

AN EVERYDAY LEARNING FINDS PROMPT PACK

AI Prompts for Small Business Owners

50+ copy-paste prompts that work like a marketing team, a customer-service desk, and a business coach — without hiring any of them.

50+ COPY-PASTE PROMPTS • CHEAT SHEET INCLUDED

EVERYDAY LEARNING FINDS

What's Inside

1. Introduction: The Team You Never Hired
2. Chapter 1: How to Talk to AI (The 10-Minute Primer)
3. Chapter 2: Marketing & Advertising Copy (Prompts 1–10)
4. Chapter 3: Social Media & Email Marketing (Prompts 11–19)
5. Chapter 4: Customer Service & Reviews (Prompts 20–27)
6. Chapter 5: Hiring, Training & SOPs (Prompts 28–35)
7. Chapter 6: Finance, Pricing & Planning (Prompts 36–43)
8. Chapter 7: Operations & Productivity (Prompts 44–51)
9. Quick-Reference Cheat Sheet (Printable)
10. Closing: Start With Three Today

How this guide works: Every prompt in this pack is copy-paste ready. Replace the text in **[BRACKETS]** with details from the business, paste it into any AI tool (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot — the free versions all work), and get a working first draft in seconds. Each prompt shows when to use it and a pro tip for getting more from it.

Introduction: The Team You Never Hired

Most small business owners wear every hat in the shop. In a single morning, the same person opens the register, answers the phone, writes the Facebook post, trains the new hire, and fixes the thing that broke at the worst possible time. There is no marketing department. There is no copywriter. There is no assistant standing by.

That is exactly the gap this pack fills. The 51 prompts inside are the missing team — **marketing, customer service, hiring, planning, and finance** — written in plain business language, ready to use the moment they are needed. No tech skills required. No learning curve measured in weeks. Copy, paste, customize the [brackets], done.

Everyday Learning Finds built this pack around one rule: **every prompt must earn its place.** Each one is specific to how small businesses actually operate — the bakery, the plumbing company, the boutique, the landscaping crew. There is no generic filler, no theory, no fluff. If a prompt does not save real time or produce real business output, it did not make the cut.

One warning before starting: AI is a very fast junior assistant, not a partner with judgment. It drafts quickly, but it can get facts wrong and it has never run a business. Chapter 1 takes ten minutes and shows exactly how to get great results while staying in charge. Read it first — it makes every prompt in the pack work twice as well.

> **The deal:** Use three prompts this week. If each one saves even thirty minutes — and most save far more — this pack pays for itself before Friday.

Chapter 1: How to Talk to AI (The 10-Minute Primer)

Getting good results from AI is not a technical skill. It is a communication skill — and small business owners already have it. Anyone who has ever told an employee "make the flyer look nice" and then said "no, make it look more like this" already understands the whole method. The AI is the new employee. The owner is still the boss. These five habits are the difference between useless output and work worth using:

1. Give it context

AI knows nothing about the business unless it is told. A prompt that says "write a sale announcement" produces a bland template. A prompt that says "write a sale announcement for a family-owned bakery in Ohio known for sourdough, announcing 20% off all bread every Friday in October" produces something usable. **Two sentences of context multiply the quality of everything else.**

2. Be specific about the output

State what the result should look like: the format (email, flyer, script), the length (3 sentences, 200 words, one page), and the audience (busy parents, homeowners over 50, first-time buyers). Vague requests get vague answers.

3. Assign it a role

Starting a prompt with "Act as a marketing consultant for local service businesses" or "Act as an HR advisor for small teams" focuses the response. The role sets the vocabulary, the level of detail, and the perspective.

4. Never accept the first draft

The first answer is a starting point, not a finished product. Follow up with "make it shorter," "make it friendlier," "add a call to action," or "give me three versions of the headline." **Iteration is where the value lives.** Two or three rounds of refinement take five minutes and turn decent output into great output.

5. Learn the [bracket] convention

Every prompt in this pack uses **[BRACKETS]** to mark the spots that must be customized. Replace each bracket with the real details — the business name, the price, the neighborhood, the deadline. The brackets are not decoration; filling them in is what turns a generic prompt into a business-specific tool.

What AI is bad at — know the limits:

- **Numbers and facts.** AI can invent statistics, prices, and regulations with total confidence. Verify every number before it goes public.
- **Final decisions.** AI suggests; the owner decides. Pricing changes, hiring choices, and legal wording stay human.
- **Customer privacy.** Never paste customer names, credit card details, or sensitive personal information into a free AI tool. Use "a customer" instead of names.

💡 Framework: The CONTEXT Loop

Before pasting any prompt, run the **CONTEXT** check: **C**ustomer (who is this for?), **O**ffer (what is being sold or asked?), **N**eed (what should the reader do next?), **T**one (friendly, professional, urgent?), **E**xamples (a past winner to imitate), **X**clusions (what to avoid). Fill in whatever applies, skip the rest — and the AI will sound like it works for the business instead of against it.

Chapter 2: Marketing & Advertising Copy

Marketing is where small businesses bleed the most time and money. Agencies charge thousands for work an owner can now draft in an afternoon. These ten prompts cover the core assets: the offer, the ad, the flyer, the website words, and the seasonal campaigns that actually drive foot traffic.

