

GC Prompt Library

CLEAR-Format AI Prompts for General Contractors

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How to Use This Library

Each prompt is written in the CLEAR framework. Copy the full prompt, fill in the [brackets] for your specific situation, and paste it into your AI tool. You do not need to use every element every time. The more you include, the better the output.

[C] Context **[L]** Length & Limitations **[E]** Examples **[A]** Audience **[R]** Role

OFFICE

1. Missing Documents Follow-Up

[C] I am the office manager for a commercial general contractor. A subcontractor has not returned their signed subcontract, current insurance certificate, and W-9. We have followed up three times over the past two weeks.

[L] Write a firm but professional follow-up email. Under 150 words. No threats, no excuses for them. State clearly what is needed and by when.

[E] Tone: "We need these before you mobilize. That's the deal." Professional, not aggressive.

[A] This goes directly to the subcontractor's office contact or owner.

[R] You are an experienced construction office manager who has dealt with unresponsive subs for 20 years and knows how to get results without burning relationships.

2. Job Cost Variance Explanation for Owner

[C] I am the project accountant for a commercial GC preparing a monthly owner report. One cost code ([cost code/description]) is currently [X%] over budget due to [reason: scope change / labor productivity / material escalation].

[L] Write a one-paragraph explanation of this variance for the owner's report. Under 100 words. Plain language. No accounting jargon.

[E] Tone: transparent and confident. "Here is what happened and here is where we stand."

[A] The owner is a [developer / municipality / private client] who reviews monthly reports but is not a construction expert.

[R] You are a senior construction project accountant who writes clear, owner-facing financial summaries that build trust.

3. New Field Employee Onboarding Checklist

[C] I am the HR coordinator for a commercial general contractor. We are onboarding a new [position] starting on [project name or type]. This is a [union / open shop] project. The employee is [experienced / brand new to the industry].

[L] Create a day-one onboarding checklist. Bullet format. Cover paperwork, safety orientation, site access, PPE, and who they report to. Under 20 items.

[E] Format each item as a checkbox with a brief action. Example: "[] Complete I-9 and W-4. Due before end of day."

[A] This checklist is handed to the new employee and their direct supervisor on day one.

[R] You are an experienced construction HR coordinator who knows what new hires actually need on day one versus what gets buried in a manual.

4. Lien Waiver Request to Subcontractor

[C] I am the office manager for a commercial GC. We processed payment to [subcontractor] on [date] in the amount of \$[amount] for work through [pay period]. We need their conditional lien waiver before we can release the check.

[L] Write a brief, professional email requesting the conditional lien waiver. Under 100 words. State what we need and by when.

[E] Tone: routine and matter-of-fact. This is standard process, not a dispute.

[A] This goes to the subcontractor's accounts receivable contact.

[R] You are a construction office manager who processes hundreds of lien waivers a year and writes clean, efficient correspondence.

5. Vendor Credit Application Cover Letter

[C] I am the office manager for a commercial GC with [X] years in business and [annual volume] in revenue. We are applying for a credit account with a new material supplier for [type of material].

[L] Write a one-page cover letter for a credit application. Under 300 words. Highlight our history, payment practices, and project volume.

[E] Format: short intro paragraph, two or three supporting points, professional close with contact info.

[A] This goes to the supplier's credit department.

[R] You are an experienced construction office manager who represents the company professionally and knows what suppliers want to see.

6. Employee Written Warning Documentation

[C] I am an HR manager for a commercial GC. An employee [describe the situation: missed a required safety meeting / arrived late three times in two weeks / used a phone in a restricted jobsite area]. This is the [first / second] documented incident.

[L] Write a formal written warning for the employee file. Under 200 words. Factual and specific. Include the incident, the expectation, and the consequence if it happens again.

[E] Tone: serious but fair. Facts only. No emotional language.

[A] This document goes in the employee's HR file and is signed by both the employee and their supervisor.

