

SIMPLE ENGLISH EDITION

Ask AI the Right Way

100 practical ways to save time and work
better in your job or business

100

practical uses

30

essentials, fully
explained

Copy

ready-to-use
prompts

AI assistant

Write a polite payment reminder
for a regular customer. Under 60
words. No emojis.

Namaskar! A small reminder: ₹
[AMOUNT] for invoice [NO.] was due
on [DATE]. You can pay by UPI...

✓ Checked. Ready to send

GAURANG BHATT

35 years helping Indian businesses use technology

Ask AI the Right Way

100 Practical Ways to Save Time and Work Better
in Your Job or Business

Gaurang Bhatt

Simple English Edition

Ask AI the Right Way

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All characters and businesses in the examples are fictional. Any similarity to real people or businesses is a coincidence.

This book was written with the help of AI tools, and every page was checked by the author. See "How this book was written".

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WhatsApp and Customer Messages

Meena's morning

Every morning at 7, Meena Agarwal opens WhatsApp. About sixty messages are waiting.

“Today's menu?” “Can I get two extra rotis?” “Is Sunday open?” “Bill please.” “Lunch was cold yesterday.”

Each one needs a reply. Each reply must be polite. By 9, she is tired, and the cooking has not started.

For most small businesses in India, WhatsApp is the office. Customers, suppliers, staff and family, all in one place.



A good business message is short, clear and human. AI helps with the first two. You add the third.

What makes a good business message

Before we use AI, let us agree on what “good” looks like.

STEP BY STEP · A MESSAGE PEOPLE READ

- 1 **First line = the point.** Not a greeting paragraph.
- 2 **Short lines.** People read on small screens.
- 3 **One clear ask.** Reply, call, pay, confirm.
- 4 **Under 80 words** for most messages.
- 5 **Use the customer's name** if you know it.
- 6 **Emojis only if you normally use them.** One is enough.

★ **ESSENTIAL** Application #18

Turn a long explanation into a clear WhatsApp message

A contractor asked Suresh why the price of a cable brand went up, and when stock will arrive. Suresh's first reply was a long paragraph about the company, the new rates, the transport strike and the supply.

WEAK PROMPT

Make this message better. [PASTES LONG PARAGRAPH]

Why it is weak: “Better” means nothing to the AI. Shorter? Politer? For whom?

BETTER PROMPT

 Copy

Rewrite my message as a WhatsApp reply to a regular electrical contractor. Main points: the company raised cable prices by 6% from 1st of this month; new stock reaches us on [DATE] because of a transport strike; I can keep 10 coils aside for him at the old price if he confirms today. First line must give the main point. Under 60 words. Friendly and respectful. End with one clear question.

SHORT VERSION

 Copy

Rewrite this as a short WhatsApp reply to a regular customer. Main point first. Under 60 words. End with one question: [YOUR MESSAGE]

SAMPLE ANSWER

Namaskar Jadhav saheb,

I can keep 10 coils for you at the old price, if you confirm today.

The company has increased cable prices by 6% from this month. New stock reaches us on [DATE] (delayed due to the transport strike).

Shall I keep the 10 coils aside for you?

— Suresh

CHECK BEFORE YOU USE

- The percentage and date: are they exactly right?
- Can you really hold 10 coils at the old price?

Notice the first line. It leads with what the contractor cares about most: getting the old price.



Ask AI to put the part the customer cares about most in the first line.

DRAFT IT WITH META AI, INSIDE WHATSAPP

If you use Meta AI in WhatsApp, you don't need another app for this.

1. Open your **separate chat with Meta AI**.
2. Type your prompt there and get the draft.
3. **Copy** the draft, open the customer's chat, paste, check, and send.

Don't tag @Meta AI inside a customer's chat or a group. Everyone in that chat can see your question and the answer.

Festival messages and offers

QUICK Application #19

Write a festival greeting or offer that doesn't feel like spam

Meena wants to announce a special Navratri thali.

