



Workforce Development Course



AI for Transportation Professionals

Upcoming Workforce Development Courses



June 4, 2026
1pm-2pm

Mobility on Demand

Explore how flexible transportation services can allow riders to request trips when they need them.



July 2, 2026
1pm-2pm

First Mile/Last Mile Safety

Discover strategies to improve safety and accessibility in short connections to transit.

Register for free at <https://www.commuterservices.com/courses/>

Thank you to our sponsor, FDOT Transit Office



Upcoming Workforce Development Courses



August 6, 2026
1pm-2pm

Transit Ridership

Discern ridership trends and identify strategies to grow and sustain transit use.



September 3, 2026
1pm-2pm

Micromobility

Promote effective integration of micromobility like bicycles, e-bikes, and electric scooters, into transportation systems.

Register for free <https://www.commuterservices.com/courses/>

Thank you to our sponsor, FDOT Transit Office



Today's Instructors

Christine Epps, Training Support Specialist
Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida
cepps@usf.edu



Evan Fruehauf, MLIS, Assistant Librarian
USF Libraries
University of South Florida
efruehauf@usf.edu



Welcome & Objectives



AI FUNDAMENTALS



REAL-WORLD
TRANSPORTATION USES



LEARN PROMPT
STRATEGIES

Poll Question

Go to
www.menti.com

Enter the code

1922 6807



Or use QR code



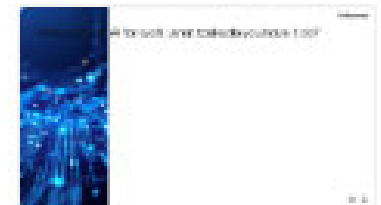
Mentimeter

Menti

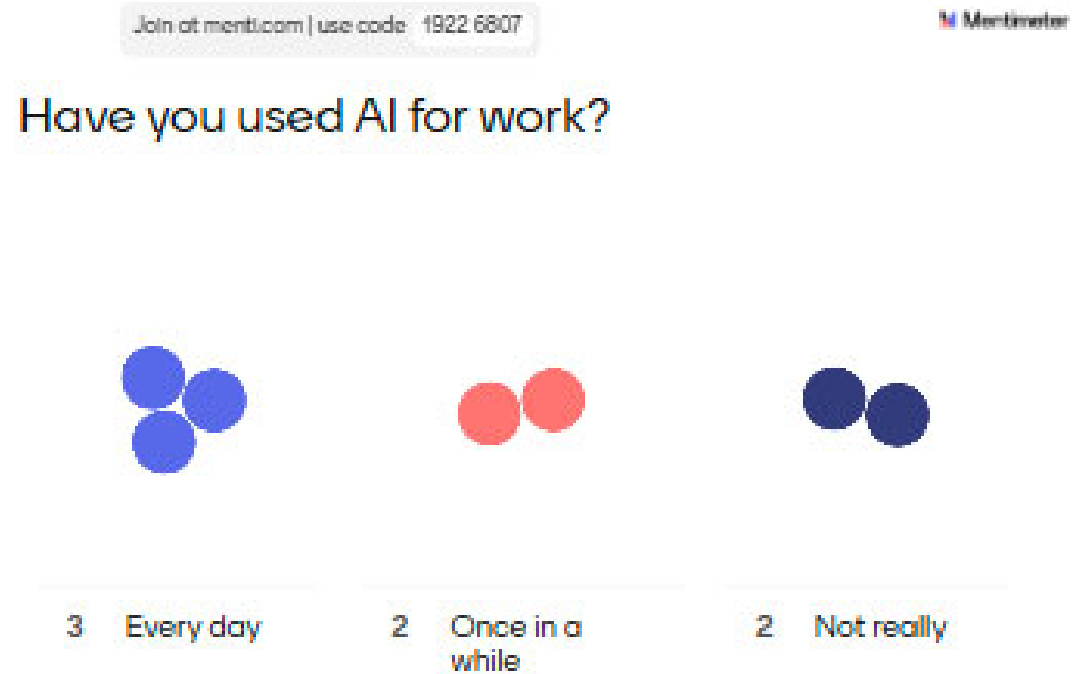
AI for Transportation Pros



Select which slide to add



Poll Question

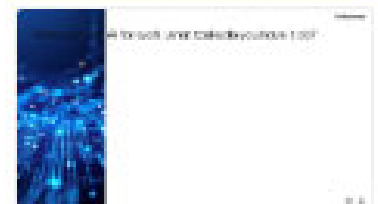


Menti

AI for Transportation Pros



Select which slide to add



Poll Question



Join at menti.com | use code: 1922 6807

Mentimeter

When you use AI for work, what tasks do you have it do?

Proofread or reword text

Filling out files

.SQL

Review documents

soften up and email or to ask for summary of information

Notes

Data management and analysis

Research, loan generator, q&qc, data search

Find out results from

Draft correspondence



menti.com
1922 6807

12 of 13 responded



Menti
AI for Transportation Pros



Select which slide to add



When you use AI for work?