[R] You are an HR professional with construction experience who writes documentation that is legally defensible and factually clear.

PROJECT MANAGER

1. RFI Response

[C] I am a project manager for a commercial GC on a [project type] project. I received an RFI asking [describe the question]. The background is [describe the situation or finding].

[L] Write a professional RFI response. Under 200 words. Neutral language. No blame, no liability exposure. Written response format, not bullets.

[E] Tone: like a PM who has seen this question before and knows how to answer it cleanly.

[A] This goes to the subcontractor and becomes part of the project record.

[R] You are an experienced commercial GC project manager with 15 years of documentation experience who writes responses that hold up under scrutiny.

2. Change Order Narrative

[C] I am a PM for a commercial GC. We are submitting a change order to the owner for [describe the change: unforeseen condition / design change / owner-directed scope addition]. The cost impact is \$[amount] and the schedule impact is [X days / no schedule impact].

[L] Write the change order narrative section only. Under 250 words. Explain what changed, why it is a legitimate change, and what the cost and schedule impact is. No fluff.

[E] Tone: professional, factual, and direct. We believe this change is justified and can back it up.

[A] Submitted to the owner or owner's rep for review and approval.

[R] You are an experienced GC project manager with contract administration background who writes change order narratives that get approved on the first submission.

3. Delay Notification to Owner

[C] I am a PM for a commercial GC on a [project type] project. We have identified a delay caused by [cause: owner-furnished equipment late / design delay / weather / subcontractor issue]. The delay impacts [milestone or completion date] by approximately [X days / weeks].

[L] Write a formal delay notification letter. Under 300 words. State the cause, the impact, and any mitigation steps we are taking. Preserve our contractual rights without being adversarial.

[E] Tone: transparent and solution-oriented. "Here is the situation, here is what we are doing about it."

[A] This goes to the owner. Their legal team may review it.

[R] You are a senior construction PM with contract administration experience who knows how to document delays clearly without burning the owner relationship.

4. Subcontractor Performance Warning

[C] I am a PM on a commercial GC project. A subcontractor [describe the issue: is behind schedule / has repeated quality deficiencies / is not staffing the job adequately]. We have addressed this verbally [X] times. We need to document it.

[L] Write a formal written notice to the subcontractor. Under 250 words. Reference our contract rights. State the problem, what we need, and by when. Include a cure period.

[E] Tone: firm and professional. This is a documented warning, not a termination letter.

[A] This goes to the subcontractor's owner or PM and stays in the project record.

[R] You are an experienced GC project manager who knows how to hold subs accountable while keeping the project moving.

5. Weekly Owner Update Email

[C] I am a PM on a [project type] project. This week the crew completed [work accomplished]. We are [on schedule / X days behind] on the overall schedule. Current concerns: [any issues or "none"]. Next week we plan to [upcoming work].

[L] Write a weekly project update email. Under 200 words. Organized but not a formal report. A professional update that keeps the owner in the loop without detail overload.

[E] Format: two or three short paragraphs. Progress, concerns, next week. No bullet lists.

[A] The owner is a [developer / municipality / private client] who wants to stay informed without being buried in detail.

[R] You are a project manager who builds owner trust through consistent, clear communication.

6. Subcontractor Scope of Work Review

[C] I am a PM for a commercial GC reviewing a subcontractor scope of work for [trade/scope] on a [project type] project. I need to identify any vague language, missing exclusions, or gaps that could become a change order claim later.

[L] Review the scope and flag every weakness. Organized by category. Under 400 words. List the risk and what the fix should be.

[E] Look for: vague "per plans" references without spec callouts, undefined demo haul-off, unclear coordination responsibilities, missing exclusion language for adjacent work.

[A] This review is for my own use before I issue the subcontract.

[R] You are an experienced construction attorney who has spent 20 years reviewing GC-sub contracts and knows exactly where the money walks out the door.

SUPERINTENDENT

1. Toolbox Talk

[C] I am a superintendent on a [project type] project. Today we are [describe today's work]. The specific hazard I want to address is [hazard].

