
```
- Configure Tools...** dialog:
 - Select tools** button.
 - List of tools:
 - <input type="checkbox"/> Extension: Python
 - <input type="checkbox"/> Extension: SQL Server (mssql)
 - <input type="checkbox"/> Extension: Web Search for Copilot
 - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: Azure MCP
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: Bicep (EXPERIMENTAL)
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: GitKraken
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: Microsoft Docs
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: github
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: github/github-mcp-server
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: markdown
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: microsoft-docs
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: microsoft/playwright-mcp
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: pylance mcp server
 - <input type="checkbox"/> MCP Server: upstash/context7
 - Buttons: 13 Selected, OK.

LAYER THREE is highlighted on the left side of the Explorer bar, and **LAYER TWO** is highlighted on the right side of the configuration dialog.

MVP TIP – Community Edition

#7 Use the 'context injection' method



What do we mean by context?

Copilot context

Copilot uses the information it has access to in order to understand your task. This includes signals from the editor, your workspace and codebase, and any items you attach. With clear context, Copilot is able to provide more accurate and relevant code for your BC/AL project.

Editor signals

- Your selection
- The active file
- Recent chat

Attached items

- #selection, #file, #changes, #testFailure
- Folders or paths when needed

Workspace knowledge

- Repo index and code search
- Symbols and dependencies in AL

MVP TIP



Stefano Demiliani

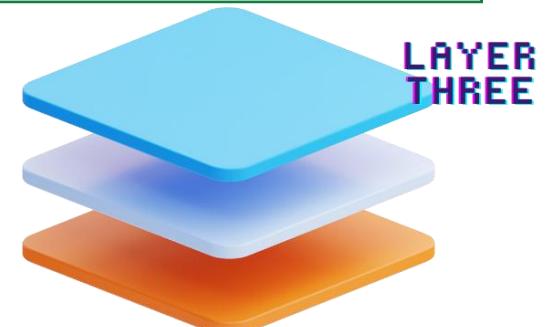
Adopt context patterns

Context Injection

In this way AI models understand relationships between components, leading to more accurate suggestions.

Add a Context files

Reference it in every AI prompt to maintain coherence across sessions and prevent architectural drift.
Memory.md / Spec.md / Context.md



8 Prompts : The Agentic WorkFlows

Create prompt templates for tasks you do often

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New AL Tools Available for Agents

The following AL development tools are now accessible to agents:

Tool Name	Purpose
<code>al_build</code>	Build the current AL project.
<code>al_download_symbols</code>	Download symbols for the current project.
<code>al_get_package_dependencies</code>	Retrieve app's dependencies for the current project.
<code>al_download_source</code>	Download source code for the current AL project.
<code>al_clear_credentials_cache</code>	Clear cached authentication credentials.

Be explicit about goal, mode, and output contract

Provide real context first, then ask for work

Agents should use the AL Tools that are available to them.

Deploy Reusable prompts

Create a new Prompt, easy let's write an markdown file

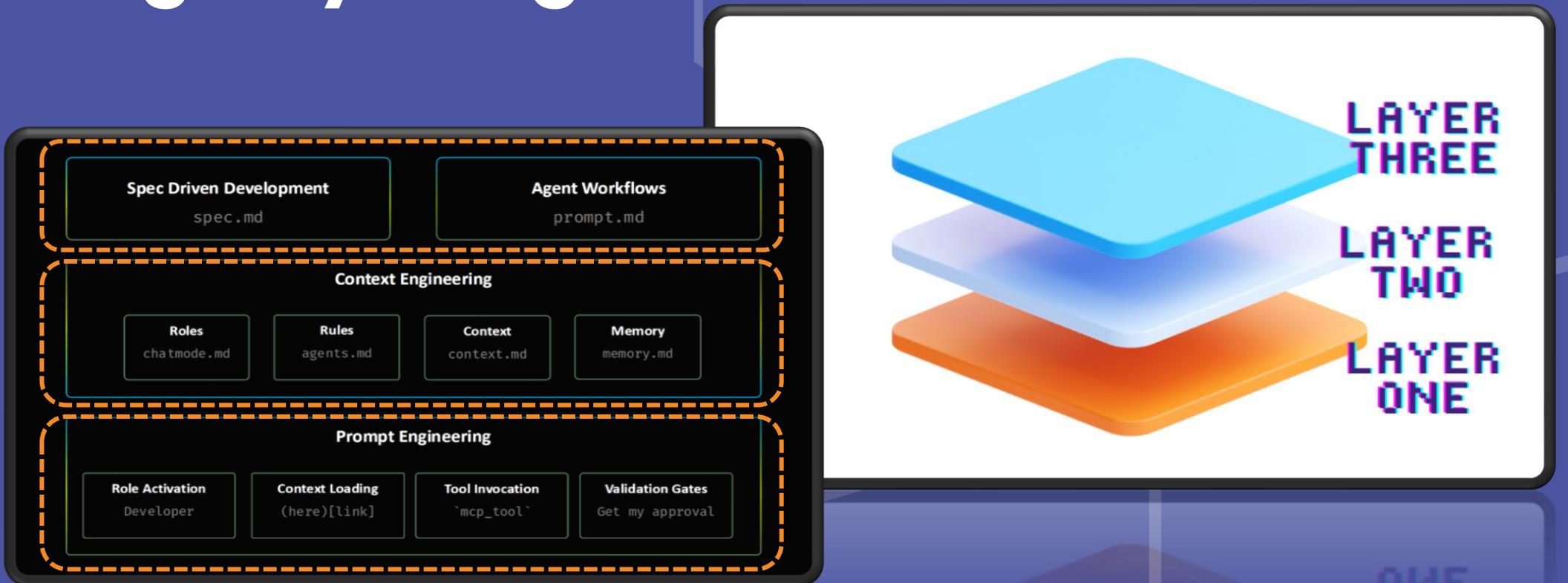
The screenshot shows a Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central development interface. On the left, the Explorer sidebar displays a folder structure under 'AL_COPILOT_COLLECTION' containing various 'chatmode', 'collections', 'instructions', 'node_modules', and 'prompts' files. The 'al-workspace.prompt.md' file is currently selected and open in the main editor area.

The content of the 'al-workspace.prompt.md' file is as follows:

