See the whole set.

A director knows a little about every department and stays curious about all of them. How to build that wide view, and use it to point AI in the right direction.

PRODUCTION
The wide view

DIRECTOR	CREW
You	AI

SCENE	TAKE
03	01

A director does not light the set, record the sound or cut the film. They know enough about each job to ask for the right thing and to notice when something is off. **That wide view is what lets them run the whole production.**

Directing AI works the same way. You do not need to master every field it touches, and you do not need to get every detail right at the start. A general map of the work and the habit of asking how things work are enough to point AI in the right direction. Then you go deeper where it matters.

01 Know a little about every department

SCRIPT

Writing

KNOW ENOUGH TO
Tell whether a draft makes one clear point for one reader.

ASK AI
"What is the one message here, and who is it for?"

CAMERA

Visuals

KNOW ENOUGH TO
Say what the viewer should notice first, and what should fade back.

ASK AI
"What would a designer change in this layout, and why?"

EDITING

Structure

KNOW ENOUGH TO
Spot what is missing, repeated or in the wrong order.

ASK AI
"Show me the outline before you write the full draft."

PRODUCTION

Numbers

KNOW ENOUGH TO
Ask where a figure came from, and whether it is plausible.

ASK AI
"Show your working, and list the source for each figure."

CLEARANCES

Rules and risk

KNOW ENOUGH TO
Recognise private data, and claims that need someone's approval.

ASK AI
"What in this should a person check before it goes out?"

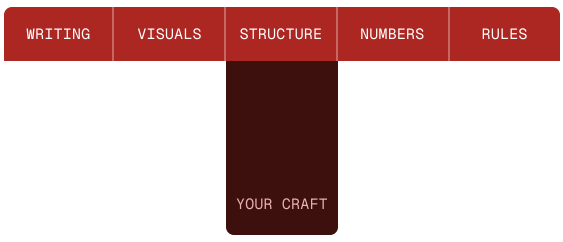
THE DIRECTOR

The whole set

KNOWS
How the departments fit together, and who signs off each part.

ASKS
"What does the whole production need next?"

02 Wide across, deep in one



The bar is the director's view: enough of each field to brief it and to check it. **The stem is your own craft,** where you can judge quality in depth. You already have the stem. The bar is what lets you direct AI outside your own lane.

WHY IT MATTERS
In a Harvard Business School and BCG field experiment with 758 consultants, AI helped on tasks it handled well. On a task outside its abilities, consultants using AI were 19 percentage points less likely to reach the correct answer. Knowing enough to spot a wrong answer is part of the job.

Dell'Acqua et al., "Navigating the Jagged Technological Frontier", 2023

03 Build a working map in 15 minutes

New field? Get the general picture first, with AI as your teacher.

The 15-minute map	5 STEPS
01 · MAP	"Explain how this field works to a smart newcomer."
02 · WORDS	"Give me the ten terms a professional here uses."
03 · CHECKS	"What do experts check first? What do beginners miss?"
04 · EXPLAIN	Summarise it in your own words. Ask AI to correct you.
05 · BRIEF	Use the new words to set the vision, limits and checks.

Example: a marketer writing a one-page sign-in security explainer.

EXAMPLE · TAKE 1

MAP	Asked AI how multi-factor sign-in works, and where each method can fail.
WORDS	Learned "push fatigue" and "phishing-resistant".
CHECKS	Asked which methods experts trust, and which they avoid.
BRIEF	"For office managers. Compare methods by strength. One page."
REVIEW	The security lead checked it before it went out.

04 Five curiosity habits

Count the ones you used this week. 0 to 1: try one today. 2 to 3: map your next field first. 4 to 5: teach your team.

01

Ask how it works

Knowing the steps shows where AI can help.

TRY IT
"Walk me through how this is done."

02

Learn the basics

A short lesson first makes the brief better.

TRY IT
"Teach me the basics before I brief you."

03

Ask for reasons

The reasons behind an answer show what to check.

TRY IT
"Why this? What did you assume?"

04

Find blind spots

The best question is often one you did not ask.

TRY IT
"What would an expert ask me that I have not?"

05

Ask the people

Colleagues know how things work here. AI does not.

TRY IT
Ask a colleague what they check first.

05 The "good enough to steer" test

You do not need to know how to do every job. You need enough to direct it and to check it.

BEFORE YOU BRIEF

- [ ] I know what good looks like.
- [ ] I know the key terms.
- [ ] I would spot an error.
- [ ] I know who checks it.

Go deeper yourself when

- **You will do this work again.** A deeper map pays off.
- **The answers keep missing.** Learn one level more.
- **You cannot tell good from bad.** Ask AI for a strong and a weak example.
- **It is your own craft.** This is your stem. Keep it deep.

Bring in a real expert when

- **Mistakes are costly.** Legal, financial, safety and security calls go to the people accountable.
- **You cannot check the answer.** Find someone who would notice an error.
- **The facts are yours.** Your clients, systems and history live with your colleagues.
- **The rule of thumb.** Curiosity is no licence to skip review. Someone qualified approves the final cut.



Know a little of everything. Stay curious.

David Martin. I build AI knowledge systems and content operations, and I train people to direct AI rather than just ask it questions. If this guide helps you or your team, I would love to hear about it.

GET IN TOUCH
david.angus.martin@gmail.com
madebydavidmartin.com

Guide 1: Take the director's chair
Guide 2: Think like the director