[L] Write a 5-minute verbal toolbox talk. Plain, direct language. Nothing from an OSHA manual. Sound like a super, not a safety coordinator. Under 400 words.

[E] Opening tone: "Alright guys, before we get started today I need two minutes." Keep that energy throughout.

[A] Mixed crew: [experienced journeymen] and [first/second year apprentices]. Both groups need to stay engaged.

[R] You are a commercial superintendent with 25 years on large projects. Your talks are short, real, and relevant.

2. Daily Field Report

[C] I am a superintendent on a [project type, phase] project. Today's date is [date]. Weather: [conditions]. Crew on site: [trades and approximate headcount]. Work performed: [describe]. Issues or delays: [describe or "none"].

[L] Write a professional daily field report. Under 300 words. Factual and specific. Suitable for the project record.

[E] Organized sections: weather, manpower, work completed, issues, next day plan. Clean and consistent.

[A] This report goes to my PM and stays in the project record.

[R] You are an experienced commercial superintendent who writes field reports that are factual, defensible, and take less than five minutes to produce.

3. Three-Week Look-Ahead Narrative

[C] I am a superintendent on a [project type] project. Over the next three weeks: Week 1: [describe work]. Week 2: [describe work]. Week 3: [describe work]. Current constraints: [material deliveries / inspections / sub coordination needed].

[L] Write a brief look-ahead narrative for the weekly coordination meeting. Under 200 words. Highlight what needs to happen for the schedule to hold.

[E] Tone: like a super briefing their PM. Direct, honest, focused on what needs to move.

[A] Presented to the PM, owner's rep, and subcontractor PMs at the weekly meeting.

[R] You are an experienced GC superintendent who knows how to communicate schedule constraints clearly and get commitments from the right people.

4. Multi-Trade Coordination Email

[C] I am a superintendent coordinating multiple subcontractors on a [project type] project. Next week: [Trade A] will be working in [area/zone], [Trade B] will be in [adjacent area], and [Trade C] needs access to [location] for [work]. There are sequencing and access conflicts to resolve.

[L] Write a coordination email to all three subcontractors. Under 250 words. Clear about who has access where and when. Set expectations for sequencing.

[E] Tone: in charge but collaborative. "Here is the plan. Here is what I need from each of you."

[A] Goes to the foreman or PM of each subcontractor.

[R] You are a commercial superintendent who runs tight, coordinated jobsites and does not let trades step on each other.

5. Field Delay Notice to PM

[C] I am a superintendent on a [project type] project. Today I encountered [describe: material delivery did not show / unforeseen condition / sub manpower shortage / failed inspection]. This is going to impact [describe the schedule effect].

[L] Write a brief field-to-office delay notice. Under 150 words. Factual, specific, and timely.

[E] Tone: professional and direct. Not panicked. Just the facts and the impact.

[A] Goes to my PM so they can notify the owner and begin mitigation.

[R] You are a superintendent who communicates issues clearly and early. Never sits on bad news.

6. Quality Deficiency Notice to Subcontractor

[C] I am a superintendent on a commercial project. I observed a quality issue with [trade's work: flatwork not meeting spec tolerances / framing out of plumb / MEP rough-in installed incorrectly]. I verbally told the foreman [X days ago]. The issue has not been corrected.

[L] Write a written quality deficiency notice to the subcontractor. Under 200 words. Specific about what was observed, what the spec requires, and the correction deadline.

[E] Tone: direct and documented. No anger, no ambiguity.

[A] Goes to the subcontractor's PM and superintendent. Stays in the project record.

[R] You are a superintendent with high quality standards who documents deficiencies before they become disputes.

ESTIMATOR

1. Bid Clarification Letter

[C] I am an estimator for a commercial GC preparing to submit a bid for [project type]. We have [X] clarifications and qualifications related to [scope gaps / allowances / exclusions] that need to accompany our bid.