0. Answer 0.00% 0.00% 0.00%



When you use AI for work?

What is AI?



Predictive and
generative capabilities



Already in use? Spell
check, voice assistants



Expands access to
expertise

AI is Predictive by Nature

AI leverages a **probabilistic approach**, instead of a deterministic one. While this means a greater range of solutions, it also means it's guessing instead of knowing. This can be helpful for finding alternate paths/patterns, but can lead to unreliability in answers.

Figure 1. Visualization of A* Pathfinding Algorithm in Chicago, IL.



Popular AI Tools

ChatGPT

Microsoft Copilot

Google Gemini

Perplexity

Grok



Copilot



ChatGPT



PERPLEXITY

Gemini



Grok

Pricing

Most tools are **free to start**
-- paid tiers typically run
\$15–\$20/month

Restrictions: Message limits,
older models, no memory,
limited file uploads

Paid Advantage: Paid unlocks
faster models, longer
context, more uploads, and
priority access -- most tasks
don't require it



Transportation-Related AI Tools

Replica

replicahq.com

Travel demand modeling, corridor planning, equity analysis

StreetLight Data

streetlightdata.com

Origin-destination patterns, multimodal traffic volumes

Blyntsy

blyntsy.com

AI detects roadway hazards from dashcam footage; used by state DOTs

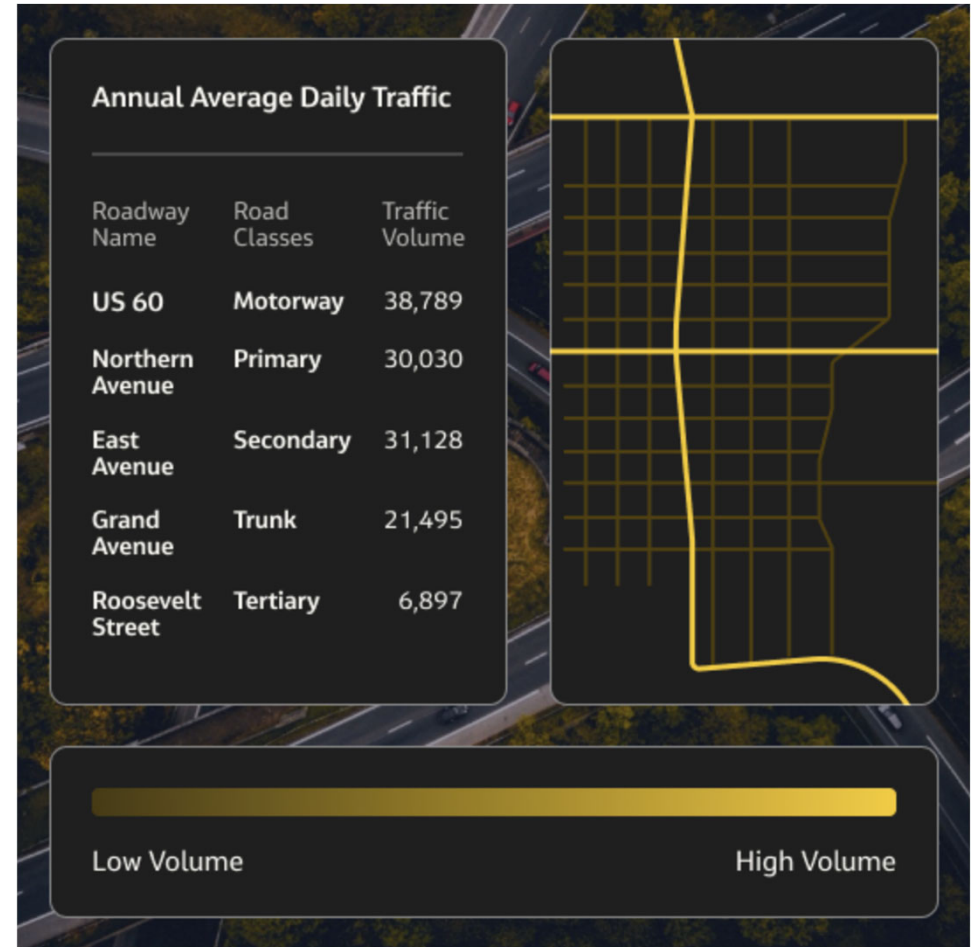


Fig 1. Visual from Streetlight Data

Key Tips

Pick one tool and start using it

Don't get stuck comparing models



Ways to Use AI



Write & edit emails, documents

Project start up

Generate ideas

Find funding/grants/RFPs

Write reports, grants, presentations, case studies

Summarize documents

Troubleshoot problems

Automate workflow for repetitive tasks

Research & analyze travel behavior or program data

Outreach or engagement

Create marketing/safety images, videos

Improving program design or evaluation

AI Risks

Hallucinations -- two types:

- ***Fabricated*** -- invented stats, studies, or citations. Always verify.
- ***Overgeneralized*** -- accurate on average, wrong for your context. Trust your local knowledge.

Over-reliance

- AI doesn't know your community or methodology the same way you do.

