

12 Follow-Up Prompts That Fix an AI Draft Without Starting Over

Save this next to your prompt library. The first prompt starts the work. These finish it.

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Everyone has a prompt library. Almost nobody has a follow-up library. These are the moves you make on the second, third, and fourth message, where the real quality gets built. Paste one in when a draft is close but not right, edit lightly, and keep going.

A

01 The keep-and-change edit

WHAT IT DOES

Edits surgically instead of starting over. You name what to protect, so the AI fixes the one wrong part without rewriting the parts that already worked.

WHEN TO USE IT

The answer is about 80 percent right and you want to fix one part without the AI touching the good parts.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Keep the structure and the strongest example. Change only the opening so it leads with the reader's problem, not the product. Leave everything else exactly as is.

B 02 The “too generic” sharpener

WHAT IT DOES

Pushes a smooth-but-forgettable draft from generic to specific, so it could only be about your situation and not any competitor's.

WHEN TO USE IT

The output reads fine but says nothing only you could say.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

This reads like it could be about any company. Rewrite it so it could only be about this specific situation: [paste 2 or 3 concrete details: the product, the audience, the actual problem]. Cut anything that would still be true for a competitor.

C 03 The constraint stack

WHAT IT DOES

Adds real-world limits (length, jargon, format) in one move, without letting the AI rewrite the substance you already liked.

WHEN TO USE IT

You like the substance but need it to fit a real format or length limit.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Good direction. Now apply three constraints without changing the core message: keep it under 120 words, use no jargon a new hire wouldn't know, and end on a question. Show me the revised version only.

D

04 The “show me three angles” fork

WHAT IT DOES

Opens up options before you commit, so you are not stuck with the first and most obvious angle the AI reached for.

WHEN TO USE IT

You sense the first answer picked the safe angle and you want choices before going deep.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Don't refine this one yet. First give me three different angles for the same point, one sentence each, so I can pick a direction before we go deep.

E

05 The evidence check

WHAT IT DOES

Turns the draft's claims into a checklist of what needs a source or a number to be credible, before anything goes out.

WHEN TO USE IT

Right before you send something with stats or strong claims in it.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Go back through what you just wrote and flag any claim that needs a source or a number to be credible. List them. Don't rewrite anything yet.

F 06 The “cut 30 percent” trim

WHAT IT DOES

Trims the fat the right way, cutting the weakest sentences instead of compressing every line into something dense and hard to read.

WHEN TO USE IT

The draft is bloated and “make it shorter” usually makes it worse.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

This is 30 percent too long. Cut it down by removing the weakest sentences and any repetition, not by compressing every line into something dense. It should read easier, not tighter.

G 07 The tone reset

WHAT IT DOES

Fixes tone without touching the content, swapping stiff corporate voice for a warm, human one that keeps every point intact.

WHEN TO USE IT

It is accurate but reads stiff, corporate, or weirdly formal.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

The content is right, the tone is off. Rewrite it to sound like a knowledgeable colleague explaining this over coffee, not a brand or a press release. Same points, warmer voice.

H

08 The “what did you assume” audit

WHAT IT DOES

Surfaces the hidden assumptions the AI made on its own, so a wrong guess cannot quietly ruin a long or complex answer.

WHEN TO USE IT

A long or complex answer where one hidden wrong assumption could sink the whole thing.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Before I use this, tell me the assumptions you made that I didn't give you. If any are wrong, I'll correct them and you can revise.

I

09 The specificity pump

WHAT IT DOES

Replaces vague filler with concrete specifics: real names, real numbers, real examples, no hand-waving.

WHEN TO USE IT

The output hides behind vague phrases instead of committing to specifics.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Every place you wrote something vague like “various strategies” or “a range of options,” replace it with the actual specific thing. Name names, give numbers, pick examples. No hand-waving.

J

10 The audience swap

WHAT IT DOES

Re-points the same draft at a different reader, adjusting the detail level and what it leads with for that person.

WHEN TO USE IT

You wrote it for yourself and now need to send it to someone with different priorities.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Keep the structure but rewrite this for [a skeptical CFO / a busy client who skims / a teammate who's new to this]. Adjust the detail level and what you lead with for that reader.

K

11 The “argue against it” pressure test

WHAT IT DOES

Stress-tests your draft by arguing the other side, so you can answer the strongest objections before anyone raises them.

WHEN TO USE IT

Before a recommendation, proposal, or anything someone might push back on.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Now take the opposite position. Give me the three strongest objections someone could raise to what you just wrote, then tell me which ones are worth addressing in the draft.

L

12 The final-mile polish

WHAT IT DOES

A clean last pass that fixes awkward phrasing and sharpens the first and last lines, without changing any meaning.

WHEN TO USE IT

The content is locked and you want it clean before it goes out.

PASTE THIS FOLLOW-UP

Last pass. Don't change any meaning. Just fix awkward phrasing, kill repeated words, and make the first and last sentence the strongest in the piece. Show me only what changed.

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