



DIFFICULT CLIENTS, SOLVED

Difficult Clients, Solved: AI
Prompts for Setting
Boundaries & Firing Bad
Clients

BY MAY PRIME

DISCLAIMER

Disclaimer The information provided in this e-book is for educational and informational purposes only. The content, including all AI prompts, examples, and guides, is not intended as, and shall not be understood or construed as, legal, financial, or other professional advice. The author and MAY PRIME are not attorneys, financial advisors, or other licensed professionals. The use of any information or prompts in this guide is solely at your own risk. MAY PRIME specifically disclaims any liability, loss, or risk, personal or otherwise, that is incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of the use and application of any of the contents of this book. No warranties of any kind, express or implied, are made. Before making any business or legal decisions, you should consult with a licensed professional.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MAY PRIME
Inc.



01 Introduction: The "Client from Hell"

02 Chapter 1: The Root of the Problem - Setting Boundaries

03 Chapter 2: Managing "Scope Creep"

04 Chapter 4: The Unrealistic Client

05 Chapter 5: When to Fold - Firing a Bad Client

06 Conclusion: You Are the CEO of Your Business

07 About the Author / More Resources from MAY PRIME



INTRODUCTION: THE "CLIENT FROM HELL"

We've all heard the stories. The "overly hands-on" client who art-directs every tiny detail. The one who calls at 10 PM. The client who, after three rounds of revisions, says, "You know what? I don't like it. Let's start over."

Or, as your Reddit research showed, the client who yells at you on a call, has unrealistic expectations, or is just plain unethical. These are the "clients from hell."

Why "The Customer Is Always Right" Is Wrong

That old saying may work in retail, but it is toxic for freelancers. Why? Because you are not a commodity. You are a highly-skilled professional, a collaborator, and an expert. When a "difficult" client goes unchecked, they don't just drain your time—they drain your energy, your creativity, and your confidence. The high cost of a bad client isn't just the money you "don't" make; it's the stress they inject into your life.

How This Guide Gives You Back Control

This guide is your shield. It's a toolkit of professional, copy-paste scripts to manage every difficult client situation. You will learn how to politely—but firmly—set boundaries, shut down "scope creep," de-escalate conflict, and, when necessary, professionally fire a client who is hurting your business. It's time to stop being a "yes-person" and start being the CEO of your freelance business.

CHAPTER 1: THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

Setting Boundaries

Why do "overly hands-on" or "needy" clients happen? It's almost never because they are "bad" people. It's because they are "anxious". They are nervous about the project, they're afraid of wasting their money, and they don't know what's happening. When you are silent, their anxiety fills the void. You prevent this by being a leader. A strong, clear, and proactive communication plan from day one establishes you as the expert and calms their anxiety. This is how you set boundaries.

Setting Boundaries "Before" the Project Starts

The best time to set boundaries is in your "Welcome Email" [from E-book 2]. This is your "project constitution." It's where you politely state your office hours, your communication channels, and your revision process. This isn't "strict"—it's "professional."

Prompt 1: The "Setting Expectations" Welcome Email

"Act as a professional freelancer. I'm adding a new section to my 'Welcome Email' for my client, [Client's Name]. This section needs to professionally establish my communication boundaries. Write a short, friendly section called 'How We'll Work Together' that includes:1. "My Office Hours:" [e.g., 'My core office hours are Monday-Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM. You can expect replies during that time.']2. "Best Way to Communicate:" [e.g., 'Email is the best way to track our conversation. I'm happy to hop on a call, but let's schedule it 24 hours in advance.']3. "Revision Process:" [e.g., 'Your project includes [Number] rounds of revisions. I'll send you the draft, you can collect all your feedback, and I'll make the changes in one go.']"

AI Prompts for a "Weekly Status Update"

This is the most powerful tool in client management. A simple, 3-point email that you send every Friday afternoon [or Monday morning].

Why? Because it answers the client's #1 unspoken question: "What is going on?"

Clients become "overly hands-on" when they are in the dark. This email shines a bright light on the process and makes you look like a hyper-organized professional. It takes you 5 minutes and saves you 5 hours of "just checking in" emails.

