

The Voice Fix

Make ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or whichever model you already use sound like you, not like an AI. Three steps, ten minutes, works anywhere.

Step 1 — Extract your voice

Paste this into your AI of choice, then drop in 3–5 samples of your own writing. Best samples: an email to a colleague, a Slack or WhatsApp message, a LinkedIn post, something you wrote for yourself. Avoid anything you've already edited through an AI — that defeats the point.

Below I'll paste 3–5 samples of my actual writing. Read them all before responding, then return a voice profile with these sections:

Sentence shape — average length, short vs flowing vs mixed, use of fragments.

Vocabulary register — formal, casual, technical. Which word would I reach for between: use/utilise, start/commence, help/facilitate?

Openings — how do I start messages? Greeting style, first-line habits.

Closings — how do I sign off?

Quirks — any distinctive patterns? Humour, questions, hedges, parenthetical asides, British vs American spelling, use of contractions.

Things I don't do — based on the samples, what phrasing or construction would be obviously out of character for me?

One-line summary — describe my voice in under 20 words.

After the profile, suggest three short phrases or sentences that would sound like me, and three that would sound *nothing* like me, so I can sanity-check the profile.

Samples:

[paste sample 1]

[paste sample 2]

[paste sample 3]

Why this step first. "Sound casual and professional" means nothing. The AI needs specifics from real examples of your writing. The three sound-like / sound-nothing-like sentences at the end are the quick trust test — if they feel off, your samples weren't representative, and you go again.

Step 2 — Lock out the AI tells

Paste this straight after the voice profile. This is the bit that removes the fingerprints — the little tics that give AI text away in two lines.

For everything you draft for me from here on, avoid the following patterns. These are the tells that make writing read as AI-generated rather than human.

Punctuation habits:

- Em dashes (—) used in place of commas, colons, parentheses, or shorter sentences. Use those instead.
- Overuse of semicolons in casual writing.
- Randomly bolded words mid-sentence for emphasis.

Sentence constructions:

- "It's not just X, it's Y" and its cousins ("This isn't merely X, it's Y", "More than X, it's Y").
- "Not only X but also Y."
- Forced parallel structure and tricolon lists where a single word would do ("clear, concise, and compelling" → "sharp").
- Opening with scene-setting preamble: "In today's fast-paced world...", "In the ever-evolving landscape of...".
- Restating the question before answering it.

Overused words and intensifiers:

- delve, tapestry, landscape, realm, navigate, unlock, leverage, robust, comprehensive, seamlessly, cutting-edge, elevate, empower, streamline, foster, pivotal, profound, nuanced, multifaceted, intricate.
- game-changer, transformative, revolutionary, paradigm shift.
- "truly", "really", "genuinely" used as intensifiers.
- "fundamentally", "essentially", "ultimately", "arguably" as sentence-starters.

Opening moves to avoid:

- "Great question!" / "What a great point!"
- "Let's explore / dive into / unpack..."
- "Whether you're X or Y..."

Closing moves to avoid:

- "In conclusion" or a summary I didn't ask for.
- "I hope this helps!" (unless I'd actually write that).
- A trailing question the user didn't invite ("What are your thoughts?", "Would you like me to elaborate?").

Hedging and meta:

- "It's worth noting that...", "It's important to remember...", "It's crucial to understand..."
- "At the end of the day", "when all is said and done".
- Excessive caveats and "however" pivots.
- Bullet points where flowing prose would land harder.

If you catch yourself reaching for any of these, rewrite. Short human sentences beat polished AI ones. When in doubt, say it the way I said it in the samples.

Why this step second. Most AI output is recognisable within two lines. These are the fingerprints. Banning them explicitly is more reliable than hoping for tone — the model will otherwise drift back to its defaults by the third paragraph.

Step 3 — Save it, then use it on real work

Don't paste these prompts every time — save them as a permanent instruction so they run silently on everything you write.

Where to save, by tool

- **ChatGPT** — Settings › Personalization › Custom Instructions › "How would you like ChatGPT to respond?"
- **Claude (claude.ai)** — Settings › Profile › "What personal preferences should Claude consider in responses?" For project-specific voices, use a Project with its own custom instructions.
- **Claude in Cowork / Claude Code** — add to your CLAUDE.md or memory file.
- **Gemini** — Gems (custom instructions per Gem) or Settings › "Saved info".
- **Copilot / others** — most have a "custom instructions" or "system prompt" equivalent under settings.

What to save. The voice profile from Step 1 (copy the whole block) *plus* the banned-patterns list from Step 2. Paste both into the same field. Keep the AI-tells list as close to verbatim as your tool allows — the specificity is doing the work.

Then test it on something real. Ask the AI to draft an email you'd actually send, or a Slack reply, or a LinkedIn post. Read it out loud. If any line still reads AI, copy that exact phrase, add it to your banned list, and re-save. The list gets more personal every week until it stops catching anything.

***Why this step last.** A voice profile sitting in a document doesn't help you. One that runs silently on every draft, without thinking, is the one you'll actually use. Ten minutes of setup saves the ten seconds of rewriting you'd otherwise do on every message — and, more importantly, stops you shipping things that sound nothing like you.*

If you find this useful, a full Build Day turns voice-matching from a one-off prompt into a workflow that runs across your email, meetings, proposals, and internal comms — so your team's AI-assisted output doesn't sound like three different people.

Book a 20-minute fit call at learninaday.co.uk.