



FREE GUIDE · FOR BUSINESS OWNERS AND TEAMS

10 Hours Back

The CORE prompt framework, getting started with Claude and Zoho CRM, and the email connectors that hand you back one to two hours a day.

Read this in ten minutes

Three chapters, three fixes: a repeatable way to brief AI so it works first time, the right accounts to start on (and why), and the connectors that put AI to work inside the tool you live in — your inbox.

No jargon, nothing extra to buy to make it work, and every example works today.



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1. The CORE prompt framework

Most disappointing AI results have the same cause: a brief a human colleague would also fail with. CORE is the four-part brief that fixes it — memorable enough to use every time, complete enough that "good on the first attempt" becomes your normal.

Letter	It stands for	What you write
C	Context	What it needs to know: paste the thread, the background, the numbers. The part everyone skips — and the number one reason results feel generic.
O	Objective	Exactly what you want, in one sentence. "Draft a reply that politely declines and keeps the relationship warm."
R	Requirements	The rules of the output: length, format, tone, reader. "150 words, plain English, for a frustrated long-standing customer."
E	Examples	Show, don't describe: paste one or two of your best past versions so it matches your structure and voice.

CORE in action — the same request, twice

✦ Before and after

Weak: "Write an email to a customer about the delay."

CORE: "[C] Here is the thread and order 4471's history: [paste]. [O] Draft a reply that apologises once and confirms the new date, Friday 24th, with free delivery. [R] 150 words, warm and direct, no corporate waffle — they are a long-standing customer and frustrated. [E] Here are two past service-recovery emails we were proud of: [paste]."

Same tool, same minute of effort. The difference is entirely in the brief.

Three CORE prompts to keep

- ✦ "[C: paste notes] [O] Summarise in five bullets, then list every action with an owner and a date. [R] Table format, plain English." — after any meeting.
- ✦ "[C: paste document] [O] Rewrite at half the length. [R] Keep every fact a customer needs; drop everything else." — anything too long.
- ✦ "[O] Before you attempt this, ask me five questions that would improve the result." — the power move for fuzzy tasks: it builds the C and R for you.

✦ Go deeper

CORE is lesson one of a full prompting method — iteration, voice-matching and building a team prompt library. **The AI Foundations Course** — 28 bite-size video lessons, whole-team licence — is at sygneus.ai/course.

2. Claude and Zoho CRM — getting started

Two tools cover most of what a small business needs: Claude for the thinking and writing, Zoho CRM for remembering and chasing. Here is how to start each one properly — because the account you choose matters more than people expect.

Claude: which account, and why

Option	Who it suits	Why / why not
Free	Trying it out personally	Fine for a look around. Not for company work: limited usage and none of the workspace controls a business needs.
Paid individual plan	Sole traders and freelancers	Serious usage limits, priority access and the full feature set. The minimum for real business use.
Team / business plan	Any business with employees	The one to choose: shared workspace, central billing, admin controls, and everyone working under the same settings and rules — which is what makes safe use enforceable.

- ♦ **The golden rule:** company work happens on a business-grade account, never on personal free accounts. It is the single cheapest risk reduction available.
- ♦ **First three things to do:** turn on two-factor authentication, review the data and training settings, and create your first Project — a workspace holding your templates and voice, set once and reused forever.
- ♦ **Plans and pricing change:** check claude.com for current details before you commit.

Zoho CRM: which edition, and why

If your customer information lives in spreadsheets, inboxes and memory, nothing chases, nothing reminds, and three people hold three different "latest" versions. That is the problem a CRM fixes — and Zoho is our pick for small and mid-size businesses: strong features for the money, and one suite that grows with you (forms, email, invoicing, automation) rather than ten subscriptions taped together.

- ♦ **Free edition:** genuinely usable for up to three users — the right way to prove the habit before spending anything.
- ♦ **Paid editions:** unlock the parts that pay for themselves: workflow automation, better pipelines and integrations. Most small teams start on the entry paid tier and upgrade only when a feature demands it.
- ♦ **Set up in this order:** pipeline stages that match how you actually sell → import your contacts → one simple automation (the follow-up reminder) → make it the single home of customer truth.
- ♦ **Full disclosure:** we are an official Zoho Partner — which is also why we know the platform deeply enough to recommend it with confidence.

♦ Go deeper

The course walks through both setups on screen, click by click, including the settings that protect your data. **The AI Foundations Course** — 28 bite-size video lessons, whole-team licence — is at sygneus.ai/course.

3. Connect Claude to Outlook or Gmail

Here is the chapter that pays for the other two. The average office worker spends around a quarter of the working day in email — call it two to three hours. Connect Claude to your inbox and a large share of that becomes review-and-approve instead of read-and-type: for a typical worker, that can hand back one to two hours every day. Ten hours a week. Hence the name of this guide.

What a connector actually is

A connector gives Claude permission to see and work with your email (and calendar) directly — so instead of copy-pasting messages into a chat window, you simply ask questions about your real inbox and get drafts ready to send. Setup takes minutes: in Claude, open the connectors or integrations settings, choose Gmail or Outlook, and approve access with your work account.

The five moves that save the hours

1. Morning triage: "Check my unread email and list what actually needs a reply from me today, most urgent first." — minutes instead of the first hour.
2. Instant context: "Find the thread with [client] about the June order and summarise where we left it." — no more scroll-archaeology.
3. Drafts in your voice: "Draft a reply to the latest message from [name]: warm, brief, confirm Thursday." You edit and send; the blank screen is gone.
4. The chase list: "List everyone who has not replied to me in five or more working days, and draft a short, friendly follow-up for each."
5. Calendar sense-check: "Look at my week and tell me which meetings have no agenda."

Two rules before you connect anything

6. Business-grade account only. Connectors see real business data; personal free accounts are not the place for them.
7. Agree the red list first: passwords, payment details and anything under NDA never go into an AI tool. One written page is enough — and every reply Claude drafts still gets a human glance before it sends.

◆ Go deeper

Module 5 of the course covers the full inbox workflow on screen — plus meetings, documents, spreadsheets and marketing. **The AI Foundations Course** — 28 bite-size video lessons, whole-team licence — is at sygneus.ai/course.

Where the rest of your ten hours live

Everything in this guide is you using AI, and it is genuinely worth an hour or two per person per day. The level above is AI that works while you don't: every enquiry filed in the CRM automatically, follow-ups drafted on schedule, quotes generated from your pipeline, the Monday report arriving unasked — with a human approving anything important.

That is systems work, and it is exactly what we build in the **AI Launchpad**: your Zoho CRM configured, your first three automations live and tested, your team trained, and a written AI use policy — delivered in 30 days at a fixed price of £4,495. No day rates, no surprises, defence-grade care with your data.

◆ Your next steps

Start free: the 2-minute AI Readiness Scorecard at sygneus.ai — your score and best starting point, instantly, no email needed.

Learn the full method: the AI Foundations Course at sygneus.ai/course — 28 lessons, whole-team licence.

Have it built for you: the AI Launchpad — book a free 30-minute call at sygneus.ai and leave with three practical recommendations, whether or not we ever work together.

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