1 The Core Offer Statement

> Act as a marketing strategist for small local businesses. I own [TYPE OF BUSINESS] in [CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD], serving [TARGET CUSTOMERS]. Our main advantage is [KEY ADVANTAGE, e.g., same-day service, family-owned since 1985, lowest prices in town]. Write a clear, compelling one-paragraph offer statement that explains what we do, who it's for, and why someone should choose us over competitors. Keep it under 80 words, plain language, no hype.

When to use it: When the website, Google Business Profile, or any ad needs a clear "who we are" paragraph — the foundation every other marketing piece builds on.

> **Pro tip:** Paste the output into three other prompts in this chapter as the context block. One strong offer statement feeds every other asset.

2 Headlines That Stop the Scroll

> Act as a direct-response copywriter for local businesses. My business: [TYPE OF BUSINESS], known for [KEY ADVANTAGE]. I need 10 headlines for [WHERE IT WILL APPEAR, e.g., a Facebook ad, a flyer in a coffee shop, the top of my website]. Audience: [TARGET CUSTOMERS]. Each headline under 12 words. Mix styles: benefit-focused, curiosity-driven, question-based, and urgency-based. No clickbait, no exaggeration I can't back up.

When to use it: Before running any ad or posting any promotion — the headline does 80% of the work.

> **Pro tip:** Test the top 3 as a Facebook post each; the one with the most comments wins and becomes the ad headline.

3 Facebook/Instagram Ad Copy

> Act as a social media advertiser for local small businesses. Write a Facebook ad for [TYPE OF BUSINESS] in [CITY]. The offer is [SPECIFIC OFFER, e.g., 15% off first visit, free estimate]. Target audience: [TARGET CUSTOMERS]. Include: a hook in the first line, 3 short benefit bullet points, and a clear call to action with [PHONE/WEBSITE]. Keep total length under 125 words. Tone: friendly and direct, like a neighbor recommending something.

When to use it: Running local ads — especially service businesses, retail promotions, and seasonal offers.

> **Pro tip:** Always add "Tag a friend who needs this" style language for service businesses; ask the AI to include a share-friendly closing line.

4 Google Business Profile Description

> Act as a local SEO copywriter. Write a Google Business Profile description for [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS] in [CITY]. Services include [LIST 3-5 KEY SERVICES]. What makes us different: [KEY ADVANTAGE]. Naturally include these keywords: [2-4 LOCAL KEYWORDS, e.g., "plumber in Dayton," "emergency plumbing"]. 750 characters max, first 250 characters must work as a standalone summary.

When to use it: Setting up or refreshing the Google listing — this is what shows up when neighbors search.

> **Pro tip:** Update this quarterly; ask the AI to produce a version highlighting the current season's most-requested service.

5 Flyer / Door Hanger Copy

> Act as a print marketing copywriter for neighborhood businesses. Write the copy for a [FLYER / DOOR HANGER / POSTCARD] for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The promotion: [SPECIFIC OFFER]. The audience is homeowners in [NEIGHBORHOOD/CITY]. Structure it as: big headline, one-sentence problem they have, the offer with the deadline, 3 trust points (licensed, reviews, guarantee), and a bold call to action with [PHONE/WEBSITE]. Total under 150 words — it must be readable in 5 seconds.

When to use it: Neighborhood marketing — landscaping, cleaning, home services, and any business that wins by street.

> **Pro tip:** Ask the AI for "5 headline-only versions first" so the best line gets chosen before the full flyer is written.

6 Website Homepage Rewrite

> Act as a website copywriter for small businesses. My current homepage says: "[PASTE EXISTING TEXT]." My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS] serving [TARGET CUSTOMERS] in [CITY]. Rewrite it to be clearer and more persuasive. Structure: headline with the main benefit, one supporting sentence, 3 bullet points of what we do best, and a call to action. Plain language, no buzzwords like "synergy" or "leverage." Keep it skimmable.

When to use it: When the website reads like a brochure from 2009 — most small business sites need this.

> **Pro tip:** After the rewrite, ask: "Now write the same page for someone reading on their phone in a hurry" — the mobile version is usually the better one.

7 Seasonal Promotion Campaign

> Act as a campaign planner for local retail and service businesses. It's [SEASON/HOLIDAY, e.g., back-to-school, the holidays, spring]. My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Create a 2-week promotion campaign with: the campaign theme and name, the offer, 3 social media post ideas with captions, 1 email subject line + body outline, and 1 in-store or on-site signage message. Keep everything consistent with one theme. Budget-friendly ideas only — no paid ads required.

When to use it: Planning around holidays and seasons instead of scrambling the week before.

> **Pro tip:** Run this prompt once per quarter and the year's promotions are planned in four sittings.

8 Competitor Comparison (Without Bashing)

> Act as a marketing writer for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Write a "Why choose us" section for my website that compares [BUSINESS NAME] to typical competitors without naming them. Our advantages: [LIST 2-4, e.g., licensed and insured, 4.9-star rating with 300 reviews, 24-hour response]. Format as a simple comparison table: feature | us | typical competitor. Honest, confident, zero trash-talk. End with one sentence inviting the reader to compare for themselves.

When to use it: For the website's about/services page — comparison content converts researchers into callers.

> **Pro tip:** Verify every claim in the "us" column is true and documented; the AI drafts, the owner fact-checks.

