

Can I Put This Into AI?

A 10-second check before you paste anything into a chatbot.

The Golden Rule: don't outsource your judgement, and don't share sensitive data.

THE 10-SECOND PASTE TEST

Would I be comfortable if this got out?

Before you paste anything into a public AI tool, ask one question: **Would I be comfortable if this appeared outside the company?** If the answer is no, don't put the real thing in.

WHAT COUNTS AS SENSITIVE

Never paste these into a public chatbot

- Client or customer names, accounts, and personal details
- Unreleased financials, deal terms, or strategy
- Anything covered by a contract or NDA
- Health, HR, or other personal data about real people
- Source code or proprietary documents your company owns

THE SWAP-IT-FOR-FICTION TRICK

Keep the productivity, lose the risk

You usually don't need the real data to get the help. Feed the AI a **fictional, what-if version** instead. Swap the real client for "a mid-sized manufacturing client." Change the real \$4.2M figure to a made-up one. Strip the names. You still get help with structure, tone, and logic, and nothing confidential leaves the building.

WHEN YOU GENUINELY NEED THE REAL THING

Two safer routes

- Use your employer's **sanctioned, enterprise-tier** tool, where data is generally excluded from training by default. Confirm that's how yours is set up.
- Run a **private or local AI model** on your own machine, so the data never leaves your device.