

# The 5-Page Guide to Using GenAI tools in Your Accounting Workflow *with* *Mark Wickersham*





## INTRODUCTION

AI is no longer just a buzzword—it's transforming the way businesses operate, and accounting firms are no exception. One of the most exciting tools out there is Generative AI (GenAI), like ChatGPT. If you've ever thought AI was only for tech giants, think again!

GenAI is now more accessible than ever and can help accounting professionals with everything from managing workflows to offering better client services.

Think about all the repetitive tasks that eat up your time—onboarding new clients, analyzing financial data, writing content for marketing. Now, imagine automating many of those processes. That's where GenAI comes in. It's like having an extra team member who works quickly, never gets tired, and can handle all sorts of tasks.

In this guide, Mark Wickersham, Chartered Accountant, public speaker, and #1 best-selling author, Value Pricing Academy, shares how you can integrate AI into your accounting workflow to save time, improve efficiency, and deliver more value to clients.

*You can watch a replay of Mark's session at Workflow Summit [here](#).*



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## GenAI & Your Accounting Workflows

Accounting firms are constantly juggling tasks—data entry, client communications, financial analysis—and all of this can be time-consuming. That's where GenAI steps in to help.

- 1. Save Time with Automation:** One of the biggest benefits of using AI is the time it saves you. With **GenAI**, you can automate everyday tasks like writing emails, preparing reports, or even creating templates. Instead of spending hours on these routine tasks, AI can handle them in minutes, freeing you up to focus on more valuable work, like advising clients or growing your firm.
- 2. Improve Your Client Advisory Services:** Speaking of client advisory, GenAI can help you deliver more value to your clients. With its ability to quickly analyze large datasets, generate reports, and even forecast trends, you'll be able to offer insights that set you apart from the competition. Your clients will appreciate the faster turnaround and the depth of the analysis you can provide.
- 3. Create Content in a Snap:** Have you ever tried to **write** but you couldn't stop staring at the blank page? AI can help generate emails, blog posts, and even social media content without breaking a sweat. It's a powerful way to keep your clients engaged and your brand visible without spending hours at your keyboard.



## How to Get Started with Gen AI

Getting started with Gen AI, like ChatGPT, is straightforward. Here are the first steps to take:

- 1. Create an Account:** If you haven't done so already, the first step is to sign up for ChatGPT, which is free to use. While the free version offers powerful capabilities, upgrading to the paid version gives you access to additional features and more frequent usage without limitations.
- 2. Understand Prompt Basics:** Once you've set up your account, the next step is learning how to interact with the AI through prompts. Start with simple prompts to get a feel for how ChatGPT responds. You can ask it to generate an email template or help you create a task list. The more you play around with it, the better you'll understand its strengths and limitations.
- 3. Use AI for Personal Tasks First:** A great way to get familiar with ChatGPT is to use it for personal tasks. For example, you can use it to plan your schedule, analyze the lyrics of a song, or even help with travel plans. This hands-on experience will help you understand how to phrase your prompts and get the most accurate results.
- 4. Identify Use Cases for Your Firm:** Once you're comfortable with ChatGPT, start looking for practical applications in your accounting firm. The key is to identify repetitive or time-consuming tasks that AI can handle. Whether it's drafting client emails, analyzing financial data, or helping with [client onboarding](#), ChatGPT can assist you in improving efficiency.
- 5. Learn Prompt Engineering:** Prompt engineering is necessary because the more specific and detailed your instructions are, the better ChatGPT will perform. It's a skill that can drastically improve how you use AI in your workflow, so it's worth dedicating some time to mastering it.



## Tips for Effective Prompt Engineering

A key part of using GenAI tools like ChatGPT effectively is mastering prompt engineering. Simply put, prompt engineering is the process of crafting clear and structured instructions for the AI to follow. The way you phrase your prompts can make a big difference in the quality of the results you get. Here are some essential tips to get the most out of your AI:

1. **Be Specific:** When you're creating a prompt, it's important to provide as much detail as possible. The AI performs better when it understands the context of the task. For example, if you're asking ChatGPT to help you draft an email, let it know who the email is for, the main points you want to cover, and the tone you'd like to use. The more specific you are, the more accurate the result will be.
2. **Give Context About Your Firm:** This could include the type of clients you work with, the services you offer, or even the tools you use. When the AI understands your specific context, it can generate workflows, emails, or marketing content tailored to your needs.
3. **Use Variables for Flexibility:** When you create prompts for recurring tasks, consider using variables. This allows you to use the same prompt for multiple situations with minor adjustments. For example, if you have a prompt for client onboarding, you can set it up with variables for client name, specific services, and timelines. That way, you can reuse the same prompt without starting from scratch every time.





4. **Test and Refine Your Prompts:** Don't expect perfection the first time you use a prompt. You might need to tweak it, adding more detail or rephrasing your request for better results. Start with simpler prompts, observe the AI's responses, and then refine your approach based on what works. Over time, you'll learn the best way to phrase your prompts to get exactly what you need.

**Must read: [100 ChatGPT Prompts for Accountants and Bookkeepers](#)**

5. **Save and Reuse Templates:** If you've created a prompt that works well for a specific task, save it! You can build a library of prompts for tasks like drafting emails, creating financial reports, or automating workflows. These can become part of your firm's standard operating procedures, allowing you to save time in the long run and maintain consistency across tasks.



## About Financial Cents

**Financial Cents** is a workflow management software that has all the features you need to get work done in a simple user interface that your team will love it and find it easy to use.

Financial Cents is always looking for ways to use technology (including AI) to help you:

- **Creating and managing projects** and collaborating (with your staff) in one place.
- **Manage client information** and collaborate to strengthen your client relationships.
- **Time Tracking** to get work done and receive payment faster.
- **Manage team capacity** to do more meaningful work and retain your best talents.

Don't take our word for it; hear what our **clients** have to say.

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