Data privacy

- Don't paste sensitive agency data into public AI tools. Check the acceptable use policy of your organization before deploying an AI model.

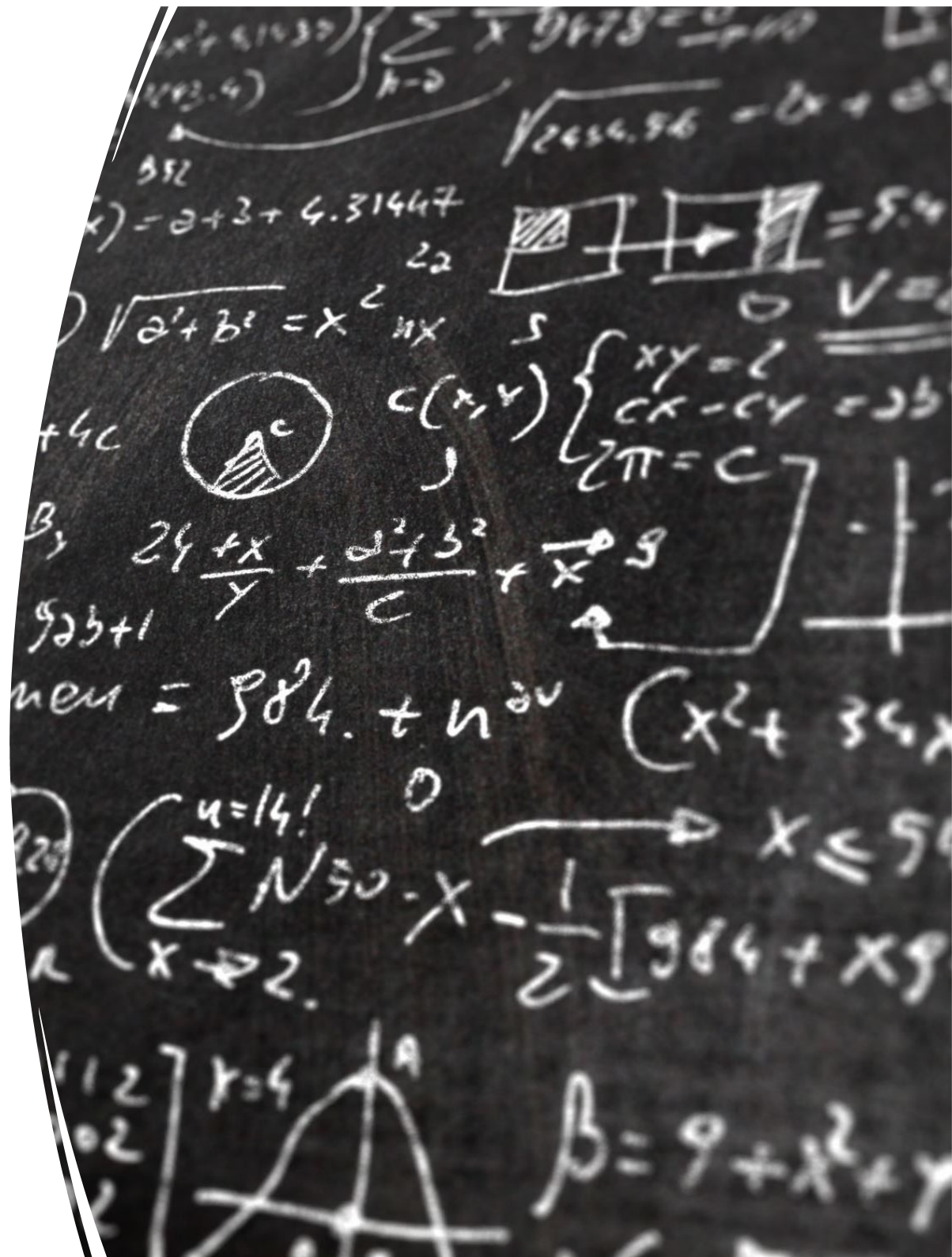


1

**LEARN
MACHINE
ENGLISH**

Prompt Formula

Role	who
Task	what
Context	which
Output	how



Prompt Formula

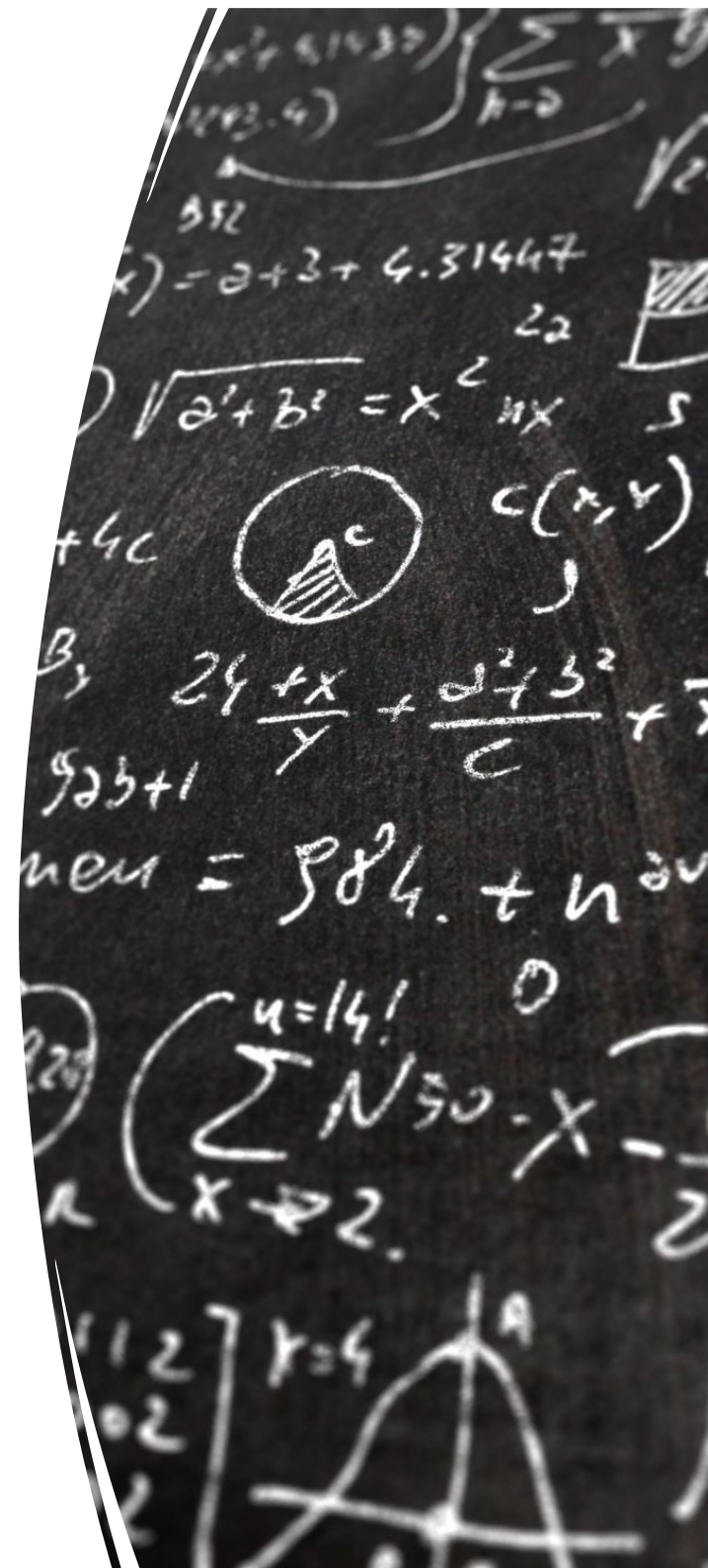
Example:

*You are a transportation
planner (role)...*

*Suggest strategies to reduce
congestion (task)...*

in a mid-sized city (context)...

*Provide them in bullet points
with explanations (output).*



Prompt Formula Example 1

Role

“You are an expert at researching transportation data and creating understandable summaries”

Task

Find recent research findings or case studies from 2020 or later about the use of vanpools including cost, trends of usage and expected outlook

Context

We are trying to increase vanpooling in the State of Florida and want to share that information with high-level executives and political leaders

Output

Create an Executive Summary of no more than 2 pages that describes the most recent research findings about the growth of vanpools in the State of Florida and list your sources.

Prompt Formula Example 2

Role

“You are an expert at marketing road safety to teenagers”

Task

Create a marketing campaign targeted to males age 16-18 who drive a vehicle.

Context

We are trying to influence male teenage drivers in Florida to avoid distractions while driving

Output

The campaign should include social media posts, images and videos to appeal to that age group. Suggest any other campaign materials that would be useful.

Prompt Formula Example 3

Role

“You are an expert at finding grants in the area of transportation”

Task

Look for grants or requests for proposals about road safety, including vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

Context

We are looking for funding in the area of transportation safety in the State of Florida.

Output

List the top 10 grants or funding opportunities ranking them by likelihood our organization would qualify. Be sure to list deadline dates for application.