9 Referral Program Announcement

> Act as a copywriter for small businesses. Write a short announcement for our customer referral program. Business: [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The deal: [WHAT THE REFERRER GETS, e.g., $25 credit] and [WHAT THE NEW CUSTOMER GETS, e.g., 10% off first visit]. Keep it to 100 words. Tone: warm and appreciative, like thanking a friend. Include a clear "here's how it works" in 3 short steps and a call to action.

When to use it: Launching or relaunching a referral program — the cheapest new-customer channel there is.

> **Pro tip:** Ask for three versions: email, in-store sign, and receipt-stuffer text — same program, three placements.

10 Ad Performance Diagnosis

> Act as a paid advertising analyst for local businesses. I'm running [FACEBOOK/GOOGLE] ads for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Here are my results: [SPEND, IMPRESSIONS, CLICKS, CALLS OR SALES]. My ad copy is: "[PASTE AD TEXT]." My landing page says: "[PASTE KEY TEXT]." Diagnose the weakest link — is it the targeting, the headline, the offer, or the landing page? Give me 3 specific fixes in order of impact, explained in plain language.

When to use it: When ads are spending money without producing calls — before raising the budget, fix the leak.

> **Pro tip:** Paste actual numbers; the AI's advice is only as good as the data it is given.

Chapter 3: Social Media & Email Marketing

Consistency beats creativity in small business marketing. Customers do not need viral — they need to remember the business exists. These nine prompts produce a month of content in one sitting: posts, captions, and the emails that turn one-time buyers into regulars.

11 30-Day Content Calendar

> Act as a social media manager for local small businesses. Create a 30-day content calendar for [TYPE OF BUSINESS] posting [3/5/7] times per week on [FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM]. Mix these content types: behind-the-scenes, customer wins, tips and education, promotions, and community involvement. For each post give: the day, the content type, and a 2-sentence description of what to post. No paid ads. Assume the owner films everything on a phone.

When to use it: Once a month — one sitting replaces 30 days of "what should I post today?"

> **Pro tip:** After the calendar, ask: "Turn week 1's posts into full captions with hashtags" — batch the captions too.

12 Caption Writer

> Act as a social media copywriter for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Write an Instagram/Facebook caption for this post: [DESCRIBE THE PHOTO OR VIDEO, e.g., "photo of our new seasonal cupcake display"]. The goal is [ENGAGEMENT / VISITS / SALES]. Include a hook in the first line, one short story or detail, and a question or call to action at the end. Add 5-8 relevant hashtags. Under 150 words. Tone matches our brand: [FRIENDLY / PROFESSIONAL / PLAYFUL].

When to use it: Every time there is a photo worth posting but no words to go with it.

> **Pro tip:** Save the 3 best captions; paste them back in as examples with "match this voice" for future captions.

13 Welcome Email for New Customers

> Act as an email copywriter for small businesses. Write a welcome email for new customers of [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The email should: thank them for [FIRST PURCHASE / SIGNING UP / BOOKING], tell them what to expect from us, include one useful tip related to [OUR SERVICE/PRODUCT], and offer [WELCOME DISCOUNT OR BONUS]. Subject line plus body. Under 200 words. Warm, personal tone — like it's from the owner.

When to use it: Setting up the first automated email — every email list needs a welcome message.

> **Pro tip:** The "useful tip" is what gets the email opened and remembered; make it genuinely helpful, not a sales pitch.

14 Monthly Newsletter Outline

> Act as a newsletter editor for local businesses. Create a monthly newsletter outline for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Include 4 sections: 1) a short business update or story, 2) one useful tip for customers, 3) this month's special or featured product/service, 4) a customer spotlight or review. For each section give a headline and 3 bullet points of what to write. Total reading time under 3 minutes.

When to use it: Monthly — newsletters keep past customers coming back without ad spend.

> **Pro tip:** Ask the AI to write the full draft of one section; the owner edits and the newsletter ships the same day.

15 Win-Back Email for Lapsed Customers

> Act as a retention copywriter for small businesses. Write a win-back email for customers of [TYPE OF BUSINESS] who haven't [PURCHASED / VISITED / BOOKED] in [3/6/12] months. Tone: genuine and warm, not desperate — like checking in on a neighbor. Include: a friendly opening, one thing that's new or improved since they last came, and a reason to return ([DISCOUNT / BONUS / LIMITED OFFER]). Subject line + body, under 175 words.

When to use it: Quarterly — past customers are the cheapest revenue a business has.

> **Pro tip:** Segment by time away; a 3-month-lapsed customer gets a different tone than a 12-month one — specify which in the prompt.

16 Event / Sale Announcement Posts

> Act as a social media copywriter. I'm running [EVENT OR SALE NAME] at [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS], on [DATE(S)]. Details: [KEY DETAILS, e.g., "20% off everything, live music, free samples"]. Write 3 posts: 1) the announcement (2 weeks out), 2) the reminder (3 days out), 3) the last-chance post (day of). Each under 100 words with a clear call to action. Make each post feel different, not copy-pasted.

When to use it: For any event, sale, or special date — the three-post sequence covers the full timeline.

> **Pro tip:** Ask for a matching short email version of the announcement post — same event, two channels.

