Client-Ready PM

FREE PRACTICE SHEET

The Word 'Sure' Is How Scope Gets Away From You

A client assumes extra work is already included

PRACTICE THESE LINES

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

A. The typical version.

Thanks for raising this.

Sure, we will include the final documentation set.

One word, 'sure', said yes to new work with no change order and no fee.

B. The clear version.

I can see why you expected it was included.

Our signed scope lists progress photos and inspection reports.

A final documentation set is new work.

I recommend a fixed-fee change order for the documentation, for your review and approval.

Or we can continue within our current scope, which covers the progress photos and inspection reports.

Which would you prefer?

Let me know by Thursday, so a change order can be approved before the next phase starts.

MAKE IT YOURS

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

A. The typical version. _how you open_. Sure, we will _what you just agreed to_.

why that reply costs you.

B. The clear version. I can see why you expected _what they assumed_. Our signed scope lists _what your signed scope lists_. _the item that is new work_ is new work. I recommend _what you recommend_, _what the client does with it_. Or we can continue within our current

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scope, *what stays in scope*. Which would you prefer? Let me know by *your reply deadline*, so *why you need the answer then*.

KEY PHRASES

“I can see why you expected”
Respects the client's assumption before you correct it.

“is new work”
Names the extra without blame or apology.

“I recommend a fixed-fee change order”
Gives your recommendation in plain words.

“Which would you prefer?”
Hands the client a real choice between two options.

“Let me know by Thursday, so”
Gives one date to reply and the reason for it.

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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