Client-Ready PM

FREE PRACTICE SHEET

You Just Found Out the Project Slipped: Send This Before They Ask

A vendor misses a milestone

PRACTICE THESE LINES

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

On today's coordination call, our structural engineering firm told us the structural submittal will be three days late, due to time allocated to an additional independent check of the calculations.

Accurate calculations protect the whole project, and we can likely recover the three days elsewhere in the permitting process.

We can submit the permit package Thursday as planned without the structural sheets, or hold it and submit the complete package next Tuesday.

I recommend holding it, because an incomplete package usually brings agency comment rounds and resubmittal fees, and each review can take a month or more.

Please let me know which you prefer by Wednesday, so we have time to prepare Thursday's submittal if you choose that option.

If I have not heard from you by then, I will hold the package and submit the complete package next Tuesday.

Going forward, our team and the firm are building this additional check into the schedule for every remaining structural submittal.

MAKE IT YOURS

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

On today's _____ (*where you heard it*), _____ (*who is late*) told us _____ (*what is late*) will be _____ (*how late*) late, due to _____ (*why it is late*). _____ (*why the delay is worth it*), and we can likely recover _____ (*the time you can recover*) _____ (*where you can recover it*). We can submit _____ (*what you submit*) _____ (*the planned submission day*)

_____ (*what option one leaves out*)

Read the full script. Scan the code, or go to https://clientreadypm.com/t/19

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, or hold it and submit *what option two delivers* *the new submission day* . I recommend holding it, because *the cost of the other option* . Please let me know which you prefer by *your reply deadline* , so we have time to *what you need time to do* if you choose that option. If I have not heard from you by then, I will *what you will do if there is no reply* . Going forward, *what changes next time* .

KEY PHRASES

“we can likely recover”
Says you expect to win the time back without promising it.

“I recommend holding it”
States your advice directly, not as a question.

“so we have time to”
Gives the reason for your deadline in the same sentence.

“If I have not heard from you by then”
Says what happens next without sounding like a threat.

“Going forward,”
Signals what will change so the problem does not repeat.

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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