Prompt 1: The "5-Minute Friday" Status Email

"Act as a professional [YOUR SERVICE, e.g., 'freelance web developer']. It's Friday afternoon, and I need to send a brief, clear status update to my client, [Client's Name], for [Project Name]. Write an email with the subject 'Weekly Update: [Project Name]'. The email must be friendly, concise, and have three simple sections:1. "What We Did This Week:" [e.g., 'This week, we completed the full design mockups for the homepage.']2. "What's Next:" [e.g., 'Next week, we'll be moving on to developing the site and setting up the product pages.']3. "Action Items [If Any]:" [e.g., 'No action needed from you right now. Enjoy your weekend!']

Prompt 2: The "I Need Something" Status Email

"Use the same 'Weekly Update' format as the prompt above, but for the 'Action Items' section, I am blocked. I need the client to do something. Write an 'Action Items' section that politely but clearly states: 'Action Item for You: We are currently waiting on [THE THING YOU NEED, e.g., 'the text for the About Page'] before we can proceed. Please send that over, and we'll be able to jump right on it.'"

CHAPTER 2: MANAGING "SCOPE CREEP"

"Can you just add..." - The Most Dangerous Phrase in Freelancing

"Scope creep" is the slow, steady process of a project getting bigger and bigger, without the budget or timeline getting bigger to match. It's deadly.

It sounds innocent: "Can you just add one more logo concept?" "Can you just add a new page to the website?" "Can you just edit this one more time?"

This is where you *must* be firm, polite, and professional. You are not running a charity. Extra work means extra pay. This isn't being "mean"; it's being a business owner.

How to Identify Scope Creep vs. a New Request

Go back to your original, signed agreement (your Proposal or your "Kickoff Email"). Look at the "Scope of Work" or "Deliverables" list. Is this new request on that list?

- No? It's scope creep.
- Yes? It's part of the job.

This is why having a clear, written agreement (from E-book 2) is so important. It's your shield.

How to Identify Scope Creep vs. a New Request

This is the script you need. Never say "no." Say, "Yes, absolutely! That's a great idea, and I can add that to the project." This email transitions the client from "asking for a favor" to "approving a new task."

Prompt 1: The "This is a New Task" Email

"Act as a professional [YOUR SERVICE, e.g., 'freelance writer']. My client, [Client's Name], just asked for [THE NEW REQUEST, e.g., 'me to write an extra blog post'] that is *outside* our original scope of work.

Write a polite and positive email that does 3 things: 1. Starts with "That's a great idea!" 2. Explains that this new request is outside the original scope we agreed on. 3. States that you would be happy to do it, and you will send over a separate 'Change Order' or 'add-on invoice' for that new task."

AI Prompts for Creating a "Change Order" Email

A "Change Order" isn't a scary legal document. It's just a simple email [or a 1-page PDF] that officially adds the new work and the new fee to your project. It's a "mini-proposal."

This keeps your project finances clean and ensures you get paid for "all" the work you do. Use this prompt "after" the client has replied to your last email and said, "Yes, please send me the details."

Prompt 1: The "Simple Change Order" Email

"Act as a professional freelancer. I need to send a 'Change Order' email to my client [Client's Name].

Write a clear, simple, and friendly email with the subject 'Change Order for [Project Name]'

The email must include:1. "Confirmation:" 'Thanks for confirming you'd like to add [THE NEW REQUEST, e.g., 'the extra blog post'] to our project.'2. "Scope:" 'This Change Order covers the following new deliverable: [List the new scope, e.g., 'One 1,500-word blog post with 2 rounds of revisions'].'3. "Timeline:" 'This will add [e.g., '3 business days'] to our original project timeline.'4. "Fee:" 'The additional fee for this work is [Total Price, e.g., '\$250']. This will be added to your final project invoice.'5. "Approval:" 'Please reply with 'Approved' and I will get started on this right away!'"

CHAPTER 3: DE-ESCALATION & DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Handling the Angry, Disappointed, or "Yelling" Client

This is the moment every freelancer dreads. A client is unhappy. Their feedback is harsh ["I don't like this at all"] or, as the Reddit post described, they are "borderline yelling at me in the call."

Your natural instinct is to get defensive. **"Do not."**

When a client is angry, they are usually just scared. They're afraid they've wasted their money. Your one and only job is to de-escalate. You must move them from an "emotional" state to a "logical" one. You do this by being a calm, professional problem-solver.

