

The AI Tells Checklist

10 signs your copy screams robot, and the 60 second fix for each. Run this over anything AI helped you write, before your customers run it for you.

1

Robot vocabulary

Elevate. Unlock. Unleash. Seamless. Game changer. Delve. Words nobody says out loud.

Fix: keep a banned words list and paste it into every prompt: "Never use these words."

2

The template opener

"In today's fast paced world..." The most recognisable AI opener on the internet.

Fix: open with a specific moment, a question, or a claim you can defend.

3

Long dashes everywhere

Dashes scattered through every paragraph like confetti. Readers now clock it instantly.

Fix: replace them with commas, colons, full stops, or a restructured sentence.

4

"It's not X. It's Y."

The contrast frame AI reaches for in nearly every draft it writes.

Fix: say what it is, plainly, once. Cut the fake reveal.

5

Everything in threes

Perfectly balanced lists of three. Every point, every sentence, every time.

Fix: use two. Or four. Or one strong point. Break the symmetry on purpose.

6

Metronome rhythm

Every paragraph the same length, every sentence the same shape. Human writing has a pulse.

Fix: put one short sentence next to a long one that breathes. Vary paragraph length.

7

The tidy wrap up

Endings that begin "In conclusion" or politely summarise what you just read.

Fix: delete the last paragraph. End on your strongest point instead.

8

No opinion

It agrees with everyone and takes no side, so it stands for nothing.

Fix: add one sentence you would defend in an argument. Conviction reads as emotion.

9

No specifics

No names, numbers or places. "We help businesses grow" could be anyone, anywhere.

Fix: add one real detail: R40 000, Durban, 90 days, the Tuesday phone call.

10

Belongs to nobody

Swap in a competitor's logo and the copy still works. That is the death sentence.

Fix: add the story, aside or admission only you could write. Then run the Logo Test again.

COUNT YOUR HITS

0 to 2: you sound human, keep going. **3 to 5:** a 10 minute edit will fix it. **6 or more:** your customers have already noticed. Time for a proper voice reset.

The Voice Transfer Prompt

Copy it. Fill in the brackets. Paste it at the start of every chat. Works in free ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini. No paid account needed.

PASTE THIS INTO YOUR AI CHAT

You are my copywriter. Before you write anything, learn me:

1. VOICE: here are 2 pieces I wrote myself: [paste them]. Match my rhythm, my openers and my sign off.

2. STANCE: my view on this topic: [your opinion]. Argue it with conviction. Do not hedge.

3. SPECIFICS: use these real details: [numbers, names, places, moments].

RULES: never use elevate, unlock, unleash, seamless, delve or game changer. No long dashes. Vary sentence length. No summary ending. Write like I talk, not like a brochure.

Now write: [the thing you need]

SAMPLE

Adjectives describe a thousand voices and the AI picks the most average one. Real samples give it a fingerprint to copy. Not a writer? Transcribe a voice note. WhatsApp voice notes count.

STANCE

AI is built to agree with everyone. Your brand is built by disagreeing with someone. An opinion is the one ingredient AI cannot generate, it can only borrow yours.

SPECIFICS

Generic claims are rented. Specifics are owned. R40 000, Durban, 90 days, the Tuesday phone call. Nobody can copy your Tuesday afternoon.

USING A FREE ACCOUNT?

Free AI forgets you between chats. Save your filled in prompt in your notes app, or in a WhatsApp message to yourself, and paste it fresh at the top of every new chat. Same result, zero Rands. Then finish with page 1: run the checklist over the draft before you publish.