

I expected efficiency. I Got a Complete Rethink of How I Communicate.

Tiffany Garside set out to save time on email. What she got instead was a mirror, and a positioning audit she didn't know she needed.

www.tiffygwrites.ai

The pitch was simple: use Claude as an email strategist for a month and see what happens. Tiffany Garside, a copywriter and business strategist, figured she'd get faster drafts, cleaner copy, maybe a few hours back each week. She got all of that. She also got something she wasn't expecting: a fundamental shift in how she understood her own business positioning.

"I didn't go in looking for a rebrand," she says. "I went in looking for efficiency. But when you start putting your emails into an AI and asking it to think about strategy, it starts reflecting things back at you that you've been too close to see."

That reflection came about three weeks in, when Garside was using Claude to review her outreach emails alongside her broader market positioning. The two didn't line up. The way she was presenting herself in her emails was telling a different story from what she actually offered and Claude, prompted to look at the gap, named it plainly.

"It wasn't dramatic. Claude didn't say 'your brand is broken.' It just kept noting that my email language was underselling a specific thing I do really well. And when it said it enough times, I had to stop and look at it."

"I went in looking for efficiency. I came out with a positioning audit I didn't know I needed."

THE SKILL THAT STARTED IT

Garside's entry point into using Claude strategically was an email skill she built around a specific frustration: the gap between what she meant to say and what she actually sent.

"I was spending all this mental energy composing emails in my head, thinking about tone, thinking about whether I was asking too much or not enough, and by the time I sat down to write, I was already tired. The first thing I tried was using Claude to think through the goal of an email before I wrote it. Not the draft.. But the outcome."

That single step changed the quality of what she sent almost immediately. *“When you’re forced to articulate what you actually want from an email before you write it, you catch yourself making assumptions. You realize you were about to send something vague because you weren’t clear yet yourself.”*

The skill evolved quickly.

Within two weeks she had three she used daily: a pre-send review that checked her emails for clarity, tone, and whether the ask matched the intent; a communication audit that looked at patterns across threads she hadn’t responded to well; and a reply framing skill for when she received emails that felt loaded — the ones where what was said and what was meant weren’t the same thing.

“That last one changed something for me. There’s so much communication that happens between the lines, and I was responding to the surface of things. Claude helped me slow down and read what was actually happening.”

WHAT THE INBOX REVEALED

About three weeks in, Garside started doing something she hadn’t planned: feeding Claude her sent emails alongside her positioning documents. She wanted to know if her outreach was landing the way her brand promised it would.

It wasn’t.

“There was a specific capability I have — the way I approach copy at the strategy level, not just the execution level and I was barely mentioning it. My emails were talking around it. Claude kept flagging it. And once it flagged it a few times, I couldn’t unsee it.”

The result was a positioning audit she describes as more useful than anything she’d paid a consultant to do. Not because Claude had insights a consultant wouldn’t, but because the process was iterative and honest in a way a paid engagement often isn’t.

“A consultant tells you what they think in a meeting. Claude tells you what it notices every time you show up with new material. Over a month, that compounds into something real.”

“Once you work with something that pushes back on vague thinking, you stop tolerating your own vague thinking.”

THE WORKFLOWS THAT STUCK

By the end of the month, Garside had built out a project structure that reflects how she thinks about Claude now, not as a tool that executes, but as a collaborator that needs to be briefed well.

She keeps one project per major function of her business. Project instructions hold fixed context: her positioning, her voice, her non-negotiables. Skills hold the repeatable processes.

“The distinction I keep coming back to is that instructions are who and skills are how. If I’m explaining my values, that’s instructions. If I’m explaining a repeatable task, that’s a skill. Then, I’ll ask Claude the difficult question: Audit my business as if I’m a corporation with a product marketing team. It shows me gaps I didn’t consider even on Instagram and throughout all my communications. Not only did I replace a VA but also a Business Coach too. My clients value my ability to execute their emails flawlessly while having the time and capacity to own their data analysis now too, over a span of 12 months.”

Her favorite scheduled task runs every Monday at 7am a communication brief that pulls together the threads she needs to follow up on, flags anything that’s gone cold for more than seven days, and gives her a one-line re-entry note for each one. “Monday used to start with a pile. Now it starts with a plan.”

She also replaced a VA she’d been paying to draft cold outreach. “She was good, but every email needed significant editing because she didn’t have full context on the relationship or the goal. Now I handle it with Claude directly. What changed is I’m not editing for intent anymore. Claude does the strategy, and I execute.”

WHAT DIDN’T WORK

Garside is straightforward about the experiment’s failures. She tried to build automated proposal drafts — a system where she could feed Claude a client brief and get a near-final proposal back. It fell apart.

“What I got was technically correct but emotionally flat. It had no sense of what the client actually cared about most. The fix wasn’t a better prompt, it was accepting that proposals need a human layer. Now I use Claude to build the structure and pull key points from the brief, and I write the emotional core myself.”

She also tried building follow-up sequences in advance. “They felt canned because they were. Responses dropped off. The problem was I was trying to automate relationships, which Claude can’t do.” She went back to writing each follow-up in real time, informed by what actually happened in the thread before it.

THE PART NOBODY TALKS ABOUT

Ask Garside what surprised her most about the month and she doesn’t mention a workflow or a metric. She talks about standards.

“Once you work with something that pushes back on vague thinking, you stop tolerating your own vague thinking. I proof my own intent now before I write anything. I ask myself what I actually want, what the other person is likely feeling, what success looks like before I open a draft.”

That shift came from one habit more than anything else: telling Claude to push back before answering. “I added one line to how I open most sessions ‘if my framing seems off, tell me before you answer.’ That changed everything. It stopped being a tool that executes and started being one that thinks.”

For business owners considering the same experiment, her advice is less about prompts and more about posture. “The quality of what you get out is almost entirely determined by how clearly you can articulate what you actually want.

And most of us haven’t had to develop that skill at this level before. Claude didn’t just improve my emails. It made me a more deliberate person. That part wasn’t in the pitch. And it’s the part that stuck.”

Tiffany Garside is a copywriter and business strategist.