Client-Ready PM

FREE PRACTICE SHEET

How to Tell a Client About a Delay Without Blaming Anyone

A missed dependency moves your delivery date

PRACTICE THESE LINES

Read each sentence aloud, in order. When you reach the end, read the whole email once more, start to finish.

Update on the foundation design.

The environmental clearance was delayed by two weeks.

Without it, we cannot finalize the foundation drawings or begin excavation.

There are three options.

A. Option A. Proceed with the design at risk and adjust later if the clearance requires changes.

B. Option B. Pause all design work until the clearance arrives.

C. Option C. Explore an alternate foundation approach that does not require the clearance.

I recommend Option C.

It removes the dependency entirely and keeps the project moving.

I need your decision by March 15, so we can brief the design team and order materials.

If you would like to discuss this on a call, I am available Thursday or Friday afternoon.

MAKE IT YOURS

Now say it about your own project. Fill each blank with your details.

Update on *the topic* _____.

FACTS

The *what was delayed* _____ was delayed by *how long* _____. Without it, we cannot *what it blocks* _____.

Read the full script. Scan the code, or go to https://clientreadypm.com/t/8

Watch on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBBaNQoX5do

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OPTIONS

There are *number* options.

A. *Option A*

B. *Option B*

C. *Option C*

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend Option *letter*. It *why it is the better choice*.

NEXT STEP

I need your decision by *date*, so we can *what the decision unblocks*. If you would like to discuss this on a call, I am available *when you are available*.

KEY PHRASES

"was delayed by two weeks"
The delay and its size, in one clause, no blame.

"Without it, we cannot"
Says what the delay blocks.

"I recommend Option C."
Your professional judgment, in one sentence.

"I need your decision by"
Asks for the decision with a date.

ONE CARD TO KEEP

Before You Hit Send

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Four lines, in this order, every time.

1 FACTS	What happened, in one sentence. No blame and no apology.
2 OPTIONS	Two ways forward. Call them A and B so the client can answer with a letter.
3 RECOMMENDATION	Say which one you would choose, and give the reason in one clause.
4 NEXT STEP	Who does what, and by when. Put a date on it and put yourself in it.

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