AI Prompts for Responding to Vague, Unhappy Feedback

The worst feedback is vague feedback. "I just don't like it." "It doesn't feel right." "I don't know, it just needs more... pop." You cannot fix this. You must ask questions to force them to be specific. This prompt turns you into a "design doctor" diagnosing the problem.

Prompt 1: The "Diagnose the Problem" Email

"Act as a professional [YOUR SERVICE, e.g., 'freelance designer']. My client just gave me vague, unhappy feedback, saying '[THE VAGUE FEEDBACK, e.g., 'I just don't like the new homepage mockup.']"

Write a calm, professional reply that does 3 things: 1. Thanks them for their honest feedback. 2. Reassures them that this is a normal part of the process [e.g., 'This is great, feedback is how we get to the perfect result!']. 3. Asks 3-4 specific diagnostic questions to force them to identify the "actual" problem. For example: 'To help me pinpoint what to fix, could you tell me... * Is it the color scheme? * Is it the font choice? * Is it the layout of the 'Services' section?' 4. Suggests a quick 10-minute call to discuss it live if they prefer."

AI Prompts to Politely Push Back on Bad Design Ideas

This is a classic problem. Your webdev client insists on a "bad design" [as the Reddit post said]. You know it will "hurt their business," but they won't listen. Your name is on this work, so you must push back.

"The Secret:" Never say, "That's a bad idea." Instead, say, "That's an interesting idea. Let's look at how it affects our main goal of [Client's Goal]." You must connect every decision back to "their" business goal.

Prompt 1: The "Goal-Alignment" Pushback

"Act as an expert [YOUR ROLE, e.g., 'web designer'] and a business strategist. My client is insisting on [THE BAD IDEA, e.g., 'using flashing red text on the homepage']. Write a polite and professional email that pushes back on this idea. The email must:1. Acknowledge their request [e.g., 'Thanks for the suggestion...'].2. Remind them of our 'shared primary goal' [THEIR GOAL, e.g., 'to make the site look professional and trustworthy so we can increase sales'].3. Explain 'how' their bad idea will hurt that goal [e.g., 'From my professional experience, flashing text can unfortunately make a site feel less trustworthy and can hurt our 'time on page' metric.'].4. Propose a 'better alternative' that still achieves what they want [e.g., 'If the goal is to draw attention, I recommend we use a bold, clean call-to-action button instead. This will guide the user's eye and look more professional.'].5. End with a collaborative question [e.g., 'What are your thoughts on that approach?']."

Prompt 2: The "When They Still Insist" EmailUse the same scenario as above, but the client has replied and is still insisting on the bad idea.

Write a final, polite "as you wish" email that:1. Agrees to make the change [e.g., 'Understood. I'm happy to make that change for you.'].2. Creates a paper trail by stating your professional recommendation one last time [e.g., 'Just to confirm, my professional recommendation is still to use the [Good Idea] as I believe it will better serve our goal of [Goal], but I am happy to proceed with your direction.'].

[This email is your "I told you so" document. When they come back later and say it doesn't work, you can refer to it.]

AI Prompts for De-escalating an Angry Client on a Call

Your 3-Step De-escalation Script

Step 1: Don't Talk. Just Listen & Agree.

- What they say: "I HATE this! It's not what I asked for, you're not listening, and this is a disaster!"
- What you say: "You are 100% right."
- Why it works: This is a "pattern interrupt." They expect you to fight. By immediately agreeing with their emotion [not their facts], you disarm them. You're not agreeing that the design is a disaster. You're agreeing that they are upset, and that their feeling is valid.

Step 2: Ask Diagnostic Questions.

- What you say: "You're right. I can tell you're frustrated, and I'm sorry for that. Let's fix this. To make sure I understand, can you pinpoint the one part of this that feels the most wrong to you?"
- Why it works: You've moved from "agreeing" to "problem-solving." You are now a collaborator in fixing the problem, not the source of the problem. You are forcing them to move from their emotional brain to their logical brain.

Step 3: State the Next Action.

- What you say: "Okay, I understand. The colors feel too dark and the homepage font is hard to read. That's a simple fix. Thank you for that clarity. Here is what I am going to do: Give me 24 hours. I will send you a new version with a brighter color palette and three new font options. We will get this right."
- Why it works: You've ended the call with a concrete, confident action plan. You've taken their vague anger, turned it into a specific to-do list, and given them a clear timeline. This rebuilds their confidence in you immediately.

