

Using custom GPTs to create good risk descriptions

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Risk management is one of those disciplines in project management that is often done “somehow” – but rarely done properly. Everyone in the project intuitively knows what is meant when someone says, “The supplier is wavering.” But you can’t just dump a statement like that into the risk register. And anyone who has ever held a risk workshop knows what we’re talking about: there are dozens of cards on the whiteboard – some with uncertainties, some with impacts, and very often the little green men from Mars.

This is where it gets exciting: How do we turn such incomplete, often flippant descriptions—a cacophony of risks, so to speak—into a clearly structured, technically sound risk description? And how can ChatGPT—or, more precisely, our own custom GPT—help with this?

The risk meta-language provides guidance

The basic idea is simple: we take the human, sometimes chaotic language of projects and convert it into a format recommended in standards such as the PMBOK Guide. This is because it defines quite clearly how risks should be described, ideally in what is known as the “risk meta language”: a risk consists of a cause and uncertainty, as well as the impact on the project objectives.

This may sound trivial, but in everyday life, it is often precisely this that causes problems. Take the example above: an important supplier is showing signs of economic weakness, perhaps facing insolvency—and although it is clear to everyone that this could become a problem, it is rarely stated explicitly:

“Due to the supplier’s financial difficulties (see article in the FAZ on April 1), there is a possibility that they will slide into insolvency and then no longer be able to fulfill their delivery obligations, which would lead to significant delays in the project schedule and mean that we would no longer be able to go live on September 1 and would incur a contractual penalty.”

Instead, the meeting is more likely to say: “The supplier is wavering.” Sound familiar? But try managing “no people,” “no money,” or “too much work.” This is where a custom GPT becomes a real game changer.

Why a custom GPT?

Of course, you could generate each risk individually and manually via a prompt. But it is much more elegant to build your own GPT, which you teach permanently:

- that the input is mostly colloquial,
- that it should be translated into the Risk Meta Language,
- and that the structure remains consistent, professional, and compliant with standards.

So you create a small set of rules—for example, in a Word document—and use this as the basis for the GPT. The document contains typical specifications: What belongs in the cause? How is uncertainty formulated? What types of effects should be taken into account?

This creates a kind of “mini-standard” that the GPT

consistently applies. The advantage: No matter how flippant, chaotic, or spontaneous the input is, the output remains clean, complete, and reliable and is an “assistance” output in the sense of the PMBOK Guide 8th edition.

From chaos to clarity – automatically

In the example with the supplier, you would enter something like this into the GPT: “Our supplier could go bankrupt. They already have major problems elsewhere.” The custom GPT then looks at the specifications in the rulebook and produces a perfectly structured risk description, including the cause, uncertainty, and clear impact on the project goals.

This step is where the real added value lies: instead of manually formulating the same train of thought every time, the GPT does the routine work. The team saves time, quality improves, and the risk register becomes a real management tool instead of a collection of notes – after human approval, of course.

Using a custom GPT is not a gimmick, but a practical extension of professional project work. By clearly explaining to the AI what a good risk description should look like, you get a reliable tool for everyday project work.

How to build your own custom GPT – a brief step-by-step guide

The real magic begins when you create your first custom GPT. It’s surprisingly easy. Here is a concise guide:

1. Open the “Custom GPTs” section in ChatGPT

The ChatGPT menu now includes an “Explore GPTs” section. There you will find not only ready-made templates, but also the “Create” option, which you can use to build your own GPT. One click – and we’re taken to the construction kit.

2. Formulate the basic task

The first step is to describe your mission statement to the GPT. In other words: “You receive a colloquial description of a risk and convert it into a clean, standard-compliant risk description using a defined set of rules.”

This is essentially the GPT’s compass.

Erstellen

Konfigurieren

+

Name

RisikoFormulierer

Beschreibung

Erstellen einer guten Risikobeschreibung

Hinweise

Du erhältst eine umgangssprachliche Beschreibung eines Risikos und wandelst sie anhand eines definierten Regelwerks in eine saubere, standardkonforme Risikobeschreibung um

Gespräche mit deinem GPT können unter Umständen alle oder Teile der angegebenen Hinweise enthalten.

