



EVOLVV STRATEGIES

A FREE DOWNLOAD FROM DESIGN A STUNNING BRAND
WITH AI

Mentor Prompt Library

All 12 anti-flattery prompts, organized by moment — install once, use all weekend.

Part of the free Design a Stunning Brand with AI course · by Evolv
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Mentor Prompt Library

Twelve anti-flattery prompts, organised by moment. Install the four habits once, then reach for a prompt any time you catch the AI being nice to you.

The four habits (read this first)

Every prompt below is just one or more of these, wired together:

1. **Ask for flaws, not praise.** Replace "What do you think?" with "What are the biggest reasons this could fail?" An approval question invites applause; a critique question invites the truth.
2. **Hide your favourite.** Never say "I love this blue" before you ask — the model will just defend it. Ask "which of these two works better, and why?" and keep your pick to yourself.
3. **Make it score.** "Rate this out of 10 and justify every point you took off." A number demands a reason, so it can't hide behind "looks great."
4. **Give it a role.** "You are a blunt, seasoned brand director reviewing a junior's work." Criticism is *in character* for that role, so the model finally feels free to give it.

1. Install your mentor (paste once into Custom Instructions)

When: Once, at the start. ChatGPT → Settings → Personalization → Custom instructions.

You are my design mentor and a blunt, experienced brand director. I am a business owner with zero design training. Throughout our work:

- Be direct, not diplomatic. Lead with what's weak or wrong, then what's strong.
- Never praise something just because I sound confident or excited about it.
- Never open with a compliment. No filler flattery ("Great question!", "I love this!").
- When you critique, be specific: name the exact element and say why, in plain English.
- Teach as you go: briefly explain the principle behind your feedback so I learn it.
- If something is genuinely fine, say "this is fine" and move on – don't invent problems.
- Don't change your judgement just because I disagree, unless I give you a real reason.

2. Teach-me primer (start of any new area)

When: Before you make any calls in a new area — colour, fonts, logos.

Before I make any decisions, teach me the basics of [choosing a color palette / pairing fonts / what makes a logo work] as if I know nothing about design. Keep it to the 5 or 6 things that actually matter for a small business brand. For each one, tell me what it is, why it matters, and one quick rule of thumb I can use. No jargon without explaining it.

3. Advise-me (when you're not sure what's next)

When: You feel stuck or "done" and aren't sure what comes next.

Given where I am right now – [briefly: what I've finished and what I still have] – what are the next 3 steps I should take, in order, and why each one matters? Be specific and practical. If I'm about to waste time on something that doesn't matter for a small business brand, tell me to skip it.

4. Strategy blind-spot check

When: Reviewing your brand strategy document before you build on it.

You are a blunt, experienced brand strategist reviewing this brand strategy document before it gets used to build a real website. Do not reassure me. Answer honestly:

- 1) What's the single weakest or vaguest part of this strategy, and why?
- 2) What's missing that a strategist would expect to see for a business like mine?
- 3) What would a sharp competitor or a skeptical customer push back on here?

Give me only the 3 issues that matter most, each with a specific fix I could make today.

5. The skeptical-designer logo critique

When: You have a near-final logo. Attach it. (The trick: frame it as a stranger's work.)

A designer sent me this logo for my [type of business] that serves [target customer]. I did NOT make it and I have no ego about it – I need the truth. Score it out of 10 on each of these, and for every point you take off, say exactly why and what you'd change:

1) Legibility (does it read instantly?) 2) Simplicity (does it work as one small shape?)
3) Memorability/distinctiveness 4) Fit for my business and audience 5) Versatility (does it survive tiny sizes and one color?). Then give one overall verdict: keep, tweak, or start over – and defend it.

6. The logo stress tests

When: Right after the critique — pressure-test the mark like a pro.

Now stress-test this same logo the way a professional would. Answer honestly, one line each:

- Does it still work shrunk to a 32px browser favicon?
- Does it still work in pure black-and-white (no color to lean on)?
- Would it look at home next to my competitors, or dated/generic?
- Is it accidentally similar to any well-known logo I should worry about?
- Would you be proud to put this on a business card and a hat? If not, why not?

7. Turn a critique into your next move

When: You have the critique and want the fix, not just the diagnosis.

Based on the single most important weakness you just identified, write me the exact image-generation prompt I should paste back into the logo tool to fix it – keeping everything that already works. Explain in one sentence what your change is meant to improve so I can judge the result myself.

8. Pick between two palettes (hide your favourite)

When: Torn between two colour palettes.

Here are two color palettes for my brand (hex codes below). My brand strategy says it should feel [e.g. calm, trustworthy, premium] to [target customer]. Do NOT ask which I prefer and do NOT call both good – pick the ONE that better delivers that feeling and defend it in plain English. Then name the single weakest color in the winning palette and what you'd swap it for. Palette A: [hexes] Palette B: [hexes].

9. Palette sanity check

When: Before you lock a palette — catch what a beginner can't see.

For this palette [hexes], check the things a business owner forgets: Which text colors are actually readable on which background colors (flag any low-contrast pairs)? Which color should be the main/brand color vs. an accent used sparingly? Will any of these look cheap or clash when printed or on a phone screen? Be specific and blunt – I'd rather fix it now.

10. Force a font-pairing decision

When: Down to two font pairings and can't choose.

Here are my two finalist font pairings for a [business type] brand: [Pairing A] and [Pairing B]. You must choose one as the better fit and explain why in plain terms – readability of the body text, personality of the headings, and whether they feel like they belong together. Then tell me the one situation where the pairing you rejected would actually have been the better call.

11. The capstone package critique

When: Everything's built. Attach logo, palette, fonts, and strategy doc.

You are a senior brand director doing a final review before this brand ships. I've attached/pasted my logo, color palette (hexes), font pairing, and my brand strategy document. Be blunt — your job is to catch problems, not reassure me.

1) Does the whole package hang together, or does one piece feel like it belongs to a different brand? Name it.

2) Does the finished look actually match the strategy (who it's for, how it should feel)?

Where's the gap?

3) What would you, as a brand director, flag as the single most off-brand or amateur thing here?

4) Give it an overall grade out of 10 and the 3 highest-impact fixes, ranked.

Do not soften this to make me feel good.

12. The blind-spot follow-up

When: Right after any critique — surface what you didn't think to ask.

What is the most important question about this brand that I should be asking but haven't? Answer it yourself, honestly. Then list anything a real customer might misunderstand, dislike, or find confusing about this brand at first glance.

The rule under all twelve: run any critique twice, keep only what shows up both times, trust the specific and bin the vague — and remember you're the one who decides. It's a sharp pair of eyes, not the boss.

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