

3 FREE SCRIPTS FOR WORK

WORD-FOR-WORD REPLIES FOR THE
9 PM PING, THE WEEKEND ASK AND
THE DEPARTED COLLEAGUE'S WORKLOAD

3

SITUATIONS

9

SCRIPTS IN 3 TIERS

6

PUSHBACK REPLIES

1

TIER DECISION GUIDE

FROM THE CORPORATE BOUNDARY SCRIPTBOOK BY FRANK MURAN

ONE SITUATION. THREE LEVELS OF RESPONSE.

Each situation below gives you three scripts that get firmer as the situation repeats.
Start at the lowest tier that will work, and move up only when it doesn't.

TIER 3

Paper Trail / CYA

For repeated patterns, unreasonable demands, or anything that needs to exist in writing.

USE WHEN IT KEEPS HAPPENING OR THERE'S REAL RISK

TIER 2

Firm & Clear

For people who didn't take the hint the first time.

USE WHEN THE GENTLE VERSION DIDN'T LAND

TIER 1

Polite & Collaborative

For good colleagues who just need a gentle nudge.

YOUR DEFAULT STARTING POINT

Three rules behind every script.

No personal excuses. Make them choose the trade-off. Write everything down.

Placeholders.

Words in **brackets** are yours to fill in: names, dates, projects.

The 8:30 PM Slack or Teams ping marked “Urgent”

The situation. Your manager or a client pings you late at night about something that is clearly not an active outage.

TIER 1 Next morning, via schedule-send

CHAT

“ Saw your note from last night. I’m on it this morning and will have an update for you by 10:00 AM.

TIER 2 If you feel you must reply now

CHAT

“ Just saw this as I was logging off. It’s first on my list tomorrow morning.

TIER 3 When late pings become a habit

1-ON-1

“ I’ve noticed late-evening messages are becoming a regular thing. I keep my evenings offline so I can do my best work during the day. If something is a real emergency that can’t wait until morning, call me. I’ll always pick up for a real fire.

IF THEY PUSH BACK

THEY

It’s urgent, I need it tonight.

YOU

Understood. Is anything broken or blocked right now? If yes, I’ll jump on it. If not, it’s the first thing I’ll do at 8:30 AM.

THEY

Everyone else on the team replies at night.

YOU

I get that. I’d rather be fully sharp from 8:30 than half-available at 10 PM. You’ll always get a fast answer from me during the day.

PRACTICE DRILL

- ☐ Write tomorrow’s 8:30 AM reply tonight and schedule it. Notice how it feels not to answer now.

FIELD NOTE I use schedule-send myself. When your replies arrive at 8:30 AM, people learn that’s when your day starts.

The Friday afternoon “can you put in a few hours this weekend?”

The situation. At 4:00 PM on Friday, a manager or colleague asks you to catch up over the weekend.

TIER 1 Calm redirect

SAY IT

“ I’m booked through Sunday, but I can start on this first thing Monday. Want me to pause anything else to make room for it?

TIER 2 Firm and direct

CHAT

“ I’m not available this weekend. I’ll pick this up at 9:00 AM on Monday.

TIER 3 When the deadline is unrealistic

EMAIL

“ Finishing this by Monday morning isn’t possible without weekend work, which I can’t take on. If Monday is a hard deadline, let’s decide before 5:00 PM today: we either bring in another person or cut the scope.

IF THEY PUSH BACK

THEY

It’ll only take a few hours.

YOU

Then it fits nicely into Monday morning. I’ll have it to you by noon.

THEY

I’m really counting on you here.

YOU

And I want to deliver it well. Rushed weekend work is where mistakes happen. Monday by noon, done properly.

PRACTICE DRILL

☐

Say Tier 2 out loud until it takes under 5 seconds and you no longer add an apology.

FIELD NOTE

Offer a specific time, like Monday at 9:00. People accept a no much more easily when it comes with a plan.

Doing a departed colleague's job without extra pay

The situation. A coworker leaves or is laid off, and their work lands on your desk with no end date.

TIER 1 Set a time limit

SAY IT

“ Happy to cover while we hire. Can we spend 15 minutes next week on the hiring plan and how long I'll be covering?

TIER 2 Make them choose

SAY IT

“ I can't keep doing **Colleague's** accounts and my own within normal hours. Which half of my current work should we pause so I can cover them properly?

TIER 3 Turn it into a raise

1-ON-1

“ For two months I've run **Colleague's** accounts on top of my own, and nothing has slipped. This is now a permanent part of my role, so I'd like to talk this week about a title and pay that match it.

IF THEY PUSH BACK

THEY

Budgets are frozen right now.

YOU

Understood. Then let's agree on the title change now and set a date for the pay review, say **Month**. Can we put that in writing?

THEY

Everyone is stretched, not just you.

YOU

That's fair. I'm not asking for less work. I'm asking for the role to match the work.

PRACTICE DRILL ☐ Start a log today: extra accounts, hours, results. Keep it for four weeks before the conversation.

FIELD NOTE Keep a log from day one: which accounts, how many hours, what results. After eight weeks you can ask for a raise with numbers in hand.

ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS. STOP AT THE FIRST "YES."

1

Is this a **repeated pattern**, a risk to **quality or safety**, or about your **pay or role**?

YES → TIER 3

2

Did they **ignore a gentle no**, or ask again after you declined?

YES → TIER 2

3

Is this the **first time**, with someone you generally work well with?

YES → TIER 1

WHEN NOT TO USE TIER 3 (YET)

- **You're on probation or in your first 90 days.** Build trust with Tiers 1 and 2 first.
- **Layoffs or a restructuring are underway.** Stay collaborative and keep good notes.
- **You have no written record yet.** Start one today, then escalate.
- **You're angry.** Wait 24 hours. Tier 3 only works when it reads as calm and factual.



THESE ARE 3 OF THE 15 SITUATIONS IN THE FULL SCRIPTBOOK.

I ran teams for thirty years. The people I managed called me Uncle Frank. Every script here is one I've used, heard from someone I respected, or wish someone had told me earlier.

The full book adds the other 12 situations (scope creep, the "quick question" that takes two hours, status checks every two hours, public criticism, a review that ignores your results, and more), 30 pushback replies, 11 rules from 30 years in management, the CYA recap email and incident log, a training workbook with a self-audit and a 30-day plan, and a printable cheat sheet.

Get the full Scriptbook: <https://frankmuran.com>

© 2026 Frank Muran · Executive Field Systems. All rights reserved.

This free sample may be shared with colleagues as is. The full book is for the buyer's personal use.