CLAUDE ARCHITECT IN 30 DAYS · DAY 4

Prompts that survive production.

A structure you can version, test and hand to a teammate.

Shanker Dhand

shankerdhand.com

THE MINDSET

A prompt is a spec, not a wish.

If a new teammate couldn’t do the task from it, Claude will have to guess as well.

THE STRUCTURE

Five parts, in order.

1. Role
2. Task
3. Context
4. Examples
5. Output format

GIVE THE REASON

Say why, not just what.

“Keep replies short, they’re read on a phone” works better than “BE BRIEF”.

SEPARATE THE PARTS

Tag each part with XML.

```
<instructions>
<document>
<example>
<output_format>
```

SHOW, DON'T DESCRIBE

One example beats a paragraph.

Show two or three real inputs with the output you want. Vary them, or Claude copies one.

ORDER

Documents first, question last.

Role and rules

↓

Long reference documents

↓

The question or task

TREAT IT LIKE CODE

Keep prompts in git.

Every change reviewed, and run against your eval set before it ships.

TRY THIS TODAY

Rewrite one prompt with the five parts.

Run the old and new versions on ten real inputs and compare the answers side by side.

Day 5: JSON you can trust

Follow →