

AI Starter Recipe Card

Turn rough notes into a useful, ready-to-review business draft.

Works for: customer updates · follow-up emails · social posts · meeting summaries · checklists · first-draft SOPs

The three-minute loop

1 · GATHER Use rough notes. They do not need to be polished.	2 · EXPLAIN Tell the AI what useful looks like with CICOV.	3 · REVIEW Answer missing questions and repair unsupported claims.	4 · SAVE Keep the recipe that worked so you can run it again.
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The reusable recipe

C Context Who are you? Who is this for? What is happening?	<p>CONTEXT: You are my practical business assistant. I run [type of business]. Help me turn rough notes into a ready-to-review [email / update / post / checklist / SOP] for [audience].</p> <p>INPUTS: Here are my notes: [paste notes here]</p> <p>CONSTRAINTS: Keep it [length]. Tone: [tone]. Do not invent names, dates, prices, promises, causes, or policies. Put anything missing or uncertain under “Check before using.”</p> <p>OUTPUT: Give me [exact deliverable]. Start with the most important point. Make the next step obvious.</p> <p>VERIFY: Compare every name, date, price, promise, and next step against my notes. Quote the source words or mark NOT PROVIDED.</p>
I Inputs Give it your notes, facts, examples, or source material.	
C Constraints Name the limits, tone, boundaries, and forbidden guesses.	
O Output Describe the exact shape of the useful result.	
V Verify Define what must be checked before anyone relies on it.	

Use your normal words. CICOV is a checklist for decisions—not a magic spelling test. If your instructions are clear in plain English, they count.

IF THE FIRST DRAFT IS TOO GENERIC Add one real example of what “good” sounds like, then say what to preserve: tone, length, structure, or level of detail.	IF INFORMATION IS MISSING Say: “Before drafting, ask me only the questions whose answers would materially change the result.”
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Four useful follow-ups

“Cut this in half without losing any fact or action item.”	“Show what came directly from my notes and what you inferred.”
“Give me three options with tradeoffs. Recommend one and explain why.”	“What would a skeptical customer, employee, or partner question here?”

Before it leaves your screen

A polished answer is still a draft. These five checks make it usable.

1 Facts and figures

Did every number, name, date, statistic, and policy come from a source you can inspect?

2 Promises and deadlines

Did the AI quietly turn "might," "if," or "discussed" into a commitment?

3 Privacy and permissions

Did you remove sensitive information and use an account approved for the data?

4 Audience and voice

Would this sound right to the real person reading it—and does it sound like you?

5 Action and ownership

Is the next step clear? Is the person with authority still making the decision, approving the message, spending the money, or changing the record?

Traffic-light inputs

GREEN · Usually safe

Public, fictional, generic, or explicitly approved information.

YELLOW · Slow down

Minimized, sanitized, authorized information used with the right account controls.

RED · Keep it out

Sensitive, regulated, privileged, secret, identifying, or permission-restricted information.

Save what worked

Name the job

"Customer delay update" beats "good prompt."

Store the recipe

Keep it where you already work: a note, document, or approved AI skill.

Test it again

A reusable recipe should work on a second real example—not only the first one.

No computer today? You still have the move.

Circle one repeated task this card could help with. During the next week, collect one real set of safe notes from that task. When you sit down with an AI tool, your raw material and your recipe will already be ready.

Coming next in the series

SESSION 2

Social Media & Marketing Without Hiring an Agency

SESSION 3

Learn New Skills for Your Business

SESSION 4

The Future of AI for Small Business

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