



ASCENDEA

AI / BUSINESS GROWTH / CHECKLIST

Humanise Your AI Copy — Practical Editing Checklist

A practical, UK-focused checklist for small-business owners to edit AI-assisted copy for clearer rhythm, concrete detail and truthful business voice, with a final human review step.



Author: Rob Arnold

ascendea.ai

ASCENDEA EDITION · OCTOBER 2026 · v1.0
Free Ascendea resource

Your route through this resource

Before you edit	3
Checklist 1: Break the repetitive rhythm	4
Checklist 2: Replace broad words with observable details.....	5
Checklist 3: Add real judgement, not made-up personality	6
Checklist 4: Run the final human review	8
A one-paragraph editing sheet	8
Optional AI editing prompt	9
End-use notice.....	10
References	10

Chapter links and PDF bookmarks support navigation. Writing areas are for handwritten or separate notes, not interactive PDF forms.

Author: Rob Arnold · Ascendea · Edition v1.0 · October 2026

<https://ascendea.ai/>

Educational guidance; not a guarantee of business results or legal, tax or personalised financial advice. This is a non-exclusive licensed-content adaptation. For your own learning and permitted end use only; no resale, redistribution, editable-source or private-label rights are granted.

For UK small-business owners and managers

Author: Rob Arnold · Ascendea · <https://ascendea.ai/>

Editorially prepared edition v1.0 · October 2026 · Release subject to library activation

AI can give you a useful first draft. It cannot supply your lived experience, your business judgement or permission to make a claim. Use this checklist to turn an approved draft into clearer copy that sounds specific to your business, without adding details that are not true.

This resource is for a web page, email, proposal, social post or customer message. It is an editing aid, not a promise that a draft is accurate, compliant or suitable for every audience.

Before you edit

Set up a safe first pass

- ☐ Keep a copy of the unedited draft so you can compare changes.
- ☐ Decide who is speaking: the owner, the company, a named specialist or the wider team. Do not switch between these voices by accident.
- ☐ Write down the reader and the job the copy needs to do. For example: help a homeowner understand a boiler-service booking, explain an accountancy firm's month-end process, or introduce a trade supplier's delivery option.
- ☐ Use only information you are allowed to put into an AI tool. Remove customer names, account details, commercial information and other confidential material unless your organisation has approved that use.
- ☐ Check every factual claim, price, date, named service and link against an approved source before publishing. The UK National Cyber Security Centre notes that generative-AI tools can present incorrect statements as facts. [1](#)

Choose a sensible target

Do not try to make every line colourful. Aim for copy that is **clear, specific and recognisably yours**. A formal tender, a safety notice and a friendly Instagram caption need different levels of personality.

Checklist 1: Break the repetitive rhythm

AI drafts often give each sentence a similar length and shape. Read one paragraph at a time and vary the pace where it helps the message.

1. Split one over-even sentence

- ☐ Find two sentences of a similar, medium length sitting next to each other.
- ☐ Pick the first one and identify its main point.
- ☐ Break it into a short, complete sentence followed by the detail.
- ☐ Keep the original meaning. Do not cut a condition that makes the statement accurate.

Draft: “Our team reviews every enquiry promptly and provides customers with the information they need to make an informed decision.”

Possible edit: “We review each enquiry before replying. If we need more information, we say so rather than guess.”

The second version only works if it is true of the business. If it is not, replace it with the actual process.

2. Join related ideas when the reasoning needs room

- ☐ Find a sentence that explains **how** or **why** something happens.
- ☐ Read the next sentence. If the two ideas belong together, join them with a plain connector such as “because”, “although”, “while” or “so”.
- ☐ Read the result aloud. Keep it only if it is easier to follow than two short sentences.

Draft: “We ask for photographs before quoting. This reduces uncertainty.”

Possible edit: “We ask for photographs before quoting because they help us understand the job and say when a site visit is still needed.”

A longer sentence is useful when it carries a clear chain of thought. It is not useful when it becomes a pile of clauses.