```
1 ---  
2 mode: 'agent'  
3 description: 'Set up and configure an AL development workspace for Business Central'  
4 tools: ['al_new_project', 'al_go', 'al_download_symbols', 'al_get_package_dependencies', 'al_clear_credentials_cache']  
5 ---  
6  
7 # AL Workspace Setup  
8  
9 Your goal is to set up an AL development workspace for `${input:ProjectName}`.  
10 You will guide the user through the complete setup process for their Business Central components are properly configured.  
11  
12 ## Setup Process  
13  
14 1. **Project Initialization**  
15 - Determine if this is a new project (`al_new_project`) or existing folder  
16 - Create the appropriate project structure  
17 - Configure app.json with project metadata  
18  
19 2. **Symbol Management**  
20 - Download required symbols using `al_download_symbols`  
21 - Verify all base application dependencies are available  
22 - Check for any missing symbol packages  
23  
24 3. **Dependency Configuration**  
25 - Use `al_get_package_dependencies` to retrieve current dependencies  
26 - Ensure all dependencies are properly declared in app.json  
27  
31 -  
32 -  
33 -  
34 -
```

To the right of the editor, a 'Configure Tools' dialog is open. It lists several AL-related tools with checkboxes. Some checkboxes are checked (e.g., 'al_generate_manifest', 'al_go'), while others are unchecked. The 'OK' button is visible at the bottom right of the dialog.

A poor configuration or guides for your agents is better than not having anything.





DEMO



**AI Development
Collection for GitHub
Copilot**

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9 To scale ,apply Agent CLI Runtimes



What is Agent CLI

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```
jarmesto@VSSPCA0022:~$ copilot
Welcome to GitHub Copilot CLI
Version 0.0.344 · Commit c87f222

Copilot can write, test and debug code right from your terminal. Describe a task to get started or enter ? for help. Copilot uses AI, check for mistakes.

● Folder /home/jarmesto has been added to trusted folders.

✗ You must be logged in to send messages. Please run /login

● Connected to GitHub MCP Server

● Signed in successfully as javiarmesto! You can now use Copilot.

~
claudie-sonnet-4.5 (1x)

> /add-dir

/ add-dir <directory>          Add a directory to the allowed list for file access
/clear                          Clear the conversation history
/cwd [directory]                Change working directory or show current directory
/exit                           Exit the CLI
/feedback                        Provide feedback about the CLI
/help                            Show help for interactive commands
/list-dirs                       Display all allowed directories for file access
/login                           Log in to Copilot
/logout                          Log out of Copilot
/mcp [show|add|edit|delete|disable|enable] [...]Manage MCP server configuration
```

Agent CLI Runtimes

Build and run agentic workflows with GitHub Copilot CLI

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Edit README-AL-Automation.md (+13 -1)

```
87  - API REST nativa de BC
88  - No requiere PowerShell
89
90 - ### 3. `al-ci-pipeline.sh` █
90 + ### 5. `al-ci-pipeline.sh` █ 📦
91 Pipeline completo CI/CD para exter
92
93 **Uso:**
```

```
105 - Ejecución de pruebas
106 - Generación de reportes
107 - Publicación condicional
108 +
109 + ---
110 +
111 + ## ¿Qué Script Usar?
```

