AI Adoption Training

Workshop#2: AI for Writing, Analysis & Communications

November 14th, 2025

Today's Agenda

1. **Intro + Recap** (5 mins)

2. **AI for Writing, Analysis and Communications (**50 minutes**)**

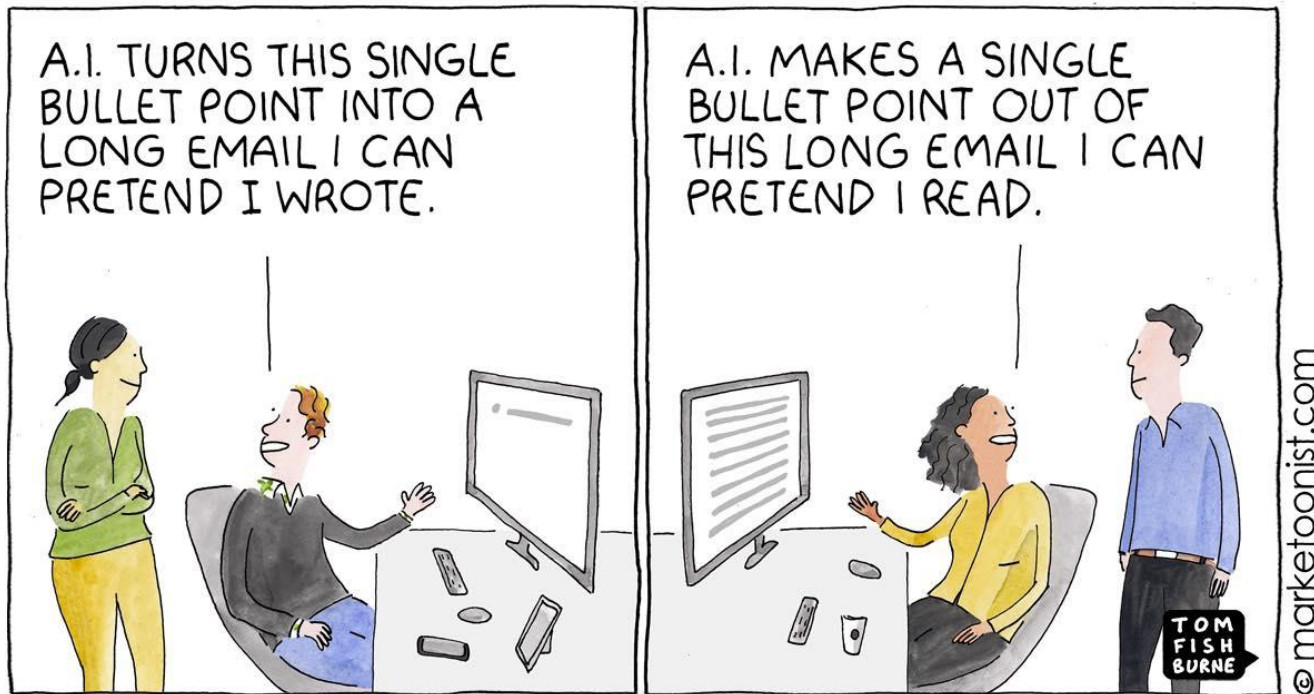3. **Questions / Interactive Session** (30 minutes)

4. **Wrap Up** (5 mins)

Materials are available at: https://github.com/mullinsean/ai_training

AI for Writing, Analysis & Communications

Sean Mullin | November 2025

AI for Writing & Analysis

What are we trying to achieve?

General Insight:

Where should I *allocate my thinking* on a project and where can I rely on an LLM to automate the low-value, "drudge work" side of knowledge work?

AI for Writing & Analysis

Potential benefits of using LLMs for general knowledge work

- Frees up more time to focus on critical thinking and analysis

- Able to incorporate and synthesize a wider range of information

- Easy to reuse existing documents:

  - Create new, more up-to-date versions (eg: "update this note to reflect changes from Budget 2025")

  - Repurpose content for other uses (eg: blog posts, strategy memos)

  - Create customized versions for different audiences (eg: stakeholders, board members, government, funders)

- More rapid iteration of documents; allows for higher-order thinking

  - Eg: add a new section that incorporates X into the analysis; rewrite note from a different perspective

