

Your Tough Conversation Script Pack

Follow-up email

Sample script pack - fictional example

This sample uses fictional details. Your script pack will be generated from the situation you provide.

PREPARED FOR

Direct report

TONE

Professional and calm

SITUATION TYPE

Follow-up email

Your 60-Second Prep Card

GOAL	Send a clear written recap after a difficult conversation about missed handoffs.
OPENING LINE	"Thanks for meeting today. I want to recap what we discussed and what we agreed will happen next."
ANCHOR PHRASE	"This recap is meant to make the expectation clear, not to restart the conversation."
DO NOT SAY	"As discussed, your attitude was unacceptable."
CLOSE WITH	"Please let me know if I missed anything important from our conversation."

Situation Summary

A manager had a difficult conversation about repeated missed handoffs. The employee was upset but agreed to clarify handoff notes before leaving shift and notify the manager sooner when a handoff may be missed.

OBSERVABLE FACTS / PLACEHOLDERS

- Repeated missed handoffs
- Employee was upset during the conversation
- Employee agreed to clarify handoff notes before leaving shift
- Employee agreed to notify the manager sooner when a handoff may be missed

MISSING FACTS TO FILL IN

- Date of conversation
- Specific handoff process name
- Next check-in date

Conversation Goal

Send a clear written recap after a difficult conversation about missed handoffs.

Full Conversation Script

1. Subject line

"Use a neutral subject line such as "Recap from today" or "Follow-up on handoff expectations.""

2. Open with purpose

"Thanks for meeting today. I want to recap what we discussed so the expectation and next steps are clear."

3. Name the topic

"We discussed repeated missed handoffs and the need for clearer handoff notes before leaving shift."

4. Acknowledge the tone without judging it

"The conversation was difficult, and I appreciate you staying with it."

5. Confirm the agreement

"Going forward, you agreed to clarify handoff notes before leaving shift and notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed."

6. Invite correction

"If I missed anything important from the conversation, please reply so we can keep the recap accurate."

7. Close professionally

"Thanks again for discussing this today. I will follow up after the next shift cycle to make sure the process is working."

Tone Options

SOFTER VERSION

Thanks for taking the time to talk today. I know the conversation was not easy, and I appreciate you staying engaged. I want to recap what we agreed to so the handoff expectations are clear.

MORE DIRECT VERSION

This note recaps today's conversation about repeated missed handoffs. Going forward, handoff notes need to be clarified before leaving shift, and you need to notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed.

CAREFUL / PROFESSIONAL VERSION

This email summarizes our conversation regarding handoff expectations, the next steps discussed, and the follow-up process we agreed to use.

Copy/Paste Follow-Up Message

Short version

“Thanks for meeting today. We discussed the repeated missed handoffs and the expectation that handoff notes are clarified before leaving shift. You also agreed to notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed. I will check in after the next shift cycle to see how the process is working.”

Best when the relationship is intact and the agreement was clear.

Formal version

“This note recaps our conversation today about repeated missed handoffs. We reviewed the expectation that handoff notes are clarified before leaving shift and that you notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed. You agreed to follow that process going forward. I will follow up after the next shift cycle.”

Best when documentation clarity matters.

Warmer version

“Thanks for talking this through today. I know it was a difficult conversation, and I appreciate you staying with it. To recap, we agreed that handoff notes will be clarified before you leave shift and that you will notify me sooner if a handoff may be missed.”

Best when the employee was upset and you want calm clarity.

Subject lines

“Recap from today; Follow-up on handoff expectations; Handoff notes - next steps”

Use neutral subjects that do not sound disciplinary unless the process requires it.

Documentation note version

“Discussed repeated missed handoffs with employee. Reviewed expectation that handoff notes are clarified before leaving shift and that manager is notified sooner when a handoff may be missed. Employee was upset during the conversation but agreed to the next steps.”

Keeps the note factual and copy/paste-ready.

Questions to Ask

- Does this recap accurately reflect what we agreed to?
- Is there any part of the handoff expectation that needs clarification?
- What could get in the way of notifying me earlier?

- What should we check after the next shift cycle?

Follow-Up Messages

SUBJECT

Recap from today

Thanks for meeting today. We discussed the repeated missed handoffs and the expectation that handoff notes are clarified before leaving shift. You also agreed to notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed. I will check in after the next shift cycle to see how the process is working.

SUBJECT

Follow-up on handoff expectations

This note recaps our conversation today about repeated missed handoffs. We reviewed the expectation that handoff notes are clarified before leaving shift and that you notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed. You agreed to follow that process going forward. I will follow up after the next shift cycle.

Documentation Note

Discussed repeated missed handoffs with employee. Reviewed expectation that handoff notes are clarified before leaving shift and that manager is notified sooner when a handoff may be missed. Employee was upset during the conversation but agreed to clarify notes before leaving shift and notify manager sooner when a handoff may be missed.

DO NOT DOCUMENT

- Do not document that the employee was dramatic or emotional.
- Do not add new concerns that were not discussed.
- Do not characterize the employee as careless.

What Not to Say / Say This Instead

Avoid saying

Say this instead

Your attitude in the conversation was unacceptable.

The conversation was difficult, and this recap is focused on the handoff expectation and next steps.

This cannot happen again or else.	Going forward, handoff notes need to be clarified before leaving shift, and I need earlier notice when a handoff may be missed.
You admitted you were wrong.	You agreed to clarify handoff notes before leaving shift and notify me sooner when a handoff may be missed.

Final Checklist

BEFORE THE CONVERSATION

- Send the recap soon after the conversation.
- Use neutral subject lines.
- Include only what was discussed and agreed.

DURING THE CONVERSATION

- Keep the email short.
- Name the expectation and next step.
- Avoid emotional labels.

AFTER THE CONVERSATION

- Save the recap according to company practice.
- Check whether the next shift cycle improved.
- Follow up if the handoff is missed again.

Guardrail Reminder

REMINDER

This script pack helps you prepare clear workplace language. It does not replace HR, legal counsel, or company policy.

PAUSE AND INVOLVE HR OR THE APPROPRIATE INTERNAL RESOURCE IF THE EMPLOYEE MENTIONS

- Discrimination, retaliation, harassment, accommodation, medical leave, pay, termination, or a formal discipline process

PAUSE PHRASE

“I want to pause here and make sure we follow the right internal process before continuing.”