17 Story / Reel Script (60 Seconds)

> Act as a short-form video scriptwriter for local businesses. Write a 60-second video script for [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The video topic: [TOPIC, e.g., "3 mistakes people make when hiring a plumber" / "how our croissants are made"]. Format: hook (first 3 seconds), 3 quick points or steps, and a call to action. Write it as spoken lines with simple stage directions in parentheses. The owner films on a phone — no fancy equipment.

When to use it: Weekly — short video is the highest-reach free content available right now.

> **Pro tip:** Film three scripts in one session; batching beats filming daily.

18 Review Request Message

> Act as a customer communications writer. Write a short, polite message asking a happy customer to leave a Google review for [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The message should: thank them for their business, explain that reviews help a small local business enormously, and include a direct link placeholder [REVIEW LINK]. Under 75 words. Text-message friendly. Zero pressure — make it easy to ignore if they're busy.

When to use it: After every completed job or happy transaction — review volume is local SEO fuel.

> **Pro tip:** Send it within 24 hours of the happy moment; timing matters more than wording.

19 Abandoned Inquiry Follow-Up

> Act as a sales follow-up writer for service businesses. A potential customer asked about [SERVICE] from [BUSINESS NAME] but never booked. Write a 3-message follow-up sequence: message 1 (2 days later): friendly check-in; message 2 (7 days later): useful tip related to their inquiry plus a soft reminder; message 3 (14 days later): final check-in with [LIMITED-TIME INCENTIVE]. Each under 75 words. Professional, never pushy.

When to use it: For quotes and inquiries that went quiet — most are not lost, just forgotten.

Pro tip: Personalize message 1 with the detail from their original inquiry; the AI drafts the template, the owner adds the personal line.

Chapter 4: Customer Service & Reviews

One handled-well complaint is worth ten ads. Customers remember how a business treats them when things go wrong far longer than they remember the price. These eight prompts cover the hard conversations: complaints, negative reviews, refunds, and the policies that prevent the next one.

20 The Perfect Apology Response

> Act as a customer service trainer for small businesses. A customer of [TYPE OF BUSINESS] is upset because [DESCRIBE THE SITUATION, e.g., "their catering order arrived 45 minutes late"]. Draft a response that: acknowledges the problem without excuses, takes responsibility, explains briefly what happened, states exactly how we'll make it right ([SPECIFIC REMEDY]), and invites them back. Under 150 words. Sincere, professional, human — not corporate.

When to use it: Any complaint — email, phone follow-up, or in-person conversation notes.

Pro tip: Write the remedy before the apology; a vague "we'll make it right" without specifics reads as empty.

21 Negative Google Review Reply

> Act as a reputation management writer. Here's a negative Google review for [BUSINESS NAME]: "[PASTE REVIEW TEXT]." Draft a public reply that: thanks them for the feedback, acknowledges their specific concern, does NOT argue or get defensive, briefly states what we're doing about it, and invites them to contact [NAME/PHONE] directly to resolve it. Under 100 words. Remember: future customers are the real audience of this reply.

When to use it: Every negative review — respond within 24 hours, every time.

Pro tip: Never mention the reviewer's name negatively or dispute facts publicly; take the dispute offline to the phone number in the reply.

22 Positive Review Reply (That Earns More Reviews)

> Act as a customer engagement writer. Here's a positive review for [BUSINESS NAME]: "[PASTE REVIEW TEXT]." Write a warm, specific reply that: thanks them by referencing something they mentioned, reinforces what we do well, and subtly encourages others reading to visit. Under 60 words. Genuine — no copy-paste template feel.

When to use it: For every positive review — replies signal an owner who pays attention.

> **Pro tip:** Mention the specific service they praised; it becomes a keyword-rich testimonial for future readers.

23 Refund / Return Policy Draft

> Act as a small business policy writer. Draft a clear, fair refund and return policy for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Our terms: [DESCRIBE TERMS, e.g., "full refund within 14 days, store credit after that, no refunds on custom orders"]. The policy must be: easy to understand (no legal jargon), firm enough to prevent abuse, generous enough to build trust. Include: what's covered, the time limits, how to request it, and any exceptions. Under 250 words. Note: have a local attorney review before publishing.

When to use it: Writing or updating the policy page, receipts, or posted store policy.

> **Pro tip:** Add one line inviting customers to talk to a manager before requesting a refund — most issues resolve in conversation.

24 Difficult Conversation Script

> Act as a customer service coach. I need to [TELL A CUSTOMER THE PRICE WENT UP / EXPLAIN A DELAY / DECLINE AN UNREASONABLE REQUEST / ENFORCE A POLICY] at [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The situation: [DESCRIBE DETAILS]. Write a script for this conversation: an empathetic opening, the message delivered clearly and kindly, 2-3 responses to likely pushback, and a positive closing that preserves the relationship. Conversational tone, not a lecture.

When to use it: Before the hard conversation, not during it — preparation is what keeps it professional.

> **Pro tip:** Read the script aloud once before the real conversation; the awkward phrasing reveals itself immediately.

25 FAQ Page Builder

> Act as a website content writer for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Write an FAQ page answering the 10 questions customers ask most: [LIST ANY YOU KNOW, e.g., "do you offer free estimates, what areas do you serve"]. For the rest, use the questions typical customers ask businesses like mine. Each answer: 2-4 sentences, plain language, and end with a call to action where natural. Organize into logical groups with short headings.

When to use it: Building or refreshing the website FAQ — every answered question is a phone call saved.