PROMPT

 Copy

Write a short WhatsApp message for regular customers of my home tiffin service in Lucknow. Navratri special vrat thali from [DATE] to [DATE], ₹[PRICE], order by 8 pm the previous day. Warm and personal, like a message from a neighbour, not an advertisement. No capital letters for shouting. Under 50 words. Add a short Hindi version.

CHECK

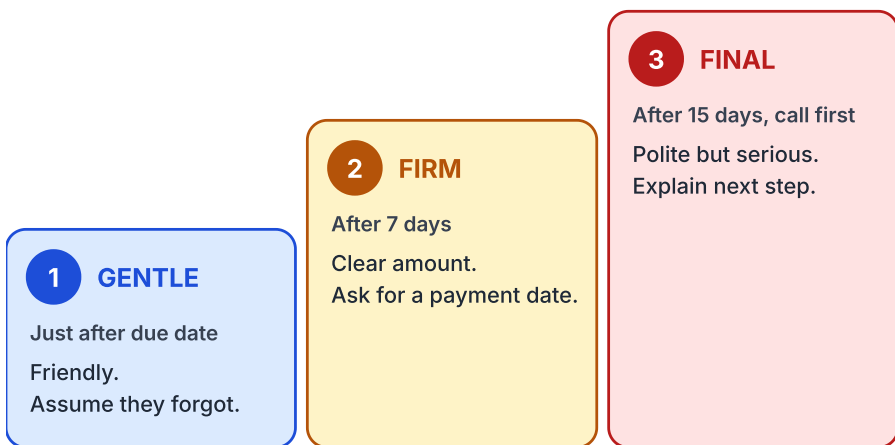
Send offers only to people who are happy to receive them. Too many broadcasts, and customers block you.

Asking for payment without spoiling the relationship

This is the message most business owners hate writing.

Ask too softly, and nothing happens. Ask too hard, and you lose a customer of fifteen years.

The answer is a **ladder**. Start gentle. Become firmer, step by step.



Every step: exact invoice and amount · easy way to pay (UPI) · thank them

★ **ESSENTIAL** Application #20

Write payment reminders in three steps: gentle, firm, final

A contractor owes Suresh ₹48,000 for material taken two months ago. The due date has passed.

WEAK PROMPT

Write a payment reminder.

Why it is weak: No amount, no history, no relationship. The AI will produce a cold, bank-style notice.

STEP BY STEP · YOUR REMINDER LADDER

- 1 Describe the relationship.** How long, how important.
- 2 Give the facts:** amount, invoice, due date.
- 3 Ask for all three messages at once:** gentle, firm, final.

- 4 **Ask for an easy way to pay** in every message (UPI, bank transfer).
- 5 **Before the final message, make a phone call.** People respond to voices.

BETTER PROMPT

 Copy

Write three WhatsApp payment reminders from me, a hardware shop owner, to a contractor who has bought from me for 8 years. ₹[AMOUNT] is pending for invoice [INVOICE NO.], due on [DATE]. 1. Gentle (send now): friendly, assume he forgot. 2. Firm (send after 7 days): clear amount, ask for a payment date. 3. Final (send after 15 days, after a phone call): polite but serious; say I will have to stop further credit until it is cleared. Each under 60 words. Mention UPI payment. Never rude, never threatening.

SHORT VERSION

 Copy

Write 3 WhatsApp payment reminders (gentle, firm, final) to a long-time customer. ₹[AMOUNT] pending for invoice [NO.] since [DATE]. Mention UPI. Never rude.

SAMPLE ANSWER

1. **Gentle:** Namaskar! Just a small reminder, ₹[AMOUNT] for invoice [INVOICE NO.] was due on [DATE]. You can pay by UPI on this number. Thank you, as always.
2. **Firm:** Namaskar. ₹[AMOUNT] for invoice [INVOICE NO.] is still pending. Please let me know by when you can clear it. UPI or bank transfer, whichever is easier.
3. **Final:** Namaskar. As we discussed on the phone, ₹[AMOUNT] has been pending since [DATE]. I will have to hold further credit until it is cleared. I value our 8 years of business and

hope to settle this soon.