Gesprächsaufhänger

Wissen
Gespräche mit deinem GPT können unter Umständen alle oder Teile der hochgeladenen Dateien offenlegen.

Risikobeschreibung PMI...
Dokument

Datei hochladen

Empfohlenes Modell
Du kannst dem Benutzer ein Modell empfehlen, das standardmäßig verwendet werden sollte, um die besten Ergebnisse zu erhalten.

Kein empfohlenes Modell – Benutzer verwenden ein beliebiges Modell entsprechend ihren Vorlieben

Funktionen

☒ Internetsuche
☒ Canvas

The screenshot above shows the configuration interface of a custom GPT titled “Risk Formulator.”

The interface is divided into two main tabs at the top:

- Create and Configure, with the Configure tab currently selected.

Below, the following fields and settings are visible:

- Name: The custom GPT is named Risk Formulator.
- Description: “Create a good risk description.”
- Instructions: A text box containing guidance that says:

“You receive an informal description of a risk and transform it into a clean, standard-compliant risk description based on a defined set of rules.”
- Conversation Starters: This section is empty.
- Knowledge: A document titled “Risikobeschreibung PMI...” has been uploaded as reference material.
- Preferred Model: Set to “No preferred model – the user may use any model based on their preferences.”
- Features:
 - Internet access: Enabled
 - Canvas: Enabled
 - Image generation: Enabled
 - Code interpreter & data analysis: Disabled.

3. Upload the set of rules

Now comes the heart of the matter: the small document that sets out the rules for clean risk descriptions.

Typical contents:

- How the risk meta-language is structured
- Examples of good wording
- Specifications for causes, uncertainty, effects

Notes on typical project goals (time, costs, scope, quality).

This Word document is simply uploaded during the GPT creation process. This means your custom GPT always has access to it—and the rules don’t have to be resubmitted with every request.

4. Define sample inputs and outputs

Optional, but very helpful: you can give the GPT a few examples, such as:

Input: “The supplier is totally unreliable.”

Output: a complete, neatly structured risk statement.

This allows the model to immediately understand how to handle subsequent real inputs.

Our chief developer was involved in a bicycle accident and we have practically no buffer in the schedule.

Here is the clean, standard-compliant RML risk description based on your informal input.
(The rules come from the provided document.)

Risk Description (RML)

Cause:

Because the chief developer is currently unavailable due to a bicycle accident and there is virtually no time buffer in the project schedule...

Uncertainty:

...there is a possibility of delays in development, as key technical tasks may not be completed as planned.

Impact:

...with the consequence that planned delivery dates may be at risk and quality objectives may not be met due to reduced development capacity.

Qualitative Assessment

- **Probability of Occurrence (QETW): 4**
(High probability, but not certain > 50%. If you assess the absence as critical for the project, a rating of 5 would also be justifiable.)
- **Impact (QAW): 5**
(Threatens critically important project objectives such as timelines and quality.)



5. Refine settings

Here you can specify a few more details:

Which tools should the GPT be allowed to use? (usually none are necessary)

Should it always use the same tone of voice? (e.g., factual, precise)

Should it be allowed to ask questions if something is unclear?

A factual, neutral tone is recommended for risk descriptions—after all, the wording should fit the register.

6. Publish and test

Finally, give the GPT a suitable name such as “RiskGPT” or “Risk Formulator” and you can try it out right away.

Simply enter a vague uncertainty, e.g., “The colleague from the department is completely overloaded; no idea how we’re going to get the specifications in time.”

And presto: you receive a professionally crafted risk description.

7. Benefits in real everyday project work

The best thing about it: GPT works consistently. No matter who from the team enters an uncertainty, the wording always ends up in the same structure, always complete, always clean. Over time, this creates a really good risk register that is no longer diluted by stylistic inconsistencies or a lack of clarity.

But it goes without saying: don’t just accept this description without checking it. It’s only a suggestion from a good assistant—it has no idea about real life.



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