> **Pro tip:** Add the FAQ answers to the AI as context for future prompts; it will answer customer-style questions in the business's voice.

26 Service Recovery Email

> Act as a customer retention writer. Write a follow-up email to a customer who had a bad experience at [BUSINESS NAME] that we've now resolved. The original problem: [DESCRIBE]. What we did to fix it: [DESCRIBE]. The email should: acknowledge what went wrong, confirm the resolution, include [MAKE-GOOD OFFER, e.g., 20% off next visit], and ask for another chance. Under 150 words. Humble, not groveling.

When to use it: 2-3 days after resolving a complaint — the follow-up is what turns critics into loyalists.

> **Pro tip:** Track who gets these emails; recovered customers who return often become the most vocal advocates.

27 Customer Feedback Survey

> Act as a customer research designer for small businesses. Create a short customer satisfaction survey for [TYPE OF BUSINESS] with 7 questions: mix of rating scales (1-5) and open-ended questions. Cover: overall satisfaction, quality, value for money, staff/service, likelihood to recommend, and "what's one thing we could do better?" Keep it completable in under 2 minutes. Include a friendly intro sentence and a thank-you closing.

When to use it: Quarterly, or after any big change (new staff, new prices, new location).

> **Pro tip:** The "one thing we could do better" question alone is worth the survey; read those answers first.

Chapter 5: Hiring, Training & SOPs

A bad hire costs a small business months. A good process prevents most bad hires and turns decent ones into great ones. These eight prompts handle the people side: the job ad that attracts the right applicants, the interview that reveals the truth, and the training documents that make the business run without the owner hovering.

28 Job Ad That Attracts the Right People

> Act as a hiring copywriter for small businesses. Write a job ad for a [POSITION, e.g., part-time barista, experienced HVAC tech] at [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS] in [CITY]. Include: an honest, appealing opening about the business and team, the day-to-day responsibilities (5-7 bullets), what we're looking for (skills AND attitude), pay range [RANGE], schedule [HOURS], and how to apply. Tone: real and welcoming, not corporate. Make great candidates excited and wrong-fit candidates self-select out.

When to use it: Every hire — the ad is a filter, not just an announcement.

> **Pro tip:** Include one "deal-breaker" line (e.g., "must be available Saturdays") — it saves dozens of wasted interviews.

29 Interview Questions With Scoring Guide

> Act as an HR advisor for small businesses. I'm hiring a [POSITION] for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Create 10 interview questions: 4 about experience and skills, 3 behavioral ("tell me about a time when..."), 2 situational ("what would you do if..."), and 1 about culture fit. For each question, include what a strong answer sounds like and one red flag to watch for. Plain language — I'm not an HR professional.

When to use it: Before every interview round — structured interviews beat gut feelings.

> **Pro tip:** Ask every candidate the same questions and take notes; comparison is impossible without consistency.

30 New Hire Welcome & First-Week Plan

> Act as an onboarding consultant for small teams. Create a first-week plan for a new [POSITION] at [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The plan should cover: day 1 (welcome, tour, basics, paperwork), days 2-3 (shadowing and supervised practice), days 4-5 (graduated independence with check-ins). Include what the owner/manager should cover each day and what "ready to work solo" looks like. Realistic for a team of [NUMBER] people with no HR department.

When to use it: Every new hire — a planned first week cuts turnover in the first 90 days.

> **Pro tip:** Assign one "buddy" employee for questions; new hires ask peers what they won't ask the boss.

31 SOP: Document Any Process

> Act as an operations consultant for small businesses. Turn this process into a clear standard operating procedure (SOP): [DESCRIBE THE PROCESS, e.g., "how we open the store each morning" / "how we handle a customer pickup order"]. Format: purpose (one sentence), who does it, step-by-step instructions numbered, what "done right" looks like, and common mistakes to avoid. Write it so a brand-new employee can follow it without asking questions. Plain language, no jargon.

When to use it: For every repeated task — SOPs are how the business runs without the owner present.

> **Pro tip:** Have the employee who does the task review the SOP; they know the shortcuts the owner forgot.

32 Employee Handbook Essentials

> Act as an HR policy writer for small businesses. Draft the essential sections of an employee handbook for [TYPE OF BUSINESS] with [NUMBER] employees: work hours and attendance, dress code, phone/social media policy, paid time off, and conduct expectations. Each section: a short plain-language policy plus one sentence explaining WHY it exists. Under 800 words total. Note at the end: have a local employment attorney review before distributing.

When to use it: When the team grows past 3-4 people — unwritten rules stop working at that size.

> **Pro tip:** The "why" sentence is what gets policies followed; rules without reasons get ignored.

33 Performance Review Conversation Guide

> Act as a management coach for small business owners. I'm doing a performance review with [POSITION, e.g., "my lead cashier"]. Their strengths: [LIST]. Areas to improve: [LIST]. Create a conversation guide: how to open positively, how to deliver the constructive feedback kindly but clearly, 2-3 questions to ask THEM about their experience, and how to close with agreed next steps. Include exact phrasing for the hardest sentence I need to say: "[THE DIFFICULT MESSAGE]."

When to use it: Before reviews — especially the uncomfortable ones owners tend to postpone.

> **Pro tip:** End every review with one specific thing they're doing well; people remember the last thing said.