3. Use a short sentence or fragment with restraint

- ☐ Look for one point that deserves a pause.
- ☐ Try a short sentence first. Use a fragment only if your usual brand voice and the setting allow it.
- ☐ Do not use fragments in a safety instruction, contract term, regulated communication or any place where a complete sentence would be clearer.

Example: “The quote covers the agreed work. Nothing more.”

A fragment can add emphasis, but it should not become a repeated stylistic trick.

4. Read the paragraph aloud

- ☐ Read the paragraph at normal speaking speed.
- ☐ Mark places where every sentence sounds alike, where you run out of breath, or where the point gets lost.
- ☐ Change one sentence length or structure, then read it again.
- ☐ Stop when the paragraph is clear. Variety is a tool, not a target in itself.

Checklist 2: Replace broad words with observable details

Words such as “efficient”, “stressful”, “excellent”, “success” and “collaboration” are not always wrong. They are often too broad to show a reader what really happens. Replace them only when you have an accurate detail to use.

1. Circle the broad words

- ☐ Scan the draft for abstract nouns and vague adjectives.
- ☐ Ask: “What would a customer, colleague or manager actually see, hear or do?”
- ☐ Check that the answer comes from real evidence, an approved process or a clearly labelled example.

Broad wording	Question to ask	More useful direction
“We provide efficient service.”	What happens, and when?	Describe the real booking, update or handover process.
“The team was stressed.”	What showed that pressure?	Describe an observable situation, if it is relevant and true.
“The project was a success.”	What was agreed, delivered or measured?	State the specific outcome and its limits.
“We work collaboratively.”	Who does what together?	Name the handover, review or shared decision.

2. Add one concrete detail where it earns its place

Use a real detail that helps the reader picture the situation. For business writing, that often means an observation rather than a poetic image.

- **Sight:** “three marked-up plans on the meeting-room table” rather than “project documents”.
 - **Sound:** “the phone still ringing while the shop team checks stock” rather than “a busy environment”.
 - **Touch or material:** “the worn sample book at the counter” rather than “a familiar resource”.
 - **Smell or taste:** use rarely, and only where it genuinely belongs to the offer, such as a bakery, café or product description.
 - **Motion:** “the queue grew after the lunch rush” rather than “demand rose quickly”.
 - [] Add no more detail than the reader needs.
- ☐ Do not invent a scene, a customer reaction or a sensory detail to make copy sound personal.
- ☐ Remove any detail that could identify a customer, employee or site without permission.

Illustrative example, not a claim about a real business:

Broad: “Our retail team faced a stressful Saturday.”

More specific: “By 1 pm, the fitting-room queue reached the end of the display rail and two colleagues paused stock work to help on the floor.”

The second line is only suitable when the business can verify it and has no reason to keep the detail private.

3. Keep the language proportionate

- ☐ Check that one useful detail has not turned a straightforward message into a story.
- ☐ Remove decorative adjectives that do not explain a benefit, a process or a decision.
- ☐ Keep factual wording in formal or high-stakes communications.

Concrete detail can make a paragraph easier to picture. It does not replace evidence, approval or plain instructions.

Checklist 3: Add real judgement, not made-up personality

A draft may hedge so much that it says very little. You can give it a point of view, but the point of view must belong to the person or business named on the copy.

1. Find the hedge

- ☐ Highlight phrases such as “typically”, “can be”, “some argue”, “it is important to consider” and “it may be beneficial”.
- ☐ Ask whether the sentence is protecting a necessary uncertainty or avoiding a decision.
- ☐ Keep a hedge when the evidence is genuinely limited, the outcome varies or a qualified adviser is needed.

Draft: “It may be beneficial for businesses to consider reviewing their enquiry process.”

Clearer, if true: “If enquiries are being missed or passed between people, map the current process before buying another tool.”

2. State the actual position

- ☐ Use “I” only when the named author is speaking from their own real experience or judgement.
- ☐ If the company is speaking, use accurate alternatives such as “Our approach is...” or “We recommend...”, but only when the company has agreed that position.
- ☐ Explain the reason for the view in one plain sentence.
- ☐ Do not borrow a confident voice, a qualification or experience that the author does not have.