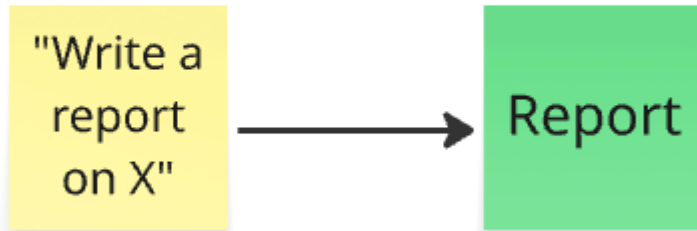- Easier to achieve consistent tone and style across an organization

What to Avoid:

- Low quality "AI slop"

- Generic, repetitive prose

- Hallucinations and factual inaccuracies
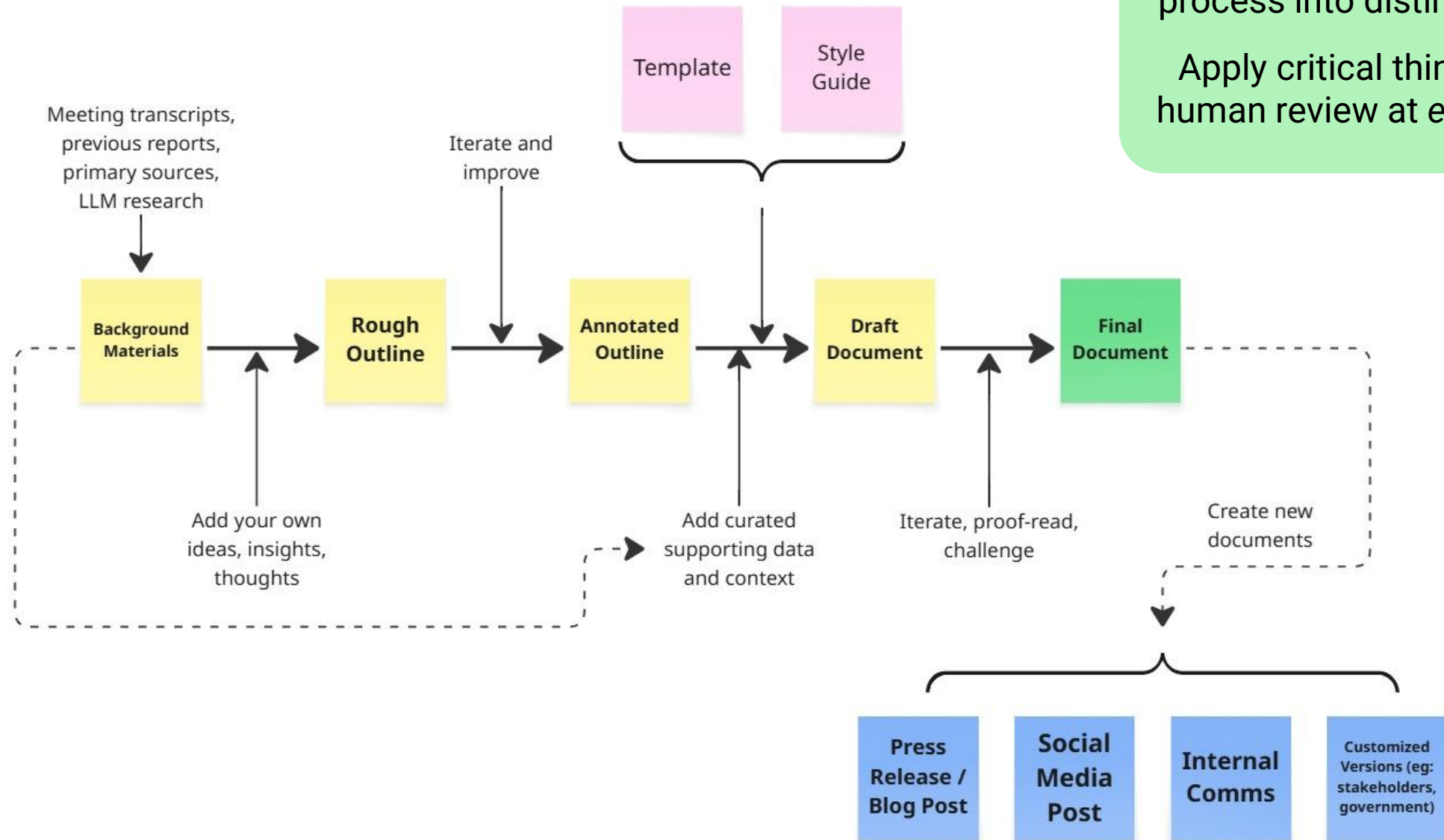
AI for Writing & Analysis

Simple prompts rarely produce good output

Simple "one shot" prompt

"Write a
report
on X" → Report

- Unlike simple requests for facts or answers to questions, using LLMs to write documents is rarely successful with simple "one-shot" prompts.