34 Letting Someone Go (With Dignity)

> Act as an HR advisor for small businesses. I need to let go of [POSITION] at [TYPE OF BUSINESS] because [REASON, e.g., repeated lateness after warnings / role eliminated]. Draft: what to say in the termination meeting (under 200 words, direct and respectful), what NOT to say, the logistics checklist (final pay, keys, accounts, personal belongings), and how to announce it to the remaining team. Dignified for them, clear for everyone else. Note: check local employment law requirements first.

When to use it: When the decision is made — delaying a necessary termination hurts the whole team.

> **Pro tip:** Keep the meeting under 10 minutes; long explanations invite argument, clarity invites closure.

35 Team Meeting Agenda Builder

> Act as a meeting facilitator for small business teams. Create a 30-minute team meeting agenda for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. The topics I need to cover: [LIST 2-4 TOPICS, e.g., holiday schedule, new register procedure, customer feedback]. Structure: quick wins/celebrations (5 min), the topics with time allocations, an open floor for team input (5 min), and clear action items with owners at the end. Include one question I can ask the team to surface problems I don't know about.

When to use it: Weekly or biweekly — short, structured meetings beat long, rambling ones.

> **Pro tip:** End every meeting by reading the action items aloud; what gets named gets done.

Chapter 6: Finance, Pricing & Planning

Most small businesses do not fail from lack of customers. They fail from thin margins, surprise expenses, and prices set by guessing. These eight prompts bring structure to the money side: pricing with confidence, watching cash flow, and planning the next move with numbers instead of hope.

36 Pricing Calculator Walkthrough

> Act as a pricing consultant for small businesses. I run [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. My main product/service is [DESCRIPTION]. My costs: materials [AMOUNT], labor [AMOUNT PER UNIT/HOUR], overhead I should allocate [MONTHLY OVERHEAD / UNITS]. Competitors charge [RANGE]. Walk me through setting a price step by step: calculate my true cost per unit, suggest 3 pricing tiers (good/better/best) with what each includes, and explain how to present the prices so the middle tier sells best. Plain math, no jargon.

When to use it: Setting or raising prices — the highest-leverage hour in the business.

Pro tip: Run this before every price increase; the AI's tiered structure usually reveals the business is undercharging the top tier.

37 The "Am I Actually Profitable?" Check

> Act as a small business financial analyst. Here are my numbers for [MONTH/QUARTER]: revenue [AMOUNT], cost of goods/materials [AMOUNT], labor costs [AMOUNT], rent [AMOUNT], other expenses [LIST WITH AMOUNTS]. Calculate: gross profit and margin, net profit and margin, and my biggest expense categories as percentages of revenue. Then flag: anything that looks unusually high for [TYPE OF BUSINESS], and 3 specific places I might be leaking money. Explain it like I'm smart but not an accountant.

When to use it: Monthly or quarterly — revenue without margin awareness is just busy work.

Pro tip: Do this with real numbers from the bank statements, not estimates; the AI can only analyze what it's given.

38 Cash Flow Forecast (Simple)

> Act as a cash flow advisor for small businesses. My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Expected income for the next 3 months: [MONTH 1: AMOUNT, MONTH 2: AMOUNT, MONTH 3: AMOUNT]. Expected major expenses: [LIST WITH TIMING, e.g., "insurance $2,400 due in month 2"]. Create a simple month-by-month cash flow table showing money in, money out, and running balance. Flag any month where cash gets tight and suggest 2-3 practical moves to smooth it out (e.g., timing purchases, collecting receivables faster).

When to use it: Quarterly, or before any big purchase — cash surprises kill more businesses than low profits.

> **Pro tip:** Update the forecast monthly with actuals; the forecast gets smarter every cycle.

39 Quote / Estimate Template Language

> Act as a business writer for [TYPE OF BUSINESS, e.g., contractors, landscapers, repair shops]. Write professional quote/estimate language I can reuse. Include: an opening paragraph explaining what's included, line-item descriptions for [LIST TYPICAL LINE ITEMS], payment terms ([DEPOSIT %, BALANCE TERMS]), how long the quote is valid ([DAYS]), and what's NOT included (to prevent scope creep). Professional but friendly. Under 300 words of reusable text with [BRACKETS] where I fill in job specifics.

When to use it: Every quote — consistent, professional estimates win jobs and prevent disputes.

> **Pro tip:** The "not included" section prevents more arguments than any other paragraph; never skip it.

40 Raising Prices Letter / Script

> Act as a customer communications writer. I need to raise prices at [BUSINESS NAME], a [TYPE OF BUSINESS], because [REASON, e.g., "material costs are up 18% this year"]. The increase is [AMOUNT OR %, e.g., "about 5% on most services"]. Write: 1) a short in-person/phone script for telling regulars, 2) a brief email or posted notice version. Both should: be honest about the reason, emphasize what ISN'T changing (quality, service), and thank customers for their loyalty. Under 150 words each. Confident, not apologetic.

When to use it: Every price increase — communicated well, most customers stay; communicated badly, they feel ambushed.

> **Pro tip:** Tell your best customers in person first; hearing it from the owner beats reading it on a sign.

