5 Steps to Meeting Minutes You Can Actually Use to Make a Decision

AI will generate a draft even from a one-line prompt, but **you are the one who makes the minutes decision-ready**: before generation, explain to the model who will make what decision; afterwards, verify action items and conditions against the recording.

1 **Define the recipient and the goal** ☐

State explicitly in your prompt who the document is being prepared for and what decision that person needs to make.

2 **Provide external context** ☐

Attach a short background note (participant roles, the essence of mentioned projects, hard external deadlines) and require the model to keep it separate from the outcomes of the meeting itself.

3 **Require timestamps and status separation** ☐

Ask the model to distinguish firm decisions from opinions and proposals, account for corrections made at the end of the discussion, and include timestamps for key remarks.

4 **Verify the draft against the recording** ☐

Use the timestamps to check whether AI assigned anyone “ghost” tasks or distorted cautious phrasing when summarizing the transcript.

5 **Use the minutes to prepare the next meeting** ☐

Add confirmed updates from the week and ask AI to compile a list of follow-up questions —without assuming tasks are complete simply because their due date has passed.

> **The “Ghost Action Items” Trap.** “We still need to align on the workload estimate” is a condition, not an assigned action item. Verify the “Owner” column against what people actually said.

A full breakdown with real responses from Claude and Codex plus a ready-to-copy prompt is available in the article **“The ‘Ghost Action Items’ Trap”**.