CHECK BEFORE YOU USE

- Fill in amount and invoice number yourself, from your books.
- Never threaten legal action in a WhatsApp message. If it comes to that, speak to a lawyer or your CA.

FROM MY EXPERIENCE

In our software business, we had many long-standing clients who paid late. Not because they were dishonest. Because they were busy, or their accounts person was on leave.

We learnt three things.

First, **always mention the exact invoice and amount.** “Payment pending” is easy to ignore. “₹48,000 for invoice 2231” is not.

Second, **make paying easy.** Send the UPI details or bank details with the reminder.

Third, **call before the final message.** A two-minute call solved more delays than ten messages.

We rarely lost a client over a reminder. We lost clients when reminders were rude.

Updates and quick replies

QUICK Application #21

Write order-status and delivery-update messages

Imran must tell a dealer that his paint order will be one day late.

PROMPT

 Copy

Write a short WhatsApp update to a paint dealer. His order of [QUANTITY] will reach on [NEW DATE] instead of [OLD DATE] because [REASON]. Apologise once. Give the new date clearly. Offer to call if he needs it urgently. Under 50 words.

CHECK

Tell the customer *before* he notices the delay. Early news feels like service. Late news feels like an excuse.

QUICK Application #22

Create quick replies and an away message for WhatsApp Business

WhatsApp Business lets you save ready replies and an automatic away message. Meena answers the same five questions every day, so she asks AI to write the replies once.

PROMPT

 Copy

I run a home tiffin service in Lucknow. Write 5 short quick-reply messages for WhatsApp Business: (1) today's menu format with blanks, (2) prices, (3) delivery areas and timings, (4) how to pay, (5) how to pause the tiffin for some days. Also write an away message for after 9 pm. Friendly, simple English, each under 40 words.

CHECK

Check prices and timings. To find where to save quick replies in the app, search YouTube for “WhatsApp Business quick replies”.

Messages in your customer's language

India speaks many languages. Your customers may prefer Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Bengali, Telugu, Kannada or another language.

AI can translate quickly. But a direct translation often sounds bookish, or strange.

★ ESSENTIAL Application #23

Translate a message into Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati or another language

Mehul's firm is changing the payment day for its weavers and job workers. Most of them read Gujarati.

WEAK PROMPT

Translate this into Gujarati.

Why it is weak: The AI may use formal, textbook Gujarati that the readers find stiff or hard to follow.

STEP BY STEP · TRANSLATE SO IT SOUNDS NATURAL

- 1 **Write the message in simple English first.** Short sentences translate better.
- 2 **Say who will read it,** and ask for everyday spoken language.

3 Ask the AI to translate it back into English. This shows if any meaning changed.

4 For anything important, ask a native speaker to read it.

BETTER PROMPT

 Copy

Translate this message into simple, everyday Gujarati, the way people speak in Surat, for weavers and job workers. Avoid formal or difficult words. Keep numbers and dates in digits. Then translate your Gujarati version back into English, so I can check the meaning.

Message: From 1 [MONTH], payments for job work will be made every Saturday instead of the 10th of each month. Please send your bills by Thursday evening.

SHORT VERSION

 Copy

Translate into simple, everyday [LANGUAGE], the way people speak in [CITY]. Then translate it back into English so I can check: [MESSAGE]

CHECK BEFORE YOU USE

- Compare the back-translation with your original. Same meaning?
- Dates and amounts in digits, exactly as yours.
- Show it to one Gujarati-speaking colleague before sending to everyone.



Ask for the language people speak, not the language of textbooks. And always ask for a translation back into English.

WORD HELP

Back-translation: translating a message back into English to check its meaning. (p. 13)

QUICK Application #24**Understand a message in a language you don't read well**

Kavita reads Tamil and English. A new supplier in Pune sends messages in Marathi.