- Output will likely be generic, unfocused and not very sophisticated.

- The LLM is "guessing" what you want, since you haven't given it any detail.

- This doesn't mirror how we create sophisticated documents:

  - Rarely do we simply sit down and write out a document from beginning to end without any preparation.

  - Rather, we do it in stages and give considerable thought and effort to each stage.
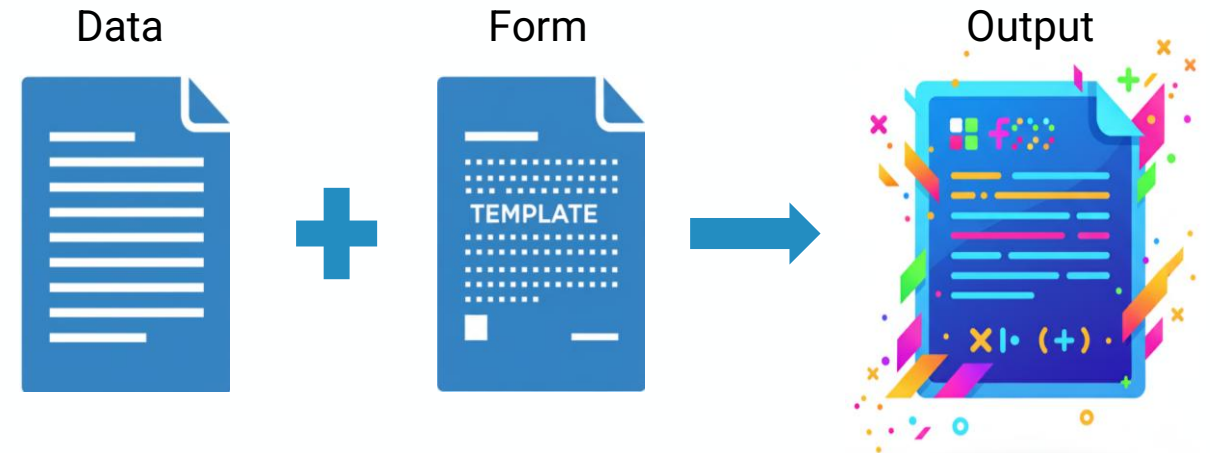
AI for Writing & Analysis

Break down the writing process into distinct stages.

Apply critical thinking and human review at *each* stage.

Meeting transcripts, previous reports, primary sources, LLM research

Template

Style Guide

Iterate and improve

Background Materials

Rough Outline

Annotated Outline

Draft Document

Final Document

Add your own ideas, insights, thoughts

Add curated supporting data and context

Iterate, proof-read, challenge

Create new documents

Press Release / Blog Post

Social Media Post

Internal Comms

Customized Versions (eg: stakeholders, government)

Prompting + Context

Quick review of key concepts

Core Prompting Pattern

1. **ROLE** → Who should the AI be?

• "You are an expert energy policy analyst"

2. **TASK** → What do you want done?

• "Summarize this report"

3. **FORMAT** → What should the output look like?

• "Create a 2-page briefing with executive summary"

4. **CONSTRAINTS** → What are the boundaries?

• "Use Canadian examples only; target audience is provincial policymakers"

5. **EXAMPLES** → Show what you want (few-shot learning)

• Provide a sample of desired output style

Managing the Context Window:

Data   Form   Output

TEMPLATE
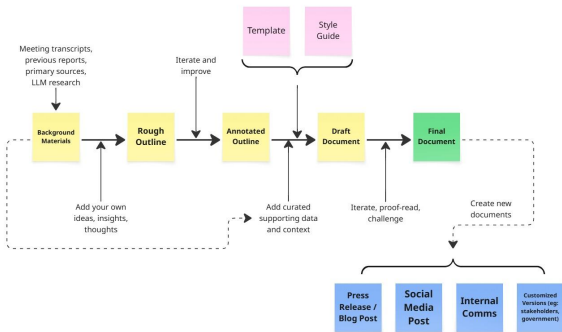
Writing a Synthesis Memo

Example: Budget 2025

Task:

Write a memo summarizing the 2025 federal Budget for internal use. Focus specifically on measures related to climate change or the energy transition. Also include how the Budget was received by media and stakeholder.
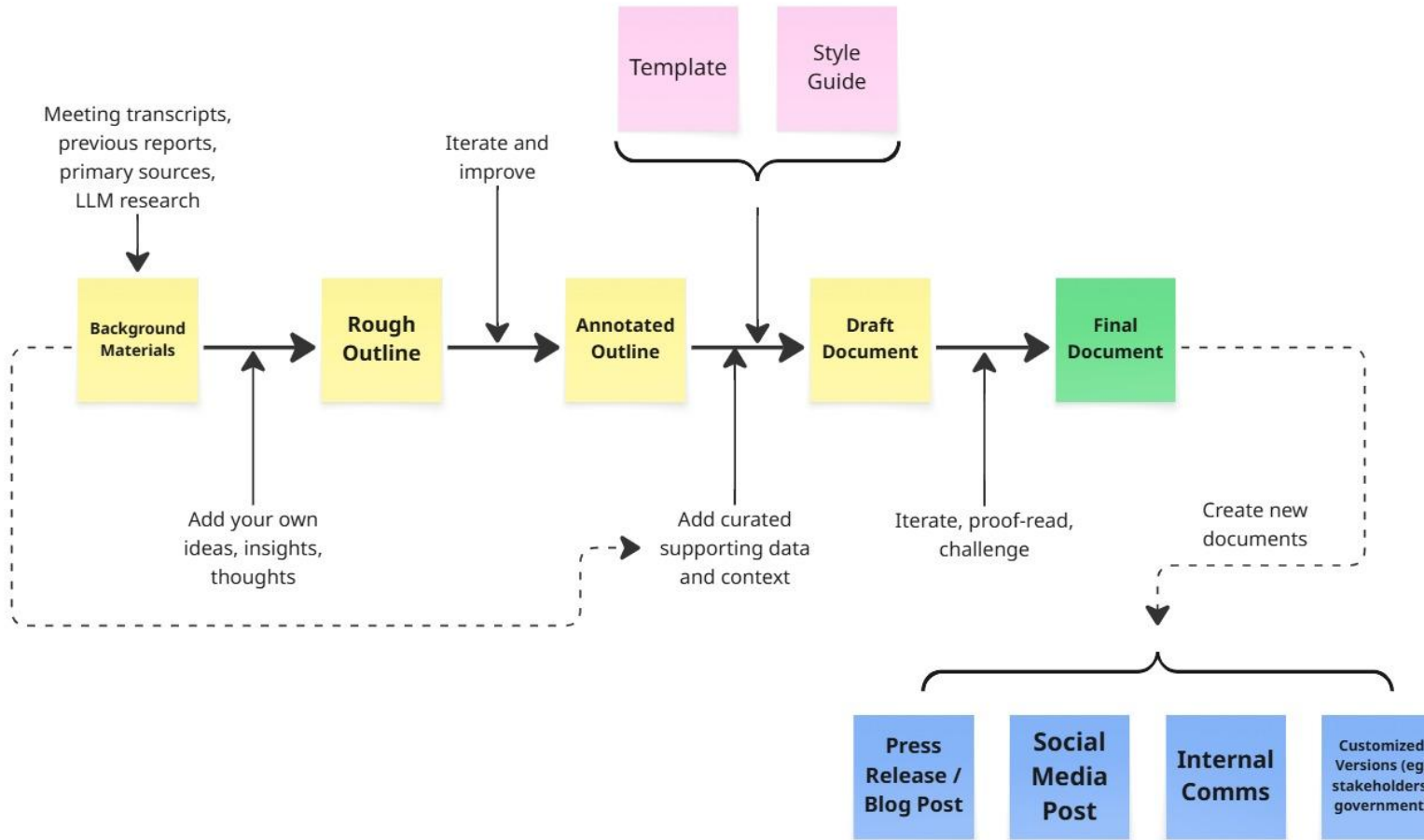
Writing a Synthesis Memo

Budget 2025 example

Process Step	Activity	Example
1. **Prepare Background Materials**	• Extract key elements of Budget 2025 • Conduct media + stakeholder scan	Budget 2025 highlights: chat, output Media/stakeholder scan: chat, output
2. **Generate a rough outline of memo**	• Review and iterate	Rough outline: chat
3. **Generate an annotated outline of memo**	• Include data sources, references	Annotated outline: chat, output
4. **Generate rough draft of memo**	• Optional: Apply a template and/or style guide • Review and iterate	Rough draft: chat, output
5. **Generate final draft of memo**	• Review, proof-read and iterate	Do this in a word processor! ☺

AI for Writing & Analysis

Recapping Key Insights

- Break down process into as many steps as necessary:
  - Decide *where* in the process you want to shape the LLM's output.
- Bigger, more sophisticated documents should involve more steps and more iteration.
- The *earlier* you intervene, the more impact you can have on structure, design, content.
- Later in the process focus more on style, verifying specific facts, proofreading.