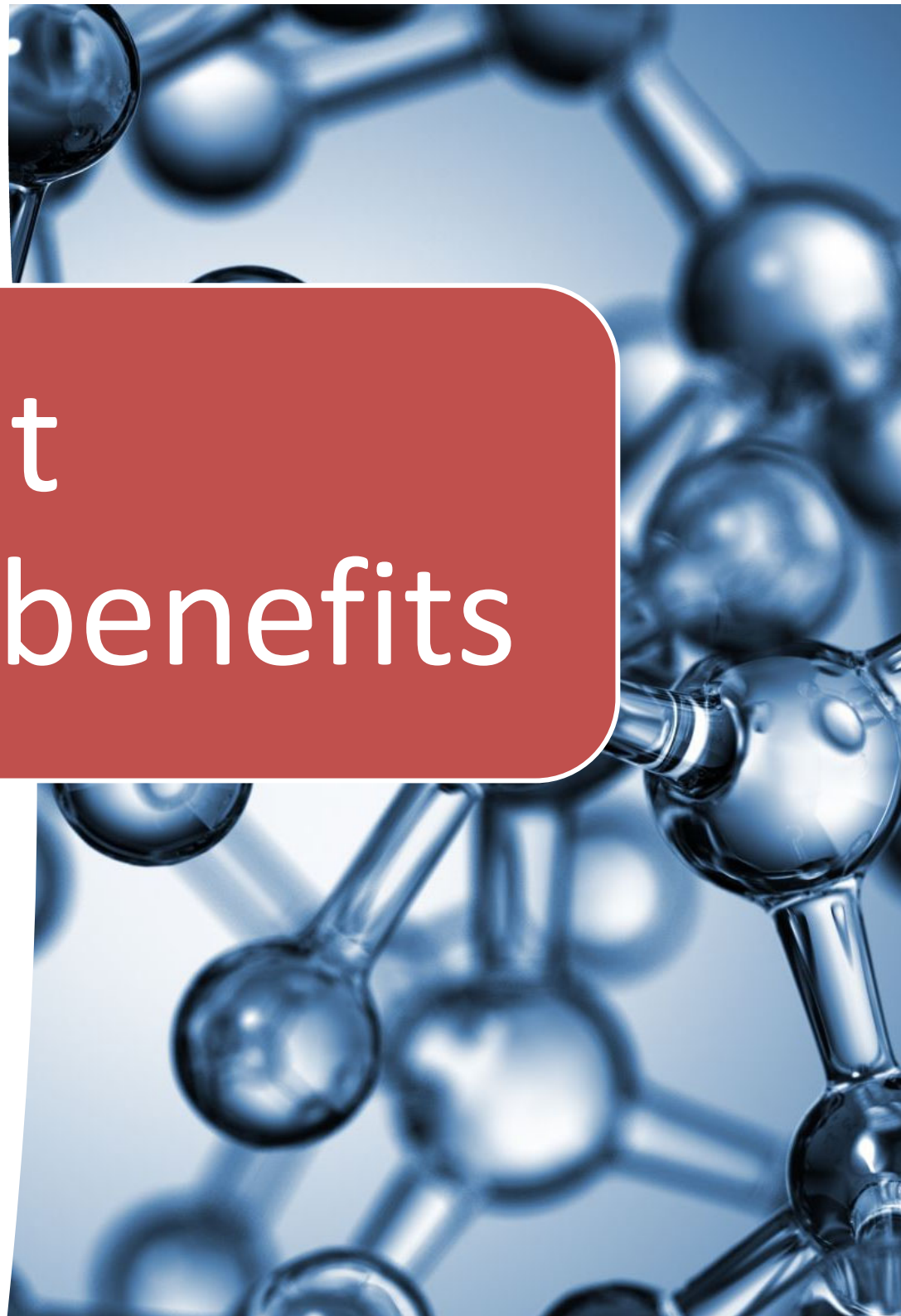
Learning Exercise 1: Prompt Improvement

See how better prompts improve results



Creating Prompts

Write about
commuter benefits



My results in Copilot

Here's a clear, engaging overview of commuter benefits—what they are, why they matter, and how they work.

What Are Commuter Benefits?

Commuter benefits are employer-sponsored programs that let employees use ****pre-tax dollars**** to pay for certain commuting costs. They're designed to make getting to work more affordable while encouraging the use of public transit, ridesharing, and other sustainable options.

These programs are governed by IRS rules in the U.S., and the allowed expenses and monthly limits are updated periodically.

How Commuter Benefits Work

Employees set aside a portion of their paycheck ****before taxes**** to cover eligible commuting expenses. Because the money is pre-tax, employees reduce their taxable income, which can lead to meaningful savings over the year.

Employers may:

- Offer pre-tax deductions only
- Contribute additional funds
- Combine both approaches

Eligible Expenses

Commuter benefits typically cover:

1. Transit

- Bus, subway, train, ferry passes
- Vanpool services
- Certain rideshare programs (when they meet IRS criteria)

My results in Copilot (cont.)

2. Parking

- Parking at or near the workplace
- Parking at a transit station used to commute

3. Bicycle Commuting

This benefit has been suspended under recent tax law changes, but some employers still offer taxable bike-related reimbursements..



Why Commuter Benefits Matter

For Employees

- Reduce taxable income
- Save hundreds to thousands of dollars annually
- Simplify commuting costs
- Encourage greener transportation choices

For Employers

- Lower payroll taxes
- Boost employee satisfaction and retention
- Support sustainability goals
- Stay competitive with modern benefits packages



Broader Impact

Commuter benefits aren't just about saving money—they help reduce traffic congestion, lower carbon emissions, and support public transit systems. They're a small but meaningful lever in building more sustainable cities.

Creating Prompts

You are a transportation and commuter benefits expert. Write a one-page overview explaining commuter benefits programs to HR managers at mid-sized companies. You want to increase the awareness and participation of employers in offering commuter benefits to employees in Florida. Include three business benefits, one statistic supporting each benefit, and a short call to action encouraging employers to implement a commuter benefits program.

