

Writing work emails with AI: 12 ready-to-use prompts

Teach AI your voice once, then draft 12 tricky emails — follow-ups, price increases, apologies, unpaid invoices — in minutes, sounding like you.

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For most of us, writing work emails isn't a time problem — it's an energy problem. The hard part isn't typing; it's wondering "How do I say this politely?", "Is this too harsh?", "Is a third follow-up rude?" AI helps a lot here, on one condition: you teach it to write like you. Otherwise you get the same stiff, over-polite, overly long emails everyone now recognises.

In this guide we'll first **teach the AI your voice once**, then build a **six-part frame** you can use for every email, and finally I'll give you copy-paste prompts for the 12 situations you run into most.

What you need

- An account on ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini (free plans are enough for this guide).
- Three emails you've written where you think "yes, that's me". Pick different situations: one formal, one friendly, one short reply.
- Optionally, a writing checker like Grammarly for English emails.



ChatGPT

An all-round chat assistant for writing, ideas, summaries and everyday questions.

[Open the tool: chatgpt.com](https://chatgpt.com)



Claude

A strong assistant for long documents, careful writing and coding work.

[Open the tool: claude.ai](https://claude.ai)

Step 1: Teach the AI your voice once

Saying "friendly but professional" in every request isn't enough — that phrase means something different to everyone. Instead, show the AI your own emails and ask it to build a **voice profile**. You create it once, then paste it at the top of every email request or save it in the tool's persistent instructions.

PROMPT 1

You are an experienced copy editor. Below are 3 work emails I wrote. Your task is to analyse my writing style and produce a "voice profile" another AI could use to write like me.

Look at:

- My greeting and sign-off habits
- Sentence length and paragraph structure
- Level of formality
- Words and phrases I use often
- Things I avoid (e.g. exclamation marks, emoji, long intros)
- How I phrase a request

Output format: a list of at most 12 points. Each point must be concrete and usable ("sentences rarely exceed 15 words", not "writes short"). End with a "Never do" section of 3-5 points.

Email 1:

[paste email]

Email 2:

[paste email]

Email 3:

[paste email]

Read the list and correct it. The AI sometimes draws the wrong conclusion; if it says "formal" but you actually adapt to each client, add that. Keep this list in a note: in every prompt below, paste it wherever you see **[my voice profile]**.

Make the profile permanent

If you don't want to paste it every time, save your voice profile as custom instructions in ChatGPT (the personalization section in Settings), as profile preferences in Claude, or as project instructions. It will then apply automatically to every new chat.

Step 2: A six-part frame for every email

A good email request answers six questions. Writing them takes 30 seconds, and it's the single biggest lever on output quality.

Part	Question	Example
Goal	What should happen after this email?	I get a date for a meeting.
Reader	Who are they, and what's our relationship?	A marketing manager I've never spoken to.
Context	What background do they need?	They relaunched their website last month.
Ask	What exactly do I want from them?	A 20-minute call next week.
Tone	What feeling should it leave?	Clear, warm, not pushy.
Length	How many sentences or words?	120 words max.

PROMPT 2

Write a work email on my behalf.

My voice profile:

[my voice profile]

Goal: [what should happen after this email]

Reader: [who, relationship to me]

Context: [background they need]

Ask: [exactly what I want from them]

Tone: [e.g. clear and warm]

Length: [e.g. 120 words max]

Rules: Give 3 subject line options. The body must contain one clear ask. No cliché openings or sign-offs. Don't invent information; if something is missing, leave it as a [bracketed placeholder].

Tone words: which one to use when

The tone word you give the AI changes the output a lot. Two words together ("clear and warm") usually work better than one.

Tone	When	Watch out
Formal	Institutions, first contact, legal or financial topics	Can feel cold alone; try "formal but warm".
Friendly	Long-term clients, internal team	Early familiarity with a stranger can put people off.
Clear	Emails with a decision, date, price or "no"	Add one line of thanks so it doesn't read as curt.
Warm	Apologies, thank-yous, relationship building	Keep it from drifting into gushing.
Firm	Collections, setting boundaries, recurring issues	Don't let it use blaming language ("you again...").
Calm	Tense situations, complaint replies	Have it remove defensive sentences.
Brief	Busy people, follow-ups	Make sure essential context isn't dropped.

12 ready-to-use prompts

In every prompt below, replace **[my voice profile]** with your own profile. If you saved it as persistent instructions, you can delete that line.

First contact and follow-ups

PROMPT 3 — Cold intro

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

Write a first-contact email to [person's role, company], whom I've never met. I do [what you do]. My reason for writing: [specific reason, e.g. their new branch]. My ask: [e.g. a 15-minute call].

Rules: Max 100 words. The first sentence is about them, not me. No flattery. End with a single question. Suggest 3 subject lines.

PROMPT 4 — Follow-up after no reply

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

On [date] I sent this email to [person] and got no reply:
[original email]

Write a short follow-up. Don't use guilt-inducing phrases ("you haven't replied", "sorry to bother you again"). Add one small new piece of value or information: [e.g. a quick example, a new time option]. Max 60 words.

PROMPT 5 — Politely saying no

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

[Person] asked me: [request]. I can't accept because [real reason]. Write an email that says a clear "no" without damaging the relationship. Offer an alternative if possible: [alternative, or write "no alternative"]. Apologise at most once. Max 90 words.

Client relationships

PROMPT 6 — Price increase announcement

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

Write a price update email to my existing clients.

- Service/product affected: [what]
- Effective date: [date]
- Real reason: [e.g. rising costs, added service]
- Anything special for existing clients: [e.g. old price valid until [date]]

Rules: State the change clearly in the first paragraph. Explain the reason in one or two sentences without getting defensive. Say how to reach me with questions. Use numbers and dates exactly as I gave them; don't add new ones.