Generating Additional Documents

Extending our original memo to other documents

Document Type	Concept	Example
1. Blog Post	Applying a style guide	Creating a style guide: chat Blog post: chat, output
2. Social Media Posts	Using examples	Social media posts: chat
3. Article for The Economist	Using Claude Skill to apply a style guide	Creating Claude Skill: chat, output Writing article: chat, output
4. Slide deck	Experimental: testing the perplexity.ai slide deck feature	Slide deck: chat, output

Moving Beyond Document Creation

Other useful use cases for LLMs in writing and analysis

1. **Brainstorming / Idea Generation**

    - Use the LLM as a dumping ground for ideas; once you have collected enough, ask LLM to organize and categorize the ideas

    - Audio input can be very useful at this stage; go for a walk and brainstorm ideas!

2. **Verification and Stress Testing:**

    - Ask LLM to critically assess the arguments or facts in a document; can be particularly effective if using an LLM different than the one used to produce the document

3. **Structured Data Extraction:**

    - With careful prompting, you can extract information from large, text-based documents in a structured way. Eg: extract all new spending items from Budget text

    - Combined with advanced research techniques, this can vastly improve the quality of data you can feed your LLM.

Best Practices

Easy practices to quickly improve your writing productivity using LLMs

1. **Create a Style Guide for the organization**

   - Capture the desired tone and writing style of the organization

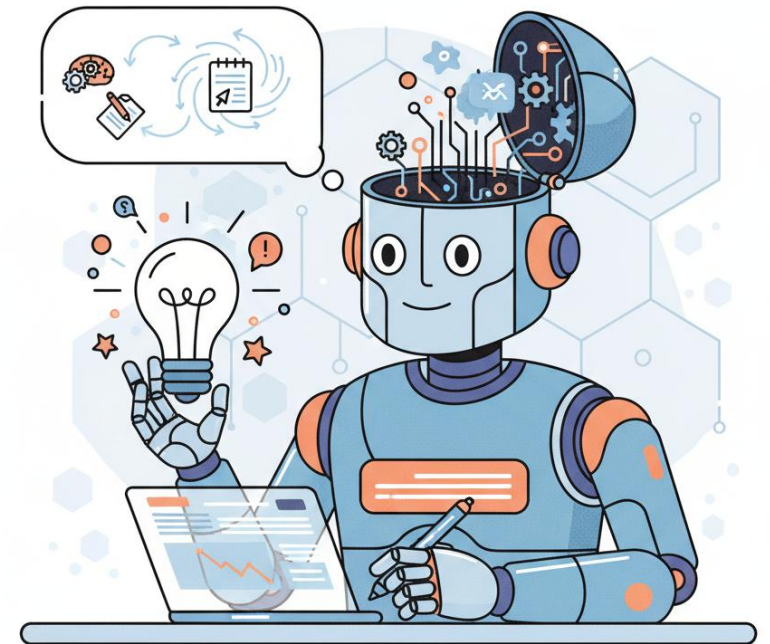2. **Create Templates for frequently produced documents**

   - Memos, research reports, blog posts, social media posts

3. **Use the Claude Skill or Custom GPT features**

   - Apply style guides and templates consistently

4. **Style guides can also help with translation!**

   - Create an English → French Canadian translation guide for LLMs

Additional Resources

For further reading

Title	URL
Claude Use Cases	https://claude.com/resources/use-cases
ChatGPT for Government: Prompt-Pack for Leaders	https://academy.openai.com/home/blogs/government-prompt-pack-for-leaders
Using Generative AI (University of Waterloo Writing Centre)	https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/Resources-AI-Overview
Alberta AI Academy Masterclass	https://masterclass.albertaaiacademy.com/
Guide on the Use of Generative AI (Government of Canada)	https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-government-innovations/responsible-use-ai/guide-use-generative-ai.html

Thank You!

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