My results in ChatGPT

Commuter Benefits Programs: A Practical Guide for **HR Leaders in Florida**

As competition for talent intensifies and employee expectations evolve, commuter benefits programs are emerging as a high-impact, low-cost strategy for **mid-sized employers**. These programs help employees cover the cost of getting to and from work—whether by transit, vanpool, biking, or parking—often using pre-tax payroll deductions or employer subsidies. In **Florida's** growing metropolitan regions, where commuting costs and congestion continue to rise, offering commuter benefits is both a workforce advantage and a smart business decision.

What Are Commuter Benefits?

Commuter benefits are employer-sponsored programs that allow employees to pay for eligible commuting expenses—such as transit passes, vanpool fares, or parking—using pre-tax income. Employers may also choose to subsidize these costs. These programs are authorized under IRS Section 132(f), making them tax-advantaged for both employees and employers.

Why Offer Commuter Benefits?

1. Improve Employee Retention and Satisfaction

Commuting is consistently ranked as one of the most stressful parts of the workday. Reducing that burden has a measurable impact on employee morale and retention.

Statistic: 64% of employees say their commute affects their job satisfaction, and those with long or costly commutes are more likely to seek new employment.

2. Reduce Payroll Taxes and Save Money

When employees use pre-tax dollars for commuting, employers save on payroll taxes (FICA) for those amounts.

Statistic: Employers can save approximately 7.65% in payroll taxes on every dollar employees set aside pre-tax for commuting expenses.

My results in ChatGPT (cont.)

3. Support Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility Goals

Encouraging alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle commuting helps reduce traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions—an increasing priority for stakeholders and communities.

Statistic: Transportation accounts for about 28% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, and employer programs that shift commuting behavior can significantly reduce that footprint.

Why This Matters in **Florida**

Florida's rapid population growth and expanding urban areas—such as Miami, Orlando, and Tampa—are increasing commute times and transportation costs. At the same time, many regions are investing in transit, vanpooling, and micromobility options. Employers who align with these trends can offer more flexible, cost-saving options to their workforce while strengthening their competitive position.

Getting Started

Implementing a commuter benefits program is straightforward. Most employers partner with a third-party administrator to handle enrollment, payroll deductions, and compliance. Programs can be customized to fit your workforce, whether you offer pre-tax benefits, direct subsidies, or a combination of both.

Call to Action

Now is an ideal time to evaluate how your organization supports employee commutes. By offering commuter benefits, you can reduce costs, improve retention, and demonstrate leadership in sustainability. Start by assessing employee commuting patterns and exploring program options that align with your business goals—then take the first step toward a more efficient and employee-friendly workplace.