CHAPTER 4: THE UNREALISTIC CLIENT

The "\$200 Project with \$20,000 Expectations"

This is one of the most frustrating clients, perfectly described in your Reddit research. This is the client who "spent \$20,000 on equipment he had no idea how to use" or the one who thinks 15-year-old junk is worth "75% of new pricing."

In your world, this client is the one who bought your cheapest "Starter" package and is now demanding the results or service level of your "Premium" package. They have unrealistic expectations about the timeline, the budget, or the final results.

AI Prompts for Re-Aligning Unrealistic Expectations

Prompt 1: The "Refer Back to the Scope" Email

"Act as a professional freelancer. My client, [Client's Name], is asking for [THE UNREALISTIC REQUEST, e.g., 'me to design 5 more logo concepts'], but our agreement was for [THE AGREED SCOPE, e.g., '2 logo concepts'].

Write a polite and helpful email that:

1. Acknowledges their request [e.g., 'I'm happy to explore more concepts for you!'].
2. Gently refers them back to the original agreement [e.g., 'Just as a reminder, our original proposal included [THE AGREED SCOPE]. We've completed that, and I'm excited you're happy with the direction.'].
3. Uses the 'Change Order' script from Chapter 2 to frame this new request as a paid add-on [e.g., 'These new concepts would be an add-on to our project. I can put together a quick 'Change Order' for [THE PRICE, e.g., '\$X00'] to cover the extra work. Please let me know if you'd like me to send that over!']"

AI Prompts for the "My Mechanic Said..." Client

This is the client from the Reddit post. You agree on a price and a plan, and then they talk to their "mechanic" [or their brother-in-law, or a friend "who knows about websites"] who gives them terrible advice and undermines your authority.

"My mechanic said he would have paid more for it." "My friend said you should be using [different, worse technology]."

You must instantly and confidently re-establish yourself as the one and only expert they have hired.

Prompt 1: The "I Am the Expert" Reply

"Act as an expert [YOUR ROLE, e.g., 'web developer'] and a firm but polite professional. My client is questioning our agreed-upon plan [THE PLAN, e.g., 'to use Squarespace for their site'] because [THEIR FRIEND/MECHANIC, e.g., 'their cousin said WordPress is better'].

Write a confident, professional email that: 1. Acknowledges their comment [e.g., 'Thanks for sharing that feedback.']. 2. Confidently re-states 'why' you, the expert, chose your plan [e.g., 'Just to reiterate, I recommended Squarespace for you specifically because your #1 goal was [Client's Goal, e.g., 'to be able to easily update the site yourself without code']. WordPress is a great tool, but it would not have met that specific goal.']. 3. Creates a 'moment of choice' for the client [e.g., 'The plan we agreed on is still the one I strongly recommend to achieve your goals. Please let me know if you'd like to proceed as planned, or if you'd like me to send over a new proposal to switch to WordPress, which would affect our budget and timeline.']"

CHAPTER 5: WHEN TO FOLD

Firing a Bad Client

A Difficult Client is worth saving. They are just anxious, uneducated about your process, or "hands-on." You can use the scripts in Chapters 1-4 to manage them and turn them into a good client. A Toxic Client must be fired. They are disrespectful, abusive, unethical, or dishonest. No amount of "managing" will fix them, and they will drain your business.

Your "Is This Client Worth Firing?" Checklist

If you're on the fence, run your client through this checklist. If you check "Yes" on three or more, it's time to fire them.

[] Disrespect: Does this client yell at you, belittle you, or use abusive language? [e.g., The "borderline yelling" client from Reddit].

[] Ethics: Does this client make you feel ethically or morally compromised? [e.g., The "My client is a Nazi" post].

[] Stress: Do you feel sick, anxious, or angry every time you see an email from them in your inbox?

[] Scope: Do they repeatedly ignore your "Change Order" emails and demand free work?

[] Payment: Are they late on every single invoice? Do you have to chase them for money?

[] Time: Are they taking up so much of your time with needy emails and calls that you can't service your good clients?

AI Prompts for Professionally Firing a Client

This is your "breakup email." The goal is "not" to be dramatic, vent your anger, or "win" the argument. The goal is to be "firm, final, and professional."