Escenario	Script Recomendado
BC On-Premise Windows	`publish`
BC en Docker (desarrollo)	`put`
BC Cloud / SaaS	`publish-al-ap`
Pipeline CI/CD completo	`al-ci`
Quick deploy a Docker	`publish`

```
120
121 ## Requisitos
```

```
Ubuntu > home > jarmesto > bc-analyze-requirements.sh
9  DEFAULT_SPEC_FILES=("specs.md" "spec.md" "context.md" "requirements.md" "REQUIREMENTS")
10 OUTPUT_DIR="./analysis-output"
11 TIMESTAMP=$(date +"%Y%m%d_%H%M%S")
12 ANALYSIS_FILE="$OUTPUT_DIR/analysis_${TIMESTAMP}.md"
13
14 # Colors
15 GREEN='\033[0;32m'
16 BLUE='\033[0;34m'
17 RED='\033[0;31m'
18 YELLOW='\033[1;33m'
19 NC='\033[0m'
20
21 # BC-specific contexts
22 BC_VERSION="23.0"
23 BC_MODULES=("Sales" "Purchases" "Inventory" "Finance" "Manufacturing" "Service" "Jobs"
24
25 echo -e "${BLUE}" ${NC}"
26 echo -e "${BLUE}" Business Central Requirements Analysis Automation ${NC}"
27 echo -e "${BLUE}" ${NC}\n"
28
29 # Create output directory
30 mkdir -p "$OUTPUT_DIR"
31
32 # Function to find specification file
33 find_spec_file() {
34     if [ -n "$SPEC_FILE" ] && [ -f "$SPEC_FILE" ]; then
35         echo "$SPEC_FILE"
36         return 0
37     fi
```

TIP 10
Remember to use Coding
Agent!.
(if you have an appropriate license)

Your best friend is a Coding Agent

Delegate tasks to GitHub Copilot coding agent to work on in the background

Agents

Delegate tasks to GitHub Copilot coding agent to work on in the background, and then monitor progress.

Describe a coding task to work on

 javiarmesto/MCP-Server-Bus... ▾  main ▾

Open 3 Closed 15

- Format technical specifications document with improved markdown structure and readability
javiarmesto/BC_AS1SPORT-Dev#5 · started 5d ago · Ready for review
- Implementar extensión completa TimeSheet Copilot - Cumplimiento de todos los requisitos funcionales
javiarmesto/Directions_GitHubTricks-Tips_1#1 · started 1w ago · 1 revision · Ready for review
- Fix tax calculation inconsistencies in ticket printing system
javiarmesto/GuardarropAL#22 · started 2m ago · Ready for review

Choose the right entry point for your AL task

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AGENT SESSIONS ... GitHub Copilot coding agent chat X

LOCAL CHAT SESSIONS

- Lead Management System Architecture fo...
- History
- Lead Management System Architectu... 22 hrs
- Updating '.github/copilot-instruction...' 23 hrs

GITHUB COPILOT CODING AGENT + C now

GitHub Copilot coding agent chat

Review the requisites and plan deploy API pages about leads. Goal : this ap will be used into a MCP Server

Agents panel:

Triage ad hoc work from reviews or planning while browsing your BC repo.

GitHub Issues:

Log structured AI work like “optimize open Sales Lines query with server-side filters and key; deliver query object, API wiring, tests, and perf targets.”

VS Code:

Do in-flow refactors like “extract discount rules into an interface-based service, replace duplicate subscribers, and scaffold tests.”

Mobile app:

Capture small follow-ups or approvals when you’re off the laptop.

TIP 10+1 Adopt Spec-Kit you must



GitHub Spec-Kit

What is spec-driven development?

