

Prompting for Impact in .NET

Using Copilot to Think, Not Just Code

Who Am I?



- Consultant @ Lean TECHniques
- Helping enhance teams with AI
- Blogging occasionally at fullproductdev.com
- Tinkerer: music, woodworking, automations
- Rarely on social, usually building something instead



<https://leantechniques.com>



[patrick-robinson-dev](https://www.linkedin.com/company/patrick-robinson-dev)



[patrob](https://github.com/patrob)



[patrobdev](https://x.com/patrobdev)



@patrobdev - fullproductdev.com

Agenda

- What is “Prompting for Impact”?
- Is This Just Prompt Engineering?
- How to Get More Out of GitHub Copilot Than Just Code
- Demo on Boilerplate API
- Final Thoughts
- Q&A
- Resources

Assumptions

- We're going to be using GitHub Copilot
- Prompting is Non-Deterministic - and we want Deterministic-ish outcomes
- AI won't take your job, but a developer equipped with AI tools might
- Not all codebases are created equal, nor are LLMs

Image by [Austin Chan](#)



What is “Prompting for Impact”?

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Is This Just Prompt Engineering?

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How to Get More Out of GitHub Copilot Than Just Code

Modes of Interaction with AI:

- Learning
 - Q&A
 - Role Play (Teacher/Student)
- Brainstorming
 - Rubber Ducking
 - Deep Research
- Impact
 - Combining Insight with Action
- More

How to Get More Out of GitHub Copilot Than Just Code

Typical Prompting:

- Write a function that does XYZ
- What does this code do?
- *Insert boring request with little to no context*

Prompting for Impact:

- Discovery, Context Building, then Act
- As a PO/PM, explain why this code exists...
- *Build context around why, determine the what, let Copilot handle* the how*

**A responsible developer OWNS the outputs and outcomes of the generated code. Do not blindly trust it. Verify it - with tests, and small, tightly-scoped changes.*

How to Get More Out of GitHub Copilot Than Just Code

- Tools for a better experience:
 - Custom Instructions
 - Reusable Prompts
 - Chatmodes
 - [awesome-copilot](#) repo has great examples!
 - (Beast Mode!)

Demo Time

Final Thoughts

- Utilizing custom instructions and chatmodes are a game changer
- Learning how to prompt better will increase mileage with Copilot
- There's always something new to learn, so make learning a habit
- Try seeing what an AI-first mentality does in your workflow
 - Ask, "Have I tried using AI to solve this problem?"
 - Or ask AI, "How might an expert ____ approach this problem?"
 - Or get meta, "Give me a prompt that accomplishes ____"
- Experiment, try new things, document and share it

Questions?

Thanks!

Link to resources



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