

OPERATOR TOOLKIT



7 Scope-Creep Replies

Calm, commercial language for the moment a client asks for more

Keep small requests from becoming unpaid projects.

A free field note from Lineproof

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MODULE 01

Use the five-move structure

Acknowledge. Anchor. Quantify. Offer choices. Record the decision.

Replace every bracketed field. Check the request against the signed agreement and your Scope Snapshot before sending. Do not begin additional work while the decision is still pending.

PRINCIPLE No surprise invoices. No invisible extra work. Every meaningful change becomes an explicit choice.

1. The simple add

COPY AND ADAPT Yes, we can add that. It is a new [deliverable/channel/version] beyond the current scope, so I have logged it as a change. I will send fee and timing options before work begins.

2. The three choices

COPY AND ADAPT The current fee covers [baseline]. The new request adds [difference]. We can add it for [fee], trade it for [included item], or place it in phase two.

3. The borderline ask

COPY AND ADAPT This is close to the current scope, but I want to clarify one point before I commit: does [request] replace [included item], or is it an additional deliverable?

4. The revision reset

COPY AND ADAPT This is revision round [number] of [total]. I can include changes that refine the approved direction. The new [audience/direction/deliverable] would be a separate change; I can price that before we proceed.

5. The budget-neutral trade

COPY AND ADAPT We can keep the current budget by replacing [included item] with [new request]. That keeps effort and timing roughly neutral. Please confirm the swap before I update the plan.

6. The rush decision

COPY AND ADAPT The requested date is earlier than the agreed milestone. I can offer the full change by [date] for [rush fee], a reduced version by [date] for [fee], or the original scope on [original date].

7. The clean close

COPY AND ADAPT I am closing the loop on change request [ID]. If I do not receive approval by [date], I will continue with the original scope and schedule.

MODULE 02

What to record

The message is only half the system. Preserve the decision trail.

- Request ID, date, requester, and a plain-language summary.
- Included, Borderline, or Additional classification.
- Estimated hours, proposed fee, and schedule impact.
- Client decision and decision date.
- Actual hours, recovered revenue, or cost absorbed.

NEXT STEP The full Scope Ledger System adds the formula-driven workbook, 12-module playbook, editable client forms, 36 messages, and AI draft prompts.

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