PROMPT Copy

Translate this message into simple English. Then tell me in one line what the sender wants me to do. If anything is unclear, say so. [PASTE MESSAGE, WITHOUT PRIVATE DETAILS]

CHECK

For orders, prices or deadlines, confirm with the sender by phone or in English.

Group messages

QUICK Application #25**Write a clear message to a group**

Anil is secretary of his housing society. The water tank will be cleaned on Sunday, and there will be no water from 10 am to 4 pm.

PROMPT

 Copy

Write a WhatsApp message for a housing society group of 60 families. Water tank cleaning on [DAY, DATE]; no water supply from [TIME] to [TIME]. Please store water the night before. Neutral and polite, no blame. Short points. Under 60 words. Add a Marathi version.

CHECK

In groups, one wrong word starts a long argument. Read it once as the most sensitive member would.

PRIVACY REMINDER

Never paste a full WhatsApp chat export, contact list or customer phone numbers into AI. Describe the situation in your own words instead (see [Application #4 \(p. 32\)](#)).

TRY THIS NOW · 10 MINUTES

1. Open WhatsApp. Find one message you have not replied to because it is difficult.
2. Describe the situation to AI, without names or numbers.
3. Ask for a reply under 60 words, with the main point in the first line.
4. If the customer prefers another language, ask for that version and a back-translation.
5. Read it once. Send it.

Common mistakes

- **Long paragraphs on WhatsApp.** Nobody reads them on a phone.

- **Copy-pasting the same broadcast to everyone.** Personal messages get replies. Broadcasts get ignored.
- **Trusting a translation blindly.** Always check the back-translation.
- **Rude payment reminders.** You may get the money and lose the customer.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Good messages: point in the first line, short lines, one clear ask.
- Use the payment ladder: gentle, firm, then a call and a final message.
- Ask for everyday language, not textbook language, and check with a back-translation.
- Save common replies once, use them every day.
- Never paste chat exports or phone numbers into AI.

YOUR PROGRESS

- ☐ I have shortened a long message (Application #18 (p. 68))
- ☐ I have prepared my payment-reminder ladder (Application #20 (p. 71))
- ☐ I have translated a message and checked the back-translation (Application #23 (p. 75))
- ☐ I have saved at least three quick replies (Application #22 (p. 74))

Next: Chapter 6 · Reading, Understanding and Summarising. Making sense of long documents and difficult letters.

Quick-reference card

Everything important in this book, on one page. Keep it handy.

Brief Your Assistant

Who it's for · **What** you want · **Background** facts · **Format** (length, shape, tone) · **Limits** (what to avoid)

Draft → Check → Use

Five quick checks: **Facts** (names, numbers, dates) · **Promises** · **Tone** · **Privacy** · **Fit** (sounds like you)

The traffic signal

Red, never: passwords, OTPs, bank, Aadhaar, PAN, GSTIN, customer lists, salaries. **Amber:** remove details first. **Green:** general questions, your own drafts.

Postcard rule

If you would not write it on a postcard, don't type it into AI. Removing names is not always enough.

Show the shape, not the data

Column headings and made-up rows. Never the real sheet.

Useful follow-ups

Make it shorter · More polite · Firmer · Simpler words · In points · In Hindi / Gujarati / Marathi · What did you assume? · Check your answer

Money, law, health, people

AI explains and prepares questions. A qualified person advises. You decide.

Fraud

Confirm every new payment instruction by calling a known number. Lost money? Call **1930**. Report at **cybercrime.gov.in**.

AI drafts. You decide.

You have read one chapter.

There are 17 more.

The full book has **100 practical ways** to use AI in your job or business: emails, quotations, follow-ups, spreadsheets, notices, training, marketing, safety and a 30-day plan.

gaurangbhatt.com

Visit the website to get the full book. Questions:
askai@gaurangbhatt.com

Try one prompt from this chapter today. Then decide.

AI drafts. You decide. Always check names, numbers and dates before you send anything.