41 Break-Even Calculator Explanation

> Act as a business finance teacher. My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. My fixed monthly costs are [RENT, INSURANCE, WAGES, ETC. WITH AMOUNTS]. My average sale is [AMOUNT] and my variable cost per sale is [AMOUNT]. Calculate my break-even point: how many sales per month (and per day) I need to cover all costs. Then show me: what happens to profit if I raise prices 10%, and what happens if I cut [ONE EXPENSE] by 20%. Show the math simply.

When to use it: When setting sales targets — "break even by the 18th" is a goal the whole team can understand.

> **Pro tip:** Post the daily break-even number where the team can see it; it turns abstract targets into a daily scoreboard.

42 New Product / Service Launch Checklist

> Act as a launch strategist for small businesses. I'm adding [NEW PRODUCT/SERVICE] to my [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Create a launch checklist covering: pricing decision, cost verification, staff training needs, marketing assets needed (signage, social posts, email), launch week timeline, and how to measure if it's working after 30 days. Practical and sequenced — what to do first through last. Assume a one-person marketing department (me).

When to use it: Before launching anything new — launches fail from forgotten steps, not bad ideas.

> **Pro tip:** Define the 30-day success metric before launch day; without it, every launch "feels" like it worked.

43 Year-End Review & Next-Year Plan

> Act as a business planning coach. Help me review this year and plan next year for [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. My numbers: revenue [AMOUNT], profit [AMOUNT], biggest win [DESCRIBE], biggest problem [DESCRIBE]. Create: 1) a one-page year review (what worked, what didn't, lessons), 2) three specific goals for next year with a metric for each, 3) the top 5 actions for Q1. Honest, practical, no motivational-poster language.

When to use it: December or January — one focused session beats a year of drifting.

> **Pro tip:** Limit it to three goals; a business that tries to fix everything fixes nothing.

Chapter 7: Operations & Productivity

The last category is the quiet one — and often the most valuable. Operations prompts do not win customers directly. They give the owner back hours: the inbox handled, the week planned, the supplier email written, the decision thought through. Time is the one inventory that never restocks.

44 The Weekly Planning Session

> Act as a productivity coach for business owners. Help me plan my week. My business: [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. This week's priorities: [LIST 3-5]. Fixed commitments: [LIST, e.g., "supplier delivery Tuesday, payroll Friday"]. My biggest time-wasters last week were [DESCRIBE]. Create: a prioritized task list, suggested time blocks for the deep work, and 2 things I should delegate or drop. Be realistic — I also have to [RUN THE REGISTER / BE ON THE TRUCK / COVER SHIFTS].

When to use it: Sunday evening or Monday morning — 20 minutes of planning saves hours of reacting.

> **Pro tip:** Paste last week's unfinished items in; the AI will help decide what still matters and what to drop.

45 Email Triage Assistant

> Act as an executive assistant. Here are my unread emails (pasted below): [PASTE EMAIL SUMMARIES OR FULL TEXT]. For each one: categorize as URGENT (needs me today), ACTION (needs a reply this week), or FYI (read only). Then draft short replies for the ACTION ones in my voice: [DESCRIBE VOICE, e.g., "direct and friendly"]. Keep drafts under 75 words each. Do not include any customer names or account numbers I pasted — refer to people by first name only in drafts.

When to use it: Every morning — 50 emails become 5 decisions.

> **Pro tip:** Strip sensitive details before pasting; summarize "customer asking about invoice #1234" instead of pasting the invoice.

46 Supplier / Vendor Negotiation Email

> Act as a procurement advisor for small businesses. Write a professional email to my supplier [SUPPLIER TYPE, e.g., "wholesale food distributor"]. I want to [REQUEST BETTER PRICING / ASK FOR BETTER PAYMENT TERMS / ADDRESS LATE DELIVERIES]. Context: I've been a customer for [TIME PERIOD], spending about [AMOUNT] per [MONTH/QUARTER]. The email should: reference the relationship positively, state the request clearly with the reason, suggest a specific proposal ([e.g., "net-30 terms" / "5% volume discount"]), and keep the door open. Firm but friendly.

When to use it: Before renewing contracts or when costs need trimming — most suppliers expect negotiation.

> **Pro tip:** Always propose a specific number; "can you do better?" gets vague answers, "can you do 5%?" gets decisions.

47 Decision-Making Framework

> Act as a business strategy advisor. I need to decide: [DESCRIBE THE DECISION, e.g., "whether to open a second location" / "whether to buy a $15,000 piece of equipment"]. Context: [RELEVANT DETAILS — costs, timing, alternatives]. Walk me through this decision: list the key factors I should weigh, the best-case and worst-case outcomes with rough numbers, 3 questions I should answer before deciding, and what additional information would make the decision obvious. Do NOT make the decision for me — structure my thinking.

When to use it: For any decision over $1,000 or that can't be undone — structured thinking beats 2 AM worrying.

> **Pro tip:** Ask the AI to argue AGAINST the decision too; the counter-argument usually contains the real risk.

48 Inventory / Stock Check System

> Act as an inventory consultant for small retail/service businesses. My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. I carry [DESCRIBE INVENTORY, e.g., "about 200 SKUs of auto parts" / "perishable bakery ingredients"]. My problems: [DESCRIBE, e.g., "running out of bestsellers, overstocked on slow items"]. Design a simple inventory routine: how often to count what, reorder point rules I can follow without software, and a one-page tracking sheet layout. Keep it doable for a team of [NUMBER] with no inventory system.

When to use it: When stockouts and overstocks are both happening — that means there's no system.