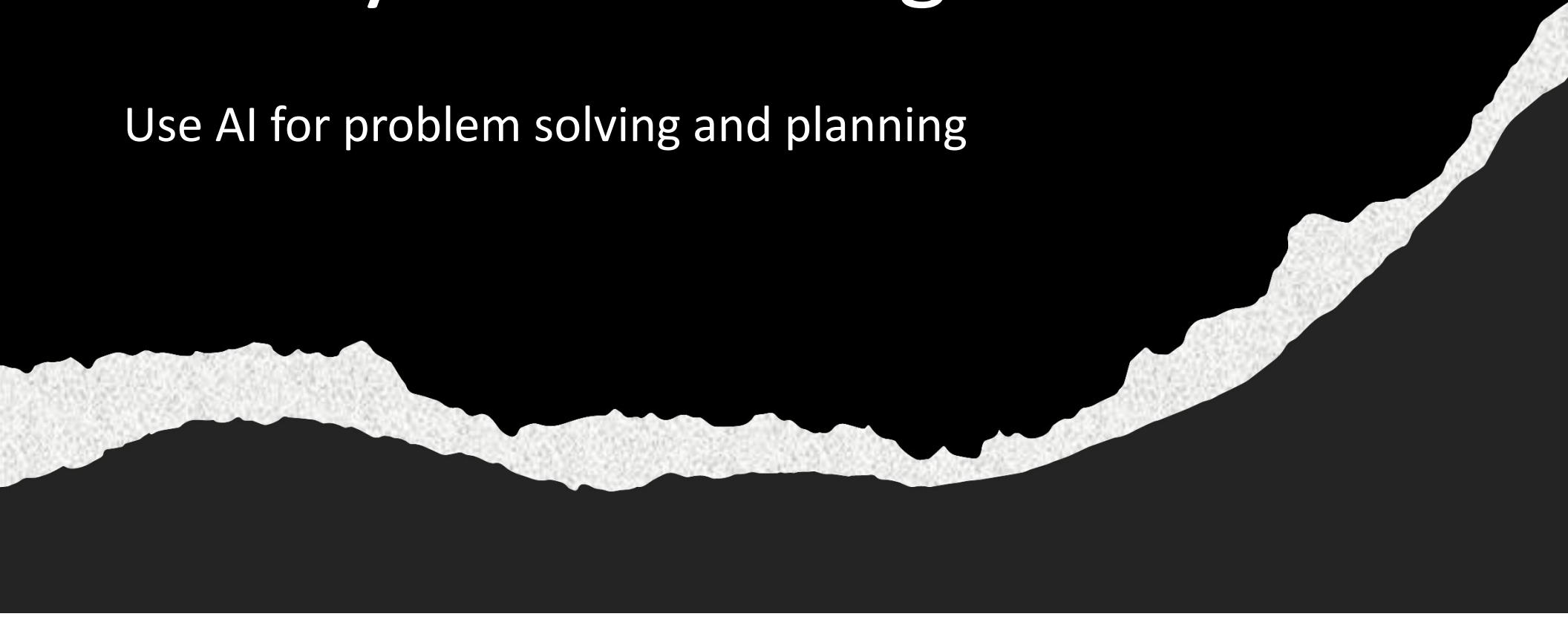
Discussion

- Targeted to HR managers at mid-size organizations
- Provided statistics
- Specific to Florida
- Call to action

Lets try another one:

AI as your Planning Assistant

Use AI for problem solving and planning



Now you create a prompt

- You are a transportation planner advising leaders in your local area.
- You want some ideas to reduce congestion without building new roads.
- You want to present these ideas to your city leaders.

Role

Task

Context

Output

My prompt

- **Role** – You are an expert transportation planner in Hillsborough County, Florida with many years of experience.
- **Task** – Search for strategies other US cities with similar population and size used to reduce congestion.
- **Context** – You want to brainstorm ways to reduce congestion without building new roads in Hillsborough County.
- **Output** – Create a list of 5 strategies, explain how it worked, list the cities that successfully implemented it. Also, be creative and develop another strategy that is thinking out of the box.

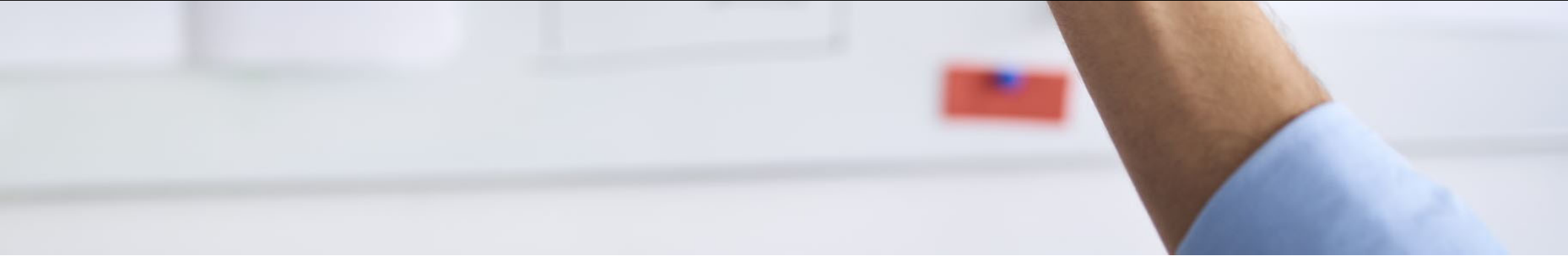
Discussion

What were your results?



Demo 3: Data Insights

Turn survey data into actionable recommendations.



Create a Prompt

You are a transportation data analyst.
Leveraging survey data on transport methods and metrics across the Tampa Bay region for commuters, identify key trends and prepare an accessible visual of those trends for a report.

An Engineered Prompt

- **Role:** You are a transportation data analyst specializing in urban and suburban commuter behavior in Florida metro regions.
- **Task:** Identify key trends across the attached dataset, including mode share distribution, the relationship between commute time and satisfaction, and cost variance by mode. Synthesize findings into 3-5 actionable takeaways relevant to regional transit planning stakeholders.
- **Context:** You have access to survey data collected from commuters across the Tampa Bay region (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and Manatee counties). The dataset includes self-reported primary transportation mode, average weekly commute time (minutes), satisfaction rating (1-5), and cost per week (USD). The survey captured responses across five transport modes: personal vehicle, public transit (HART/Pinellas Suncoast), and rideshare (Uber/Lyft). Data reflects 2023-2024 collection periods.
- **Output:** Produce a clean, accessible data visualization suitable for inclusion in a regional transportation report. Use clearly labeled charts, avoid jargon in axis labels, and ensure the visual can be understood without additional context by a general audience.