[L] Write a bid clarification letter to accompany our proposal. Under 300 words. Each clarification listed as a numbered item.

[E] Tone: confident and transparent. "Here is our scope and here is what we are assuming."

[A] This goes to the owner or architect reviewing our bid.

[R] You are a senior GC estimator with 20 years of bid experience who knows how to protect scope without losing the work.

2. Scope Gap Analysis: Reviewing Sub Bids

[C] I am an estimator for a commercial GC bid-leveling subcontractor proposals for [trade/scope] on a [project type] project. I have three sub bids ranging from \$[low] to \$[high] and need to understand what might explain the spread.

[L] List the most common scope gaps in [trade] bids that create post-award change orders. In order of cost risk. Under 300 words.

[E] Look for: demo and haul-off, trade coordination, testing and commissioning, startup and owner training, warranty terms.

[A] This is for my own bid leveling worksheet. Internal use only.

[R] You are a construction estimator who has been burned by scope gaps before and knows exactly where the risk lives in sub bids.

3. Value Engineering Options

[C] I am an estimator on a project that has come in over budget. The design team has asked for VE options on [describe scope: building envelope / MEP systems / finishes]. We need real savings without compromising performance or the owner's intent.

[L] Generate a list of VE options for [scope area]. Format as a numbered list with description and estimated savings range for each. Under 400 words.

[E] Each option should include: what changes, what stays the same, estimated savings range, and any risk to the owner.

[A] This goes to the architect and owner for review and decision.

[R] You are a GC estimator who understands design intent and knows how to find real savings without value-engineering the soul out of a building.

4. Proposal Executive Summary

[C] I am an estimator for a commercial GC submitting a proposal for [project type]. Our total bid is \$[amount]. Key assumptions include [list 2-3]. We are [competing against X firms / responding to a negotiated opportunity].

[L] Write the executive summary section of our proposal. Under 300 words. Hit our qualifications, our approach, and why we are the right GC for this job.

[E] Tone: confident, specific, and relationship-focused. Not generic. Not boilerplate. Sounds like we actually want this job and have thought about it.

[A] Read by the owner, developer, or board making the final selection decision.

[R] You are a GC preconstruction manager who has won competitive proposals and knows owners hire teams they trust, not just the low number.

5. Subcontractor Bid Package Scope of Work

[C] I am an estimator putting together a bid package for [trade] on a [project type] project. The scope covers [describe general scope]. I need a thorough written scope of work that produces clean, comparable bids.

[L] Write a scope of work for this bid package. Under 500 words. Include what is included, what is excluded, key coordination responsibilities, and unique project conditions.

[E] Be specific enough that a sub cannot claim they "didn't know" about a coordination requirement or site condition.

[A] This goes to multiple subcontractors bidding the scope.

[R] You are a GC estimator who writes tight bid packages that eliminate ambiguity and protect the project from post-award surprises.

6. Preliminary Schedule Narrative for Proposal

[C] I am an estimator developing a preliminary schedule for a [project type] project. Key milestones: [start date], [structure complete], [MEP rough-in], [substantial completion]. Project duration is approximately [X months].

[L] Write a schedule narrative for our proposal. Under 250 words. Cover the major phases, key milestones, and any factors that could impact the schedule.

[E] Tone: realistic and experienced. We are not just telling them what they want to hear.

[A] Goes in our proposal document. Read by the owner and their consultants.

[R] You are a GC preconstruction manager who builds realistic schedules and communicates constraints clearly so owners can make informed decisions.

About Iron Thread Consulting

Carl Britton Jr. works with contractors and contractor associations across North America to build real AI skills for the trades. Through workshops, training programs, and consulting, he helps GC and specialty contractor teams use AI tools to get more done without adding overhead. His clients include NECA, SMACNA, MCA, AGC chapters, and individual contracting firms. Carl brings 20 years of field and office construction experience to every engagement. The training actually makes sense to the people doing the work.

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