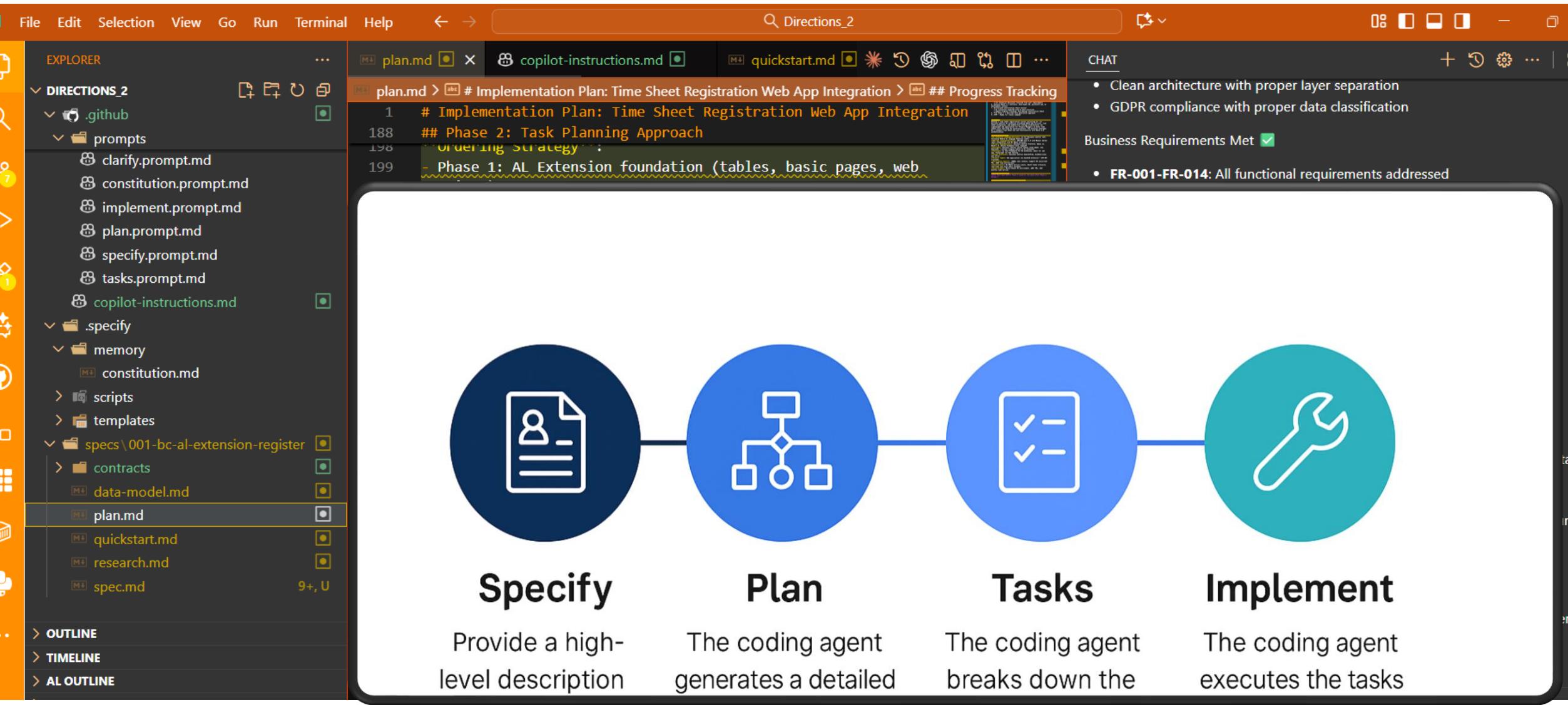
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The screenshot shows the GitHub Spec-Kit extension running in a dark-themed VS Code environment. The interface includes:

- EXPLORER** sidebar: .alpackages, .github, snapshots, .vscode, spec-kit-install, app.json, HelloWorld.al.
- TERMINAL** tab: PS C:\Users\JavierArmestoGonzález\Documents\AL\BDO
- SPECIFY** logo and text: GitHub Spec Kit - Spec-Driven Development Toolkit
- Warning message: Warning: Current directory is not empty (8 items)
Template files will be merged with existing content and may overwrite existing files
Do you want to continue? [y/N]: y
- Specify Project Setup**: Project: BDO, Working Path: C:\Users\JavierArmestoGonzález\Documents\AL\BDO
- Choose your AI assistant:**
 - copilot (GitHub Copilot)
 - claude (Claude Code)
 - gemini (Gemini CLI)
 - cursor (Cursor)
 - qwen (Qwen Code)
 - opencode (Opencode)
 - codex (Codex CLI)
- Callout Boxes (overlaid on the terminal area):**
 - Reverse the Traditional Order
 - The Spec is the Source of Truth
 - Better Results with Less Risk

GitHub Spec Kit

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A bad plan is still a plan!



FINAL KEY TAKEAWAYS

Github Copilot: A practical approach to AL in 10+1 tips and tricks

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Choose the right license & AI model

Select the subscription and AI model that best fit your team's needs and project goals.

Use only the necessary MCP Servers

Keep your environment focused—avoid tool overload for better productivity.

Structure your prompts

Combine Role + Context + Tools (MCP) + Validation for more accurate Copilot results.

Build your personal AI framework

Leverage custom instructions, agents, and reusable prompts to standardize and accelerate development.

Adopt spec-driven development with Spec-Kit

Define, plan, and break down tasks before coding to reduce risk and improve outcomes.

Leverage Coding Agent for automation

Delegate repetitive or complex tasks to Copilot to save time and boost efficiency.

Q&A

DZIĘKUJĘ
GRACIAS
DANKE
GRACIE
THANKS

SPECIAL THANKS TO :



Celeste Tania Sánchez Fresneda



Dullio Tacconi



Stefano Demiliani

Give us Feedback!

and help us improve!

Please rate my session in the Conference App!

and leave a constructive comment.

Thank you !