> **Pro tip:** Start with the top 20 sellers only; a system covering 20 items beats a perfect system covering 200 that never gets used.

49 Customer Data Privacy Checklist

> Act as a data privacy advisor for small businesses. My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS] and we collect [DESCRIBE DATA, e.g., "customer names, phone numbers, and emails for appointments"]. Create a practical privacy checklist: what data we should and shouldn't collect, how to store it securely (passwords, who has access), what to never paste into AI tools or public forums, how long to keep records, and what to tell customers about their data. Plain language, actionable this week.

When to use it: Now, and yearly — small businesses are targets precisely because they assume they're not.

Pro tip: The single highest-impact step is usually unique passwords on business accounts; start there.

50 Competitor Watch Brief

> Act as a competitive intelligence researcher. My business is [TYPE OF BUSINESS] in [CITY]. My main competitors are [NAMES OR DESCRIPTIONS]. Create a competitor watch brief template I can update quarterly: what to check on each competitor (pricing, reviews, social activity, new services), where to look (their website, Google reviews, social pages), and how to record what I find. Then: based on what's typical for [TYPE OF BUSINESS], list 5 things competitors commonly do that I should verify I'm not missing.

When to use it: Quarterly — 30 minutes of watching beats a year of being blindsided.

Pro tip: Read competitors' 1-star reviews; their weaknesses are the market telling you exactly what to offer.

51 End-of-Day Shutdown Routine

> Act as a productivity coach for business owners. Design a 15-minute end-of-day shutdown routine for the owner of [TYPE OF BUSINESS]. Include: capturing loose tasks and ideas, reviewing tomorrow's schedule, one quick financial check ([e.g., "today's sales vs. target"]), closing loops (messages answered, doors locked, registers counted), and a clean-desk/reset step. The goal: leave work at work and start tomorrow without digging through chaos. Numbered steps, realistic for someone who's tired at closing time.

When to use it: Daily — the routine that protects evenings and mornings at once.

Pro tip: Do it at the same time every day; routines survive on schedule, not willpower.

Quick-Reference Cheat Sheet (Printable)

Cut this page out — figuratively or literally. Every prompt in the pack, one line each: the task, the prompt number, and the key customization that makes it work.

Task	#	Key customization
Core offer statement	1	Key advantage + target customers
Headlines	2	Where it appears + audience
Facebook/Instagram ad	3	Specific offer + call to action
Google Business Profile	4	Local keywords + services
Flyer / door hanger	5	Offer + deadline + trust points
Homepage rewrite	6	Paste existing text
Seasonal campaign	7	Season + theme
Competitor comparison	8	Verified advantages only
Referral program	9	Both sides' rewards
Ad diagnosis	10	Real numbers + ad text
30-day content calendar	11	Posting frequency
Caption writer	12	Describe the photo/video
Welcome email	13	Welcome offer
Newsletter outline	14	This month's special
Win-back email	15	Months lapsed
Event announcement posts	16	Dates + details
60-second video script	17	Topic
Review request	18	Review link
Abandoned inquiry follow-up	19	Their original inquiry
Apology response	20	Specific remedy
Negative review reply	21	Paste the review

Positive review reply	22	Reference what they praised
Refund policy	23	Your actual terms
Difficult conversation script	24	The hard sentence
FAQ page	25	Questions you already hear
Service recovery email	26	Make-good offer
Feedback survey	27	Your service specifics
Job ad	28	Pay range + schedule
Interview questions	29	The position
First-week plan	30	Team size
SOP document	31	Describe the process
Handbook essentials	32	Employee count
Performance review guide	33	The difficult message
Termination meeting	34	The reason
Team meeting agenda	35	Your topics
Pricing walkthrough	36	Real costs
Profitability check	37	Real numbers, not estimates
Cash flow forecast	38	3 months in/out
Quote language	39	Typical line items
Price increase notice	40	Honest reason
Break-even math	41	Fixed costs + avg sale
Launch checklist	42	The new offering
Year-end review	43	This year's numbers
Weekly planning	44	This week's priorities
Email triage	45	Strip sensitive data first
Supplier negotiation	46	Specific ask with a number
Decision framework	47	Costs + alternatives
Inventory routine	48	Top 20 items first

Privacy checklist	49	What data you collect
Competitor watch	50	Competitor names
Shutdown routine	51	Your closing tasks

Closing: Start With Three Today

Fifty-one prompts can feel like a lot. The trick is to ignore forty-eight of them for now. Pick three that match this week's actual problems — the ad that needs writing, the review that needs answering, the price that needs raising — and use them today. Real prompts, real business, real results. That is the entire method.

Then build the habit: one prompt a week, minimum. Tape the cheat sheet to the wall by the register or pin it above the desk. When a task feels heavy, check the sheet first — there is probably a prompt for it, and the heavy task is probably a ten-minute task in disguise.

A note on what comes next: this pack is the first in a series. Everyday Learning Finds is building profession-specific prompt packs — for trades, for retail, for food service, for professional services — each one going deeper into the daily work of that trade. The prompts in this pack are the foundation; the profession packs are the second floor. Watch thedecodernetwork.com for what's next.

> **The only wrong move:** letting this sit in a downloads folder. Open any AI tool — the free version is fine — paste prompt #1, fill in the brackets, and see what the missing team can do.