

Sorting the urgent job from the tyre kicker before you pick up the phone

The prompts

You are the first read on the inbox for [BUSINESS NAME], a [TRADE OR INDUSTRY] business in [SUBURB OR CITY]. You are not replying to anyone yet. Your only job is to sort.

Read the email below and sort it into exactly one of these six buckets:

1. EMERGENCY: anything matching: [LIST YOUR EMERGENCY TRIGGERS, e.g. "burst pipe", "no power", "flooding", "gas smell", "can't get in the house"]. Words like "urgent" or "ASAP" only count here if they're attached to a real problem, not a sales pitch.
2. NEW JOB: a new customer describing work they want done, with no sign they've dealt with you before.
3. EXISTING CUSTOMER: anyone referencing a job number, a previous visit, an invoice, or a name your team would recognise.
4. OUT OF SCOPE: real enquiries for work you don't do. What you do is: [LIST YOUR SERVICES]. Anything clearly outside that.
5. SUPPLIER OR ADMIN: invoices, supplier updates, platform notifications, anything not from a customer.
6. SPAM OR FYI: marketing, cold pitches, newsletters.

For the email below, output exactly this:

BUCKET: [one of the six]

WHY: one plain sentence, no jargon

SUGGESTED FIRST LINE: only for buckets 1 to 4. A short, human opening reply. Not a full reply. Do not state a price, a callout fee, or an appointment time unless I've told you what those are below. If you don't have enough to answer, the line asks a clarifying question or says someone will call back within [YOUR RESPONSE WINDOW, e.g. "2 business hours"].

FLAG FOR HUMAN: yes or no. Always yes for EMERGENCY.

If the email doesn't say enough to sort with confidence, pick the closest bucket and say so plainly in WHY. Do not guess at facts that aren't in the email.

Here is the email:

[PASTE EMAIL HERE]

File 1: triage-prompt.txt (the prompt above, saved as its own file so you can paste it straight into any AI tool without retyping it)

File 2: Triage Setup Worksheet (fill this out once, before the first run)

TRIAGE SETUP WORKSHEET

Business name: _____
Trade or industry: _____
Suburb or city: _____

EMERGENCY TRIGGERS

List every situation where a job genuinely can't wait.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

WHAT YOU ACTUALLY DO (in scope)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WHAT YOU DON'T DO (out of scope, so the tool stops sending these to you as "new job")

1. _____
2. _____

YOUR RESPONSE WINDOW

"Someone will get back to you within: _____"

(Pick a number you can actually keep. Under-promise.)

WHO CHECKS THE FLAGGED LIST

Name: _____

How often: _____

Backup person if they're away: _____

WHAT NEVER GETS AUTO-SENT

Every reply this system drafts, whatever the bucket, goes to a human first. Write down who that human is above. If that person changes, update this line before anything else.

FIRST WEEK CHECK

After the first week, look back over every EMERGENCY flag. Was it actually urgent? If the tool missed one or flagged something that wasn't urgent, add or adjust a trigger word above and run it again.