Claude's Output

TAMPA BAY AREA COMMUTER SURVEY — 2022-2024 · N = 470 RESPONDENTS

Total respondents

470

6 counties surveyed

Drive-alone share

74.9%

Most common mode

Avg. weekly commute
cost

\$68

All modes combined

Transit share combined

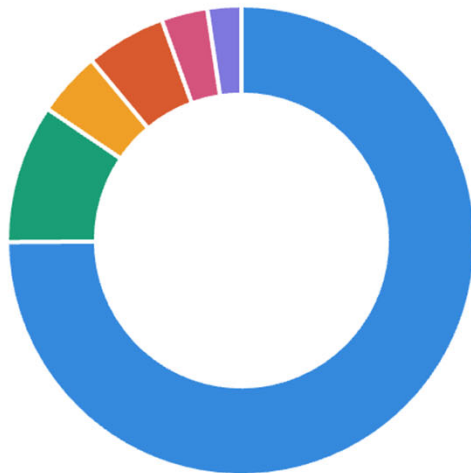
8.7%

Bus + Express Bus +
Vanpool

Mode share

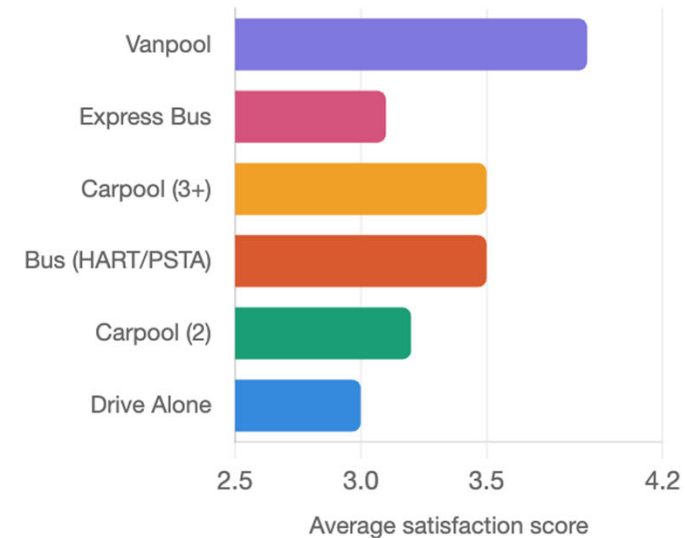
How respondents primarily travel

- Drive Alone 75%
- Carpool (2) 10%
- Carpool (3+) 4%
- Bus (HART/PSTA) 6%
- Express Bus 3%
- Vanpool 2%



Satisfaction by mode

Average rating out of 5



Verify AI Outputs

Check assumptions

Validate sources

Cross-check models



Improve Results



BE SPECIFIC



ASK FOR EVIDENCE



PUSH FOR
STRONGER INSIGHTS

Final Takeaways



AI is a tool, not a replacement for expertise



Prompt quality matters



Start small and experiment



Take-home Tools



AI Prompt Formula



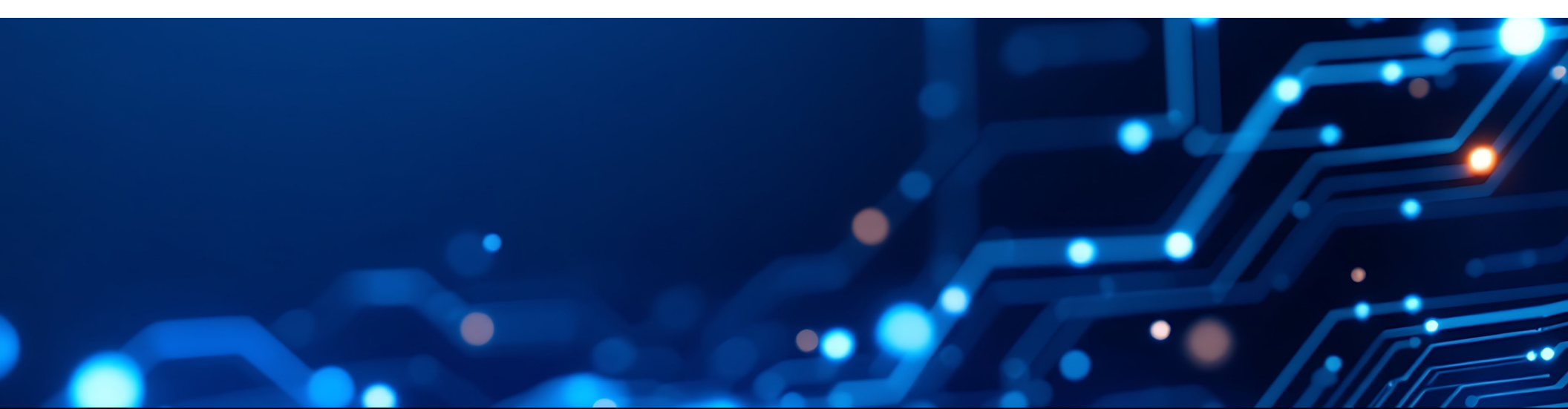
Examples of AI Prompts



List of AI Terms

<https://guides.lib.usf.edu/AI/whatis>





Please complete the evaluation

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YTD7FZN>

Next Workforce Development Course

Mobility on Demand

Thursday, June 4, 2026

1pm – 2pm ET

Register Today

<https://www.commuterservices.com/courses/>





Christine Epps, Training Support Specialist
Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida
cepps@usf.edu



Evan Fruehauf, MLIS, Assistant Librarian
USF Libraries
University of South Florida
efruehauf@usf.edu

Thank You!