

The 11 Riff Questions

One riff. Teach AI who you are.

This is the foundational riff. The voice memo where you answer eleven questions about your business and give Claude the raw material it will lean on in every chat that follows. The answers feed your business summary, your project tracker, your custom instructions, and every output downstream from there.

Read each question fully before you start talking. Let the focal points sit for a second. Then hit record and speak.

There are no wrong answers. There are only honest ones and careful ones. Go with honest.

QUESTION 1

What is your business and who do you serve?

Describe what you do in plain language. If you had to explain it to someone at dinner who asked what you do for work, what would you say? Then get specific about the people you serve.

FOCAL POINTS

- Who are the best clients you have worked with? What made them great?
- What makes someone a strong fit for what you do?
- Who does not belong in your world? Who drains you or creates friction?
- If you had to describe your ideal client to a friend, what would you say about their situation, what they are dealing with, and what they need?
- What industry, niche, or type of person do you work with most naturally?

QUESTION 2

What problem do you solve and what result do you create?

Why do clients actually come to you? Not the polished version. The real tension or frustration that makes someone reach out. Then describe what is different for them after working with you.

FOCAL POINTS

- What is the specific pain, frustration, or situation that drives someone to seek you out?
- What is different for them after working with you? What actually shifts?
- If a past client described the transformation to a friend, what would they say?
- Is the result something tangible they can point to, or is it more internal? Be specific either way.
- What is the gap between where they are when they find you and where they are when you are done?

QUESTION 3

What services do you provide and what do you not provide?

Name what you offer. Then name what you do not. The second part matters just as much because it prevents scope creep and misaligned expectations.

FOCAL POINTS

- What do you feel confident delivering right now?
 - What do you actively avoid, dislike, or refuse to do?
 - Where has scope creep happened before? What do clients ask for that is not part of your offer?
 - What are you open to learning or adding later but do not want to sell yet?
 - What feels aligned and energizing versus what feels draining even if you are capable of doing it?
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QUESTION 4

Walk through the full client journey from first contact to completion.

This is the A to Z of how someone works with you. Start from the moment they reach out and walk through every step until the engagement is complete. Be detailed. This is the process someone is buying.

FOCAL POINTS

- How does someone first reach out or inquire?
 - What happens between their first contact and actually starting work together?
 - What does onboarding look like? What do they need to do or provide before you begin?
 - What are the touchpoints along the way? Calls, check-ins, deliveries, milestones?
 - How do you communicate with them throughout? How often? Through what channels?
 - What does the final delivery or completion look like? How do they know it is done?
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QUESTION 5

What does someone actually get when they work with you?

Separate from the process, what are the tangible things they walk away with? Think about deliverables, access, support, assets, documents, sessions. Include what is included and what people might assume is included but is not.

FOCAL POINTS

- What tangible deliverables or outputs do they receive?
 - How many sessions, calls, or touchpoints are included?
 - Is there a timeline or duration for the engagement?
 - Are there limits on revisions, rounds of feedback, or scope?
 - What do people commonly assume is included that actually is not?
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QUESTION 6

What happens when the engagement ends?

Most people never think about this part. But how an engagement ends determines whether someone refers you, comes back, or just quietly disappears.

FOCAL POINTS

- Is there a defined end point, or does the work just fade out?
 - Do clients typically renew, upgrade, or transition into something else?
 - Is there a final review, deliverable, or closing conversation?
 - What happens if they want to continue working with you?
 - What happens if you need to end the relationship? How do you handle that transition?
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QUESTION 7

How do you currently get clients?

Be honest about what is actually driving business right now versus what you think should be driving it. This is not about what you want to be doing for marketing. It is about what is actually working.

FOCAL POINTS

- Where do your clients come from right now? Referrals, social media, ads, networking, existing relationships?
 - What has been your most consistent source?
 - Is there a pattern in how your best clients found you?
 - What have you tried that has not worked or that you have stopped doing?
 - If all your marketing stopped tomorrow, how long before your pipeline dried up?
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QUESTION 8

How would you honestly assess your skill level and where are your gaps?

This is not about being hard on yourself. It is about knowing where you stand so you position honestly and grow intentionally. Your clients will trust you more when your confidence matches your capability.

FOCAL POINTS

- Where are you genuinely strong? What can you deliver without stress?
 - Where are you still developing or feel uncertain?
 - Where do clients sometimes need something you cannot provide?
 - What would require significant growth, training, or outside support to offer?
 - Is there a gap between what you are selling and what you can consistently deliver?
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QUESTION 9

What do you charge and how do you feel about it?

Talk through your pricing openly. Include the number and the feeling. Both matter. If there is a gap between what you charge and what you think you should charge, say that too.

FOCAL POINTS

- What is your current pricing? Name the actual numbers.
 - What feels clean and confident to charge right now?
 - What feels like a stretch or premature?
 - What would need to change in your business or skill set for pricing to increase?
 - Is your pricing based on your value, your costs, what competitors charge, or what feels safe?
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QUESTION 10

How much can you realistically take on without burning out?

Not how much you can handle on a good