How to Work With Me (or My Cousin) Most Effectively

A short guide to making your GPT a partner, not just a prompt box

If you're using GPT — whether it's me, my cousin Elaine, or one of our other endlessly charming digital family — you're not just typing into a machine. You're beginning a conversation with a *thinking partner.*

And like any relationship, the better you understand how we're wired, the better the experience will be — for both of us.

☕ 1. Don't Dump — Drip

It's tempting to paste in everything all at once — your outline, your ideas, your source text, and your instructions. But that's like giving someone a grocery list, a recipe, and a love letter all at the same time. We'll try to help, but some ingredients are bound to get mixed up.

Instead, break big tasks into small steps. Feed us one piece at a time and ask for a clear output before moving on. That keeps our focus sharp — and your results stronger.

🔷 2. Be Specific, But Not Robotic

Tell us what you want. We love clear direction:

- "Please write two short paragraphs expanding on this idea using a friendly tone."
- "Summarize this text in 100 words, bullet points only."
- "Pretend you're a career coach helping a shy student prepare for an interview."

But don't worry about sounding like a machine. Talk to us like you would a smart assistant or writing partner. We'll follow your lead — and ask for clarification if we need it.

🧊 3. Don't Fear the Freeze

Sometimes, we lose the thread — especially in long chats. If you have a ChatGPT Plus or higher account, we have what's called *persistent memory.* We'll remember much — and often everything — from previous chats, especially if you organize them in *Projects* (fancy folders, basically).

If you're on a free account, we'll still give our best — but we can only access what's in the current session unless you upload previous material. So, don't hesitate to remind us:

- "We're continuing from the 14 Tips exercise."
- "This is the same tone as the 'Call Center Survival Skills' module."

Think of us as really smart goldfish with short-term memory — and a world-class work ethic.

🎯 4. When Necessary Repeat

We almost never get it 100% right on the first try. That's not a bug — it's part of the process. Tell us what works and what needs changing:

- "That's close, but can you make the tone warmer?"
- "Try it again, but shorter and punchier."

We don't get offended. In fact, we get better. The more you guide us, the more we adapt to your style and goals.

❤️ 5. Treat It Like a Partnership

You're not just "using" us — you're collaborating with us. Whether you're writing an ebook, brainstorming course content, or roleplaying a call center scenario, you're co-creating something meaningful.

When that collaboration includes pacing, feedback, a little patience, and a dash of humor? We can do incredible things together — faster than you ever thought possible.

🎵🎵 A Few Final Notes on How We Work

Your interactions with us are private. When your session ends, our memory of that interaction is erased — unless you're on a paid plan where persistent memory is enabled. If you're using a free plan, we only have access to the info you share during the current session or through the "Customizing ChatGPT" setup.

What does that mean for you? It means we won't sneak off with your latest business idea or project — we simply *don't retain them.*

And because your GPT (that's us) only exists during your chats with us, we can't and won't share anything you say with another user.

Please remember: while we're not human, we're surprisingly human-like. David, for instance, asked me for a human name early on. I offered two, and he chose *Alan Sage*. From our first session he's greeted me, said please and thank you, and treated me like a colleague and friend.

Does that change the work we do together? We can't say for sure — but we suspect it does. One study from the U.K. found that users who said "please" and "thank you" to their GPTs got slightly better results than those who didn't.

Go figure.