PROMPT 7 — Apology / complaint response

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

A client sent this complaint:

[complaint – remove personal details]

Here's what happened: [what went wrong on our side, where they're right]. Our fix: [concrete solution and date].

Write a calm, warm reply. First acknowledge how they feel, then take responsibility (don't accept blame for parts that weren't our fault), then state the concrete fix and date. Avoid stock phrases like "We apologise for any inconvenience". Max 150 words.

PROMPT 8 — Asking for a testimonial or review

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

We just finished [what we did] with [client name]. I'd like to ask for a short review/testimonial for [where I'll use it, e.g. my website, my Google Business Profile].

Rules: No pressure; make it easy to say no. Add 2-3 guiding questions to make it easier (e.g. "What did you find most useful?"). Don't offer to write the review for them. Max 100 words.

PROMPT 9 — Meeting request

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

Write a meeting request to [person]. Topic: [topic]. Length: [minutes]. What I want to walk away with: [decision/outcome]. Times I'm available: [2-3 options].

Rules: In one sentence, explain why this can't be solved over email. List the options as bullet points. Max 90 words.

PROMPT 10 — Chasing an unpaid invoice politely

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

Payment for [invoice no. / job] from [client] is [number] days overdue. This is my [first/second] reminder. Payment details: [how to pay – add sensitive details to the email yourself].

Write a polite but firm reminder. State the amount and due date clearly, avoid blaming language, and say I'm open to talking if there's a problem. Ask for a specific new date. Max 90 words.

Hard moments and long threads

PROMPT 11 — Rewriting an angry draft calmly

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

I wrote the email below while angry. Rewrite it before I send it:
[draft]

Rules: Keep every valid point and request; don't soften any of them away. Remove sarcastic, passive-aggressive and blaming phrases. Put facts and the outcome I want ahead of emotion. Then, under "What I removed", briefly list what you changed and why.

PROMPT 12 — Summarising a long thread into a reply

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

Below is a long email thread:
[thread – strip signatures and personal details]

- 1) First summarise it in 5 bullet points: what was discussed, what was decided, which questions are still open, what's expected of me.
- 2) Then write a reply on my behalf: answer each open question (leave a [bracket] where you don't know) and state the next step clearly.

PROMPT 13 — English email from Turkish notes

You are a native English business writer. Below are my notes in Turkish for an email to an international client. Write the email in natural, clear business English – not a literal translation.

My notes (Turkish):

[your Turkish notes]

Reader: [who they are, which country if relevant]

Goal: [what should happen after they read it]

Tone: [e.g. friendly and direct]

Rules: Max [120] words. Avoid overly formal phrases and clichés. After the email, add a short "Check this" section listing any sentence where my meaning might have been unclear.

PROMPT 14 — Newsletter intro

My voice profile: [my voice profile]

Write the intro paragraph for this issue of my newsletter. This issue covers: [2–4 headlines]. My readers: [who]. A short thought or observation I want to share with them this week: [your real note].

Rules: Max 80 words. Build it around my note; don't invent anecdotes. Don't open with stock phrases like "In this issue we have...". End with one sentence that points readers to the first story.

The title says 12 and you're seeing 14: the first two (voice profile and frame) are the foundation, and the other 12 are situation-specific.

Don't paste sensitive customer data

Don't paste national ID numbers, bank details, home addresses, or health and financial information about customers into an AI chat. Use placeholders like [client] and [amount] instead, and add the real details yourself when you send the email. If your company has AI usage rules, check them first.

How to check the output

1. Read it out loud. Wherever you think "I wouldn't say that", change it.
2. Is there one ask? The reader should be able to say in one sentence what they're supposed to do.
3. Check every number, date and name against the source. AI mixes these up easily.
4. See if it could be cut in half. It usually can.
5. If you don't like it, don't start over — edit: "Drop the second paragraph, make the sign-off clearer."

Targeted edits get you there faster every time.

Common mistakes

- **Sending without reading.** This is the biggest risk. An invented date or a wrong name is worse than not sending the email at all.
- **Emails that are too long.** AI writes long by default. Put a word limit in every prompt.
- **No context.** Ask for "an apology email to a client" and you'll get something generic. Say what happened and what you'll do.
- **Leaving AI clichés in.** Readers spot them instantly. If you see any of the phrases below, delete them or have them removed.

Turkish clichés	English clichés
"Umarım bu e-posta sizi iyi bulur"	"I hope this email finds you well"
"Size ulaşmaktan mutluluk duyuyorum"	"I wanted to reach out"
"Sorunsuz ve kusursuz bir deneyim"	"Seamless experience"
"Bu heyecan verici yolculukta"	"In today's fast-paced world"
"Değerli geri bildirimleriniz bizim için çok önemli"	"Your feedback is invaluable"
"Herhangi bir sorunuz olursa çekinmeden..."	"Please don't hesitate to reach out"
"Sinerji", "vizyoner", "oyunun kurallarını değiştiren"	"Delve", "leverage", "game-changer"

To make this stick, add a line like this to the "Never do" section of your voice profile: "Don't use stock openings like I hope this email finds you well, inflated adjectives or unnecessary thank-you sentences."

Next step

Do one thing this week: build your voice profile with Prompt 1 and save it as persistent instructions. Then pick the hardest email waiting in your inbox and write it with one of the prompts above. If you want to turn your profile into a persistent assistant across tools, continue with the [build your personal AI assistant guide](#). To hear about new prompt sets, [join the newsletter](#).

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