

Workload Saying No Script Kit

Use the method

Prepare a clear conversation when a new request exceeds your available time or conflicts with an existing commitment. Use this before accepting more work. The result is a truthful boundary, an optional feasible alternative, and a recorded priority decision. Adapt the language to your role and obligations; a script alone does not change assigned responsibilities.

- 1. Clarify the request.** Ask what result is needed, by when, and what happens if it waits. Separate a stated deadline from an assumed one.
- 2. Check commitments.** Identify your current accepted work and available time. You can explain the workload without sharing private health or personal details.
- 3. State the limit.** Use a short factual sentence: I cannot complete this by that date with the current commitments. Avoid a vague maybe that sounds like acceptance.
- 4. Offer only feasible options.** If possible, offer a later date, smaller scope, or an agreed handoff. Do not volunteer another person or promise an alternative before confirming it.
- 5. Ask for a priority decision.** When the requester controls priorities, ask which existing task should move. Record what changes and who must be informed.
- 6. Confirm the outcome.** Summarize accepted work, deferred work, owner, due date, and any unresolved disagreement. Use the appropriate manager or escalation route when the decision exceeds your authority.

Worked example

Deadline script: I can deliver the two-page summary Friday. I cannot deliver the full report Wednesday with the work already agreed. Would the summary meet the immediate need?

Priority script: I can take this on if we move the inventory review. Which result should come first, and who will notify the inventory owner?

Decline script: I cannot take on this request this week. I can review availability next Monday, but I cannot promise a start until then. Handoff script: A handoff may be possible; I will confirm capacity before offering a name.

Illustrative outcome: a supervisor moves the inventory review to Monday and confirms the urgent request for Thursday. The operator records both dates and tells the affected owner. If no decision is reached, the conflict remains visible rather than becoming a hidden promise.

Before you put it to work

- ☐ The limit is truthful, specific, and understandable.
- ☐ Alternatives are feasible and do not commit another person.
- ☐ Changed priorities are authorized and communicated.
- ☐ Unresolved conflict has a decision or escalation owner.

If the problem keeps returning

If every request is described as urgent, ask the priority owner to rank actual commitments together. Bring the workload record so the conversation concerns tradeoffs rather than personal justification.

Connect the tools

Use PW-01 for available capacity and BO-07 for customer scope changes.

Working worksheet

Name or team _____ Date _____

Scope and setup

Request, requester, decision authority, requested result and date, and current commitments.

Reusable record

Option	Result and scope	Feasible date	Existing work affected	Decision and owner

Duplicate rows or this worksheet for additional records.

Use your own records. The examples on page 2 are illustrative. Continue on a duplicate worksheet when you need more space.

Personal observations are optional. Keep this worksheet in a private location and share only the work decision you choose to share.

Complete and review

Conversation draft

One factual boundary sentence, optional feasible alternative, and question for the priority decision owner.

Confirmed decision

Accepted deferred or declined work, changed due dates, authority, and who must be notified.

Unresolved conflict

Decision needed, person who can decide, interim instruction, escalation route, and follow-up date.

Review after use

Did your wording accidentally imply acceptance? _____

Who agreed to the tradeoff? _____

What new commitment needs written confirmation? _____

Next action _____ Owner _____ Due _____