You are not asking for permission; you are "informing" them of a business decision. This script is designed to end the relationship cleanly and get you paid for all the work you've already done.

Prompt 1: The "We're Not a Good Fit" Breakup Email

"Act as a professional freelancer. I need to fire a toxic client, [Client's Name], who is disrespectful and constantly pushing boundaries.

Write a short, firm, and polite email that does 4 things: 1. States "calmly" and "finally" that you are ending the project [e.g., "This email is to inform you that I will be stopping work on the [Project Name], effective today."] 2. Does "not" use emotional language. Use a neutral, corporate reason like, "It's become clear that we aren't the right fit for each other in terms of working style and communication." 3. Outlines the final deliverables and payment [e.g., "I am attaching all the work completed to date. I will also be sending a final invoice for all work completed up to this point, as per our contract."] 4. Ends the relationship cleanly [e.g., "I wish you the best of luck in finding a new partner for your project."]

Prompt 2: The "When They Reply Angrily"

"The client I just fired replied with an angry email. Write a one-sentence, final reply that does not engage in the argument and simply ends the conversation."

"All work completed to date has been delivered, and the final invoice has been sent. I wish you the best, but this decision is final."

After you send this, "do not engage further." Block them if you have to. Your business is better off.

AI Prompts for Handling the Unethical Client

This is the "My client is a Nazi" scenario. This is not a "difficult" client; this is an unacceptable one. Your business values and personal ethics matter.

You do not need to "manage" this person. You need to end the relationship as quickly and safely as possible. Your contract is your guide.

"Disclaimer:" This is **"not"** legal advice. If you are in a contract, you should consult an attorney, as the Reddit poster did. This prompt is for a scenario where you are not in a binding, complex legal agreement and can simply terminate the project.

Prompt 1: The "Termination for Cause" Email

Act as a professional freelancer. I have discovered that my client, [Client's Name], is engaged in unethical activities that I am not comfortable with. I need to terminate our project immediately.

Write a very short, formal, and non-emotional email that:

1. Formally states you are terminating the project, effective immediately.
2. Gives a vague, legally-safe reason. **"Do not accuse them."** Use a reason like: '...due to a conflict with my professional business values,' or '...due to the discovery of project materials that fall outside of my professional code of conduct.'
3. States the plan for final files and payment [e.g., 'All work completed to date is attached. No further invoices will be sent, and no further work will be completed.']
4. Ends the relationship 'without' well wishes [e.g., 'This decision is final.']

In this scenario, your goal is not to get the final payment. Your goal is to get 'out'. Do not engage, do not argue. Just send the email, terminate the contract, and block all communication.

CONCLUSION: YOU ARE THE CEO OF YOUR BUSINESS

A freelancer is not just a person who does a creative skill. A freelancer is a business owner. You are the CEO, the Head of Sales, the Project Manager, and the Chief Financial Officer of "You, Inc."

The moment you truly adopt that mindset is the moment you stop letting bad clients walk all over you. A CEO would not accept a client who yells at their staff [you]. A CEO would not accept a client who constantly demands free work [scope creep].

This guide was designed to give you the scripts and the confidence to be that CEO. You now have the tools to set boundaries, communicate your value, and build a freelance business that is not only profitable, but *respectful* of your time, your skill, and your mental health.

You have the power to say "no." You have the power to fire clients who drain your energy. Now, go build a business you actually love running.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yassir is the founder of MAY PRIME, a resource hub dedicated to helping freelancers work smarter, not harder, by leveraging the power of AI.

After seeing countless talented freelancers get stuck on repetitive tasks, YASSIR created this series of e-books to provide the exact, copy-paste solutions needed to automate their work and get back to what they do best.

Master the Entire Client Lifecycle

This guide gave you the tools to manage difficult clients. But what about finding them and onboarding them professionally in the first place?

Check out the other guides in the "Freelance AI Toolkit" to master the entire client lifecycle:

The "No-LinkedIn" Playbook: AI Prompts for Winning Clients
The complete guide to turning your portfolio website into a 24/7 client-acquisition machine. Find and win your ideal clients without "networking."

The Smart Start: AI Prompts for Proposals & Red Flags
Stop guessing on proposals. This guide gives you the exact scripts to spot "red flag" clients, write winning proposals, and create simple, professional contracts.

Find them all at
MAYPRIME.STORE