Example: “We do not quote for electrical work from a single photograph because access and existing wiring can change the scope.”

This is more useful than a generic promise only if it accurately reflects the firm's process.

3. Add a considered counterpoint where it helps

A “hot take” is not a requirement. If you challenge common advice, make the claim narrow, relevant and supportable.

- ☐ Identify a piece of conventional advice in the draft.
- ☐ Write the boundary: when does it not apply, or what has the business seen instead?
- ☐ Check that you can support the statement with experience, evidence or an approved source.
- ☐ Remove it if it creates heat without helping the reader make a decision.

Example: “More booking options are not always better. For our small workshop, a short call before we confirm a repair slot helps us avoid promising a visit that needs specialist parts.”

Do not present a preference as a universal rule.

4. Use a specific story only when it is real and permitted

A short, honest example can explain a point better than a broad claim. It must not become an invented personal anecdote, testimonial or customer case study.

- ☐ Name the purpose of the story: what decision, mistake or change does it explain?
- ☐ Confirm that the event happened as described.
- ☐ Remove names, confidential facts and identifiable details unless you have permission to use them.
- ☐ State the limit of the story. One experience does not prove that the same result will occur elsewhere.

If you do not have a suitable real story, use a direct explanation. For an internal workshop, you may use a clearly labelled **fictional teaching scenario**, not a disguised client story.

Checklist 4: Run the final human review

Publish only what you can stand behind

- ☐ The voice matches the named author or business.
- ☐ Every claim, price, date, service description and link has been checked.
- ☐ First-person wording describes real experience or a genuinely held view.
- ☐ Examples are clearly labelled if fictional or illustrative.
- ☐ No customer, supplier, employee or confidential detail appears without a valid reason and permission.
- ☐ The copy does not promise a result, saving, ranking, conversion or outcome that you cannot support.
- ☐ The reader can still understand the next step, even after you added detail or personality.
- ☐ A suitable person has approved the final version for the channel where it will appear.

If you use an AI tool for a second editing pass, treat its suggestions as suggestions. Reject anything that adds an unverified claim, changes the meaning, exposes information or makes the copy sound unlike the approved voice. The NCSC advises that AI-generated content can be wrong and identifies risks around unchecked input, so human review remains necessary. [1](#)

A one-paragraph editing sheet

Use this with one real paragraph at a time. Write only details you can verify and use.

Prompt	Your note
Reader and purpose	
Exact sentence that sounds over-even or generic	
One change to the rhythm	
Broad word to replace	
Real, permitted detail available	
Author's real view or boundary	
Fact, permission or approval to check	
Final action: publish, revise, ask for evidence, or remove	

Optional AI editing prompt

Use this only with an approved draft and information you are allowed to share.

Act as an editorial assistant for a UK small business. Review the draft below without adding facts, customer stories, prices, performance claims or qualifications. Identify: (1) two places where sentence rhythm is repetitive; (2) up to three broad words that could be replaced with a real observable detail; and (3) hedging that may hide the author's actual position. For each item, give an edit suggestion and explain what evidence or author approval is needed. Preserve genuine uncertainty. Do not invent sensory details, anecdotes, testimonials or results. Return suggestions only, not a final published draft.

After using the prompt:

1. Compare every suggestion with the original source material or the business owner's approved facts.
2. Accept only changes that are accurate, appropriate for the audience and consistent with the real voice.
3. Ask a responsible person to review claims, permissions and the final copy before publication.

End-use notice

This Ascendea edition is a **non-exclusive licensed adaptation** of private source material, with UK-focused editorial guidance added for general education. It is provided for your own learning and permitted end use. **No resale, redistribution, private-label, editable-source or PLR rights are granted.** It does not transfer rights in the underlying source material.

This checklist is general educational material, not legal, regulatory, security or professional advice. AI tools, terms and guidance change. Check the relevant official guidance, your organisation's policies and a qualified adviser where needed. No outcome is guaranteed.

References

1. National Cyber Security Centre — AI and cyber security: what you need to know
<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/ai-and-cyber-security-what-you-need-to-know>