

BONUS CHAPTER

100+ AI Power Prompts

"Ab is '*The Simplifier*' when explaining how AI works and knowing how to deploy it for outsized impact."

- DANG LE, CEO AND INVESTOR

ESSENTIAL

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AI

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AB DEWEESE

FOREWORD BY RISHI KHAN, PH.D.

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BONUS CHAPTER:

Power Prompts for Productivity

Throughout my book, Essential AI, I shared a bit about myself: my work experiences, a little about my family, my startup companies, and my personal passions, like jujitsu and pursuing a Ph.D. in physics. But one thing I didn't mention is that I do all of this while also managing ADHD. In fact, I suppose it's possible I do all of this because of ADHD. You see, I have lots of interests, and I love pursuing all of them. Having a foot in all these places enriches my life. But to juggle all my activities and priorities, I have to work hard at focus and personal productivity. I have an ADHD coach who has taught me about the science and practice of thriving with ADHD as a business leader and entrepreneur, and I am an aficionado of personal productivity hacks and life philosophies that enable me to do everything I want to do without constantly careening off track (something that's easy to do not only for people with ADHD but for just about everyone in our short-attention-span world).

Because this has been an area of deep learning and a lifetime practice for me, I am in the process of writing a book on ADHD for entrepreneurs and businesspeople like me. In my research and practice, I've found that there are powerful productivity and focus strategies that leverage AI that work for people with ADHD and everyone else, too. My book is in process, but I will share some of these ADHI-enabled tips here in the form of a bonus chapter. (Btw, ADHI is an acronym for Attention Deficit - Human Intelligence, my own way of seeing my ADHD as a superpower when effectively channeled!)

In this chapter, you'll find several categories of productivity hacks that can help you in your professional and personal lives. These include ADHD-friendly strategies, science-backed productivity hacks, productivity tips for collaboration and group work, and advice based on 3 philosophical traditions. These are all paired with powerful AI prompts that will help shortcut these strategies and put them into practice -- over 100 ADHD power prompts in all.

If you, too, are living with ADHD (or you think you might be) and are interested in learning more about my upcoming book, visit abdeweese.com and add your name to my e-newsletter list so that you'll be alerted when the book is published.

One last note before we dive in: It's easy to become overwhelmed by too much information. I don't want you to feel like you must try everything in here. There are lots of prompts included in this chapter because no single technique is right for everyone at every time. Different tips will appeal to different people, and they may be more or less relevant depending on what's on your plate. So, scan the list. Consider which of these tips and techniques would work for you right now. Try one or two to start and see how they feel. You can come back and scan this list again when you want to switch things up.

ADHD-FRIENDLY PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES

ADHD-friendly productivity strategies are based on neuroscience and behavioral research and help manage executive function challenges like task initiation, focus, time blindness, and working memory. AI can be an excellent support tool for people with ADHD, helping to provide structure, reminders, motivation, and cognitive offloading. These are powerful strategies, but make no mistake—they will work for you whether you have ADHD or not.

Below are science-backed ADHD productivity strategies, along with AI prompts to implement them.

Body Doubling (Virtual Accountability)

Why It Works: People with ADHD often find it easier to stay on task when someone else is working nearby. This is called body doubling—even a virtual presence helps reduce distractions.

How AI Helps: AI can act as a virtual body double to keep you accountable during tasks.

AI Prompts:

- *“Act as my virtual coworker. As I start my work session, ask me what I plan to accomplish.”*
- *“Simulate a coworking session with me by prompting me to describe my task before I begin and summarizing my progress when I finish.”*
- *“Give me a three-minute ‘pep talk’ to get me started on a task I’ve been avoiding.”*

Time Blindness & The Now/Not Now Problem

Why It Works: People with ADHD struggle with time perception and often underestimate how long things take.

How AI Helps: AI can help externalize time, provide realistic time estimates, and improve task initiation.

AI Prompts:

- *“Estimate how long these tasks will actually take me.”*
- *“Break down [task] into steps, assign realistic time estimates, to help me stay on track.”*
- *“Help me prioritize. I have 45 minutes free. What’s the best way to use it?”*

The 'Wall of Awful' & Task Initiation Struggles

Why It Works: ADHD brains may see tasks as mentally exhausting, leading to avoidance. Breaking tasks into smaller, low-pressure steps reduces overwhelm.

How AI Helps: AI can make tasks less intimidating by reframing them or breaking them down. By the way, for any parents out there, this is a great way to motivate kids to do their chores or their homework, too. When you make things fun, the drudgery disappears almost magically.

AI Prompts:

- *"Help me get started on [task] by breaking it into three tiny steps, each under five minutes."*
- *"Reframe [task] in a way that makes it feel less overwhelming or stressful."*
- *"Give me a silly challenge or a fun way to make [boring task] more enjoyable."*
- *"Write me a motivation boost to hype me up before I start [task]."*
- *"Turn (insert boring task) into a game with a ridiculous name and fun rules."*
- *"Invent a silly backstory where I'm the hero, and completing this (task) will save the world."*
- *"Rewrite my to-do list as if it were a reality TV challenge."*

The Dopamine Deficit & Reward-Driven Motivation

Why It Works: ADHD brains seek dopamine hits, so pairing boring tasks with enjoyable elements boosts motivation.

How AI Helps: AI can make tasks less intimidating by reframing them or breaking them down. By the way, for any parents out there, this is a great way to motivate kids to do their chores or their homework, too. When you make things fun, the drudgery disappears almost magically.

AI Prompts:

- *“Turn my to-do list into a game where I earn points for each completed task. Include a challenge where I invite a friend into the game that makes getting through our to-do lists into a friendly competition.”*
- *“Suggest a dopamine-friendly reward system I can use to stay motivated while working.”*
- *“Help me pair a boring task with something enjoyable (e.g., music, movement, a snack).”*
- *“Create a fun, ADHD-friendly challenge to help me finish [task] quickly.”*

Hyperfocus: Managing the ‘ADHD Superpower’

Why It Works: ADHD brains sometimes enter hyperfocus—a state of deep concentration where time disappears. While productive, it can lead to burnout or ignoring other priorities.

How AI Helps: AI can help define time limits, build in breaks, prevent time blindness, and help with task switching.

AI Prompts:

- *“What are signs that I’m overusing my focus energy, and what should I do when I notice them?”*
- *“Suggest a natural ‘breakpoint’ in this task where I should stop and reassess.” “Create an ‘exit strategy’ that I can put on my calendar at a specific time to help me transition out of hyperfocus mode when necessary.”*
- *“Suggest a short ‘brain reset’ activity to help me shift from one task to another.”*

Executive Dysfunction & Decision Paralysis

Why It Works: People with ADHD often struggle to start tasks due to decision fatigue and difficulty structuring work.

How AI Helps: AI can simplify choices, create clear next steps, and reduce overwhelm.

AI Prompts:

- *“If I can’t decide what to do next, ask me guiding questions to help me prioritize.”*
- *“Narrow down my choices for [decision] to just two or three options.”*
- *“Write a short, structured plan for how I should tackle [complex project].”*
- *“Generate a checklist that simplifies [task] into easy steps I can follow.”*

Out-of-Sight, Out-of-Mind Problem

Why It Works: ADHD brains struggle with object permanence, meaning tasks or obligations that aren’t visually present can be forgotten.

How AI Helps: AI can create external reminders, visual cues, and ‘brain dumps.’

AI Prompts:

- *“Summarize my current tasks into a simple, easy-to-see list I can pin somewhere.”*
- *“Help me create a visual system for remembering important deadlines; make it fun.”*
- *“Generate a quick ‘review list’ of questions I need to ask myself before bed to set myself up for success tomorrow.”*

Sensory & Environment-Based Productivity Hacks

Why It Works: People with ADHD are often more sensitive to their surroundings—small distractions can derail focus, while the right environment can boost performance.

How AI Helps: AI can help create ADHD-friendly workspaces and suggest sensory adjustments.

AI Prompts:

- *“Suggest background music or sounds that improve ADHD focus.”*
- *“Help me design a distraction-free workspace tailored for my sensory needs.”*
- *“List physical movement breaks I can take to reset my focus.”*
- *“Help me find the best lighting and desk setup to reduce visual distractions.”*

Remember, ADHD brains thrive on structure, novelty, and accountability—AI can provide external supports to help manage time, focus, and motivation. AI helps by acting as a virtual assistant, focus coach, and motivator. AI can help ADHD individuals and anyone who struggles with focus build productivity systems that actually work.

SCIENCE-BACKED PRODUCTIVITY HACKS

There is an excellent body of literature on productivity, with strong science backing it up. Here, I'll touch on research-backed hacks to help you stay focused and productive. Then, I'll provide an AI power prompt to help you execute it.

Time Management

Hack: The Pomodoro Technique

Research-Backed: Studies show that working in short, focused sprints (25 minutes on, 5 minutes off) improves concentration and prevents burnout.

AI Prompts:

- *“Create a Pomodoro schedule for me based on my tasks today, optimizing for deep work in the morning and admin tasks in the afternoon.”*
- *“Customize a Pomodoro plan for me, factoring in my most difficult tasks first, my typical energy dips, and the need for creativity versus execution. Ask me questions that will help you create this for me.”*
- *“Adjust my Pomodoro work sessions for a longer task requiring deep focus—should I extend the work period or modify my breaks?”*

Hack: Task Batching

Research-Backed: Context switching wastes cognitive energy; batching similar tasks together (e.g., email, calls, writing) increases efficiency.

AI Prompts:

- *“Categorize my to-do list into logical task batches and suggest a structured work plan.”*
- *“Suggest a batching system for both work and personal tasks, making sure to reduce task switching.”*

Focus & Deep Work

Hack: Eliminate Decision Fatigue

Research-Backed: The brain gets exhausted making decisions all day; routines and automation save mental energy.

AI Prompts:

- *“Help me create a daily routine that minimizes decision fatigue while optimizing my peak energy times.”*
- *“Design a morning and evening routine that reduces decision fatigue while still allowing for flexibility.”*
- *“Identify areas in my daily life where automation could reduce decision fatigue (e.g., meal planning, outfit selection, recurring tasks).”*

Hack: Cognitive Offloading

Research-Backed: Writing things down (or outsourcing memory to AI) reduces cognitive load and improves focus.

AI Prompts:

- *“Summarize my notes from today’s meeting and generate action items for me.”*
- *“Create a streamlined note-taking system for me that ensures I capture key insights without information overload.”*
- *“Extract the most relevant insights from my past week’s notes and summarize them into actionable takeaways.”*

Decision-Making

Hack: The Eisenhower Matrix

Research-Backed: Prioritizing tasks based on urgency and importance increases effectiveness. Upload your task list, then try these prompts.

AI Prompts:

- *“Sort my task list using the Eisenhower Matrix and suggest what to delegate or eliminate.”*

- *“Take my current to-do list and separate tasks into four quadrants: urgent-important, urgent-not-important, important-not-urgent, and neither. Provide recommendations for handling each.”*
- *“Suggest a method for reducing the number of ‘urgent-but-not-important’ tasks I deal with each week.”*

Hack: Pre-mortem Strategy

Research-Backed: Thinking ahead about what could go wrong in a project helps mitigate risks.

AI Prompts:

- *“Pretend my project has failed. List the top five reasons why, so I can address them proactively.”*
- *“For my current project, create a scenario where it fails in six months—list both internal and external reasons why.”*
- *“What warning signs should I monitor to predict potential failure in this project before it happens?”*

Motivation & Procrastination

Hack: Temptation Bundling

Research-Backed: Pairing an unenjoyable task with a pleasurable one boosts motivation (e.g., only watching your favorite show while exercising).

AI Prompts:

- *“Suggest a temptation bundling strategy for [task I’m procrastinating on].”*
- *“Generate a list of rewarding activities I can pair with tasks I tend to procrastinate on, ensuring they are productivity-enhancing rather than distractions.”*

- *“If my goal is [e.g., exercising more], suggest fun temptation bundling strategies that work with my interests and daily schedule. Please ask me questions first to make sure you can customize these strategies for me.”*

Hack: Implementation Intentions

Research-Backed: Setting specific “if-then” plans increase follow-through (e.g., “If it’s 8 AM, then I will start my report”).

AI Prompts:

- *“Help me create implementation intentions for my biggest goals this week.”*
- *“For my most frequently postponed tasks, generate ‘if-then’ plans to increase my likelihood of completing them.”*
- *“Identify moments in my schedule where I can insert micro-routines using the if-then strategy to improve consistency.”*

Energy & Well-Being

Hack: Circadian Rhythm Alignment

Research-Backed: Aligning work with natural energy cycles increases productivity.

AI Prompts:

- *“Based on my usual energy levels throughout the day, suggest an optimized daily schedule. Please ask me questions so that you can assess how to most effectively help me.”*
- *“Suggest how I should structure my workload for maximum efficiency based on my energy levels during different seasons.”*

Hack: Active Breaks

Research-Backed: Short walks or physical activity boost cognitive function and creativity.

AI Prompts:

- *“Give me a five-minute physical movement routine that improves posture and reduces stiffness after long work sessions.”*
- *“Suggest different types of short breaks (e.g., movement, breathing, mindfulness) depending on the type of work I’m doing.”*

COLLABORATIVE PRODUCTIVITY

Team productivity techniques are just as important as individual strategies. Below are research-driven approaches that can make the best of teamwork and collaboration. Try these in conjunction with your colleagues on the collaborative AI platform CollabChat AI (collabchat.ai).

Team Task Management & Prioritization

Hack: Shared Eisenhower Matrix

Research-Backed: Prioritizing tasks as a team increases alignment and reduces wasted effort. Upload relevant documents, then try these prompts.

AI Prompts:

- *“Sort our team’s task list into the Eisenhower Matrix and recommend what to delegate or delay.”*
- *“Analyze our backlog and suggest which tasks should be grouped or re-prioritized for efficiency.”*

Hack: Workload Balancing

Research-Backed: Uneven task distribution leads to burnout and inefficiency.

AI Prompts:

- *“Assess team workloads and suggest a fairer task distribution based on capacity and strengths.”*
- *“Identify who on the team is overloaded and suggest ways to redistribute tasks.”*

Effective Team Communication

Hack: AI-Powered Meeting Summaries

Research-Backed: Summarizing key points and action items prevents information loss.

AI Prompts:

- *“Summarize today’s meeting and extract action items for each team member.”*
- *“Generate a follow-up email from our meeting that clearly outlines next steps.”*

Hack: Asynchronous Updates

Research-Backed: Reducing unnecessary meetings improves productivity.

AI Prompts:

- *“Summarize the latest project updates and provide a quick digest for those who missed the meeting.”*
- *“Generate a message or email update covering key team accomplishments from this week.”*

Brainstorming & Decision-Making

Hack: AI-Moderated Brainstorming

Research-Backed: Structured brainstorming leads to more innovative ideas.

AI Prompts:

- *“Facilitate a brainstorming session by generating 10 initial ideas for [problem] and prompting the team for further input.”*
- *“Combine our team’s best ideas into a single, cohesive proposal.”*

Hack: AI-Assisted Pros & Cons Analysis

Research-Backed: Making group decisions based on structured evaluation leads to better outcomes.

AI Prompts:

- *“Generate a pros and cons list for [decision] based on our team’s input.”*
- *“Suggest alternative solutions for our current challenge, weighing risks and benefits.”*

AI-Powered Decision Matrix

Use Case: Need help deciding between options? AI can help create a weighted decision matrix.

How AI Helps:

- *AI can generate a spreadsheet with weighted scoring for different factors.*
- *You define criteria (e.g., price, features, reviews), and AI assigns scores to help you objectively compare choices.*

AI Prompt:

- *“Create a weighted decision matrix for choosing between [product A, product B, product C] based on criteria like price, durability, and customer reviews.”*

Cross-Team Collaboration

Hack: Knowledge Sharing

Research-Backed: Transparent information flow prevents bottlenecks.

AI Prompts:

- *“Summarize key insights from [Team A]’s report and explain how [Team B] can use them.”*
- *“Draft a shared knowledge base entry on [topic] to help onboard new team members faster.”*

Hack: AI-Powered Conflict Resolution

Research-Backed: Proactively addressing team tensions leads to better collaboration.

AI Prompts:

- *“Analyze our team feedback and suggest ways to improve collaboration.”*
- *“Reframe this tense email into a more constructive and solution-focused response.”*

Shared Focus & Productivity Boosts

Hack: Collaborative Pomodoro Sessions

Research-Backed: Group focus sessions increase accountability and productivity.

AI Prompts:

- *“Create a Pomodoro schedule for our team, aligning deep work periods and check-ins.”*
- *“Suggest a way to sync our team’s focus sessions while accommodating different time zones.”*

Hack: Collaborative Pomodoro Sessions

Research-Backed: Group focus sessions increase accountability and productivity.

AI Prompts:

- *“Create a Pomodoro schedule for our team, aligning deep work periods and check-ins.”*
- *“Suggest a way to sync our team’s focus sessions while accommodating different time zones.”*

Hack: AI-Optimized Team Breaks

Research-Backed: Synchronized team breaks improve mental refreshment and reduce burnout.

AI Prompts:

- *“Suggest a shared team break schedule that balances productivity with rest.”*

- *“Recommend fun, quick activities our remote team can do together to recharge.”*

Tracking Progress & Accountability

Hack: AI-Generated Progress Reports

Research-Backed: Regular check-ins improve accountability and motivation.

AI Prompts:

- *“Generate a weekly team progress report highlighting key wins, challenges, and next steps.”*
- *“Create a daily stand-up summary based on our team’s task updates.”*

Hack: Goal Alignment

Research-Backed: Teams perform better when individual goals align with company objectives.

AI Prompts:

- *“Analyze our current goals and suggest ways to align individual efforts with our team’s broader objectives.”*
- *“Identify any misaligned priorities and propose adjustments.”*

AI-Enhanced Learning & Skill Building

Hack: Team Knowledge Gaps Analysis

Research-Backed: Addressing collective skill gaps enhances team effectiveness.

AI Prompts:

- *“Analyze our team’s skill sets and suggest areas where we should invest in learning.”*
- *“Recommend microlearning topics based on our project challenges.”*

Hack: Peer Coaching with AI Support

Research-Backed: Coaching improves knowledge retention and team growth.

AI Prompts:

- *“Match team members with complementary skills for peer coaching.”*
- *“Create a structured learning plan for our team to master [new tool/skill].”*

AI-Powered Collaboration & Automation

Hack: Automating Repetitive Tasks

Research-Backed: Automation frees up cognitive resources for high-impact work.

AI Prompts:

- *“Identify repetitive tasks our team does frequently and suggest automation solutions.”*
- *“Generate email templates for common team communications to save time.”*

Hack: Smart AI Assistant for Team Queries

Research-Backed: Quick access to shared knowledge improves efficiency.

AI Prompts:

- *“Set up an AI chatbot that can answer our team’s frequently asked questions.”*
- *“Summarize our past discussions on [topic] and provide key takeaways.”*

Philosophy Frameworks for Productivity

Several life philosophies can enhance productivity, reduce stress, and increase fulfillment by shaping how we approach work, time, and effort. Below are eight productivity-boosting philosophies, along with AI prompts to help apply them in daily life.

Kaizen (Continuous Improvement)

Philosophy: Small, consistent improvements over time lead to massive growth. Instead of overwhelming yourself with big changes, focus on tiny, incremental steps.

How It Boosts Productivity: Helps build momentum and reduces mental resistance to starting tasks.

AI Prompts:

- *“Break my big goal into the smallest possible first step I can take today.”*
- *“Suggest a daily micro-habit that will lead to long-term improvement in [skill/habit].”*
- *“Help me reflect: What small improvement did I make this week, and how can I build on it?”*

Stoicism (Emotional Resilience & Focus)

Philosophy: Focus on what you can control and let go of what you cannot. Avoid wasting energy on distractions or emotional reactions that don't serve you.

How It Boosts Productivity: Reduces procrastination, decision fatigue, and stress by maintaining focus and emotional control.

AI Prompts:

- *“Reframe this frustration I’m feeling into a more constructive perspective.”*
- *“List the things I can control about this situation and what I need to let go of.”*
- *“Help me practice detachment: How would a Stoic approach [challenging situation]?”*

Essentialism (Do Less, But Better)

Philosophy: Not all tasks are created equal—eliminate the non-essential and focus only on what truly moves the needle.

How It Boosts Productivity: Reduces burnout, increases meaningful output, and improves decision-making by cutting out distractions.

AI Prompts:

- *“Help me identify the 20% of tasks that will give me 80% of my results.”*
- *“Which of my current obligations could I eliminate or delegate to create more focus?”*
- *“Rewrite my to-do list using the Essentialist approach—only list the truly important things.”*

The 85% Rule (Optimal Effort, Not Perfection)

Philosophy: Peak performance happens when you're working at 85% effort, not 100%. Pushing too hard can lead to burnout and inefficiency.

How It Boosts Productivity: Encourages sustainable progress and reduces perfectionism.

AI Prompts:

- *"How can I work at 85% effort today instead of exhausting myself?"*
- *"Help me reframe perfectionist tendencies so I can complete tasks faster."*
- *"Suggest ways to recognize when I'm overexerting myself and need to pull back."*

The Pareto Principle (80/20 Rule)

Philosophy: 80% of results come from 20% of efforts. Identify and prioritize high-impact actions instead of being busy for the sake of being busy.

How It Boosts Productivity: Helps maximize efficiency and avoid wasted effort.

AI Prompts:

- *"Analyze my task list and highlight the 20% of tasks that will create 80% of my results."*
- *"Suggest how I can spend more time on high-leverage work and less on low-value tasks."*
- *"Based on the 80/20 rule, what should I stop doing immediately?"*

Memento Mori (Use Mortality as Motivation)

Philosophy: Remember that time is finite—work on what truly matters.

How It Boosts Productivity: Encourages urgency, clarity, and meaningful action.

AI Prompts:

- *“If I had only one year left to accomplish my most important goal, what would I do today?”*
- *“Remind me of the bigger purpose behind my daily work when I feel unmotivated.”*
- *“Help me reframe my procrastination—if my time was limited, what would be worth doing?”*

Parkinson’s Law (Work Expands to Fill the Time Available)

Philosophy: Work takes as long as you allow it. Set tight deadlines to force efficiency.

How It Boosts Productivity: Helps beat procrastination and improves efficiency by avoiding unnecessary perfectionism.

AI Prompts:

- *“Set an artificial deadline for me to finish [task] in half the time I originally planned.”*
- *“Turn this big project into a series of timed sprints to create urgency.”*
- *“Help me eliminate unnecessary steps in my workflow that slow me down.”*

The Rule of 3 (Simplify Your Focus)

Philosophy: Instead of overwhelming to-do lists, pick just three main goals each day, week, and month.

How It Boosts Productivity: Prevents task overload, keeps focus clear, and improves completion rates.

AI Prompts:

- *“What are the three most important things I should accomplish today?”*
- *“Help me refine my weekly goals down to just three key priorities.”*
- *“Remind me that if I finish these three things today, I’ll have had a productive day.”*

Bonus: How to Integrate These Philosophies into Daily Life

AI-Powered Workflow Idea:

- *Morning: Ask AI for a daily priority list using Essentialism and the Rule of 3.*
- *Mid-Day Check-In: Use Parkinson’s Law to set a deadline sprint for unfinished tasks.*
- *End of Day: Reflect on Kaizen (small improvements) and Pareto (80/20 insights).*
- *Long-Term Reflection: Use Memento Mori and Stoicism to ensure you’re working on things that truly matter.*

CONCLUSION

Readers, I hope you found these focus and productivity hacks helpful. Remember, you don't need to try them all. Just try those that resonate with you.

If you'd like more information about how to use AI to improve your productivity in business and the workplace, you'll find tons of valuable knowledge in my book *Essential AI: Your All-in-One QuickStart to Using AI in Business and The Workplace*. If you haven't read it yet, find it on Amazon or at <https://abdeweese.com/book/> and dive in. You'll be using AI like a pro in no time. If you have any ideas, comments, or questions, contact me directly at connect@abdeweese.com. I hope to hear from you.