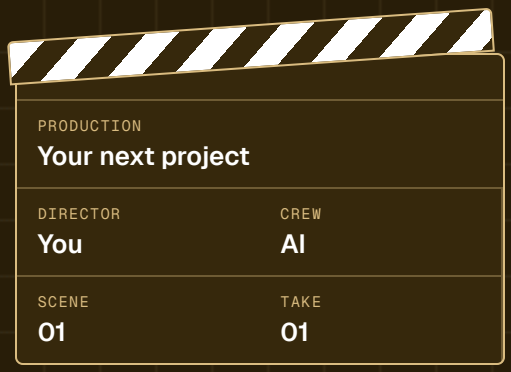
THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR SERIES · GUIDE 1

Take the director's chair.

How to get better results from AI at work by changing one thing: your role. A two-page guide for leaders, teams and anyone with a brief to deliver.



Most people use AI like a search box. They ask a question, take the answer and move on. The results feel generic because the request was generic. **The people who get the most from AI work differently. They direct it.**

A film director does not operate the camera or build the set. They hold the vision, brief the crew, call for another take and approve the final cut. That is the role to take with AI, whether you lead a company, a department or a single project. It is a skill, and it improves quickly with practice.

01 Asking versus directing

	ASKING	DIRECTING
The goal	"Write something about this."	A clear result, audience and standard
Context	Left for the AI to guess	Facts, examples and limits supplied
Scope	One narrow task	The whole job, from plan to finished piece
First draft	Accepted or abandoned	Reviewed and sent back with notes
"That can't be done"	The end of the conversation	The start of a different approach
Final result	Generic and unchecked	On brief and approved by a person

02 Five habits of a good director

01

Set the vision

Say what the result is, who it is for and what good looks like before anything is made.

TRY IT
Open every request with the finished result, not the task.

02

Brief the crew

AI knows a great deal about the world and nothing about your organisation unless you tell it.

TRY IT
Paste in the facts, an example you like and anything that is off limits.

03

Widen the brief

Go past the obvious uses. The tool that summarises a report can also build the plan, the tracker and the presentation that follow.

TRY IT
Ask for the next three deliverables, not just the first.

04

Call for another take

A director does not accept the first take by default. Notes improve the work faster than new prompts.

TRY IT
Give specific notes: keep this, cut that, change the tone here.

05

Approve the final cut

Nothing goes out until a person has checked it. You are accountable for the result, not the tool.

TRY IT
Check every fact, number and name before you share it.

03 Write a director's brief

A good brief does most of the work. Cover these six points and the first draft arrives far closer to what you need.

The director's brief	6 POINTS
RESULT What you need made, and what finished looks like.	AUDIENCE Who will read or use it, and what they already know.
FACTS The approved information it may use. Nothing else.	STANDARD An example, a house style or a tone to match.
LIMITS Claims, topics, names or data that are off limits.	REVIEW Who checks the output, and where it goes next.

An example brief for a routine marketing task. Save one like it and reuse it.

EXAMPLE BRIEF · TAKE 1

RESULT	A one-page sheet for our managed backup service, ready for sales to send.
AUDIENCE	IT managers at mid-sized public organisations who are short on time.
FACTS	Use only the attached service description and pricing notes.
STANDARD	Match the tone of the attached sample. Plain language. Under 300 words.
LIMITS	No claims we cannot support. No competitor names.
REVIEW	Draft only. I will review it before anything is sent.

04 When AI says "that can't be done"

Often that is a limit of the first approach, not of the task. A good director asks for another way, and also knows when a limit is real.

Find another route

- **Break it into steps.** Ask for the outline first, then each section.
- **Supply what is missing.** Add the file, the figures or the example it lacks.
- **Change the format.** A table, a checklist or a script may work where prose did not.
- **Ask what it needs.** Have the AI list what would let it finish the job.
- **Try another tool.** Different tools are strong at different jobs.

Know when to listen

- **A fact it cannot verify.** Pushing here is how you get confident, invented answers.
- **Data it should not see.** Client, staff and financial details stay inside approved tools.
- **A call that needs a person.** Hiring, legal and budget decisions stay with the people accountable for them.
- **The rule of thumb.** Push on method. Respect limits on facts, privacy and accountability.

05 Bring the director's chair to your team

Build the brief once

Save instructions, examples and house style in a shared AI project so every request starts with context.

Keep one source of truth

Maintain a single file of approved facts, so AI drafts from what the organisation has signed off.

Name the approver

Decide who reviews each type of output before it is used. AI drafts, people decide.

Train the role, not the buttons

Tools change every few months. The habit of directing the work lasts.

BEFORE YOU SHARE IT

- [ ] It matches the brief
- [ ] Every fact is checked
- [ ] Names and figures correct
- [ ] Approver has signed off



You are the director. AI is your crew.

David Martin builds AI knowledge systems and content operations for B2B teams, and trains people to direct AI rather than just ask it questions. If this guide helps you get a better result, I would love to hear about it.

GET IN TOUCH

david.angus.martin@gmail.com

madebydavidmartin.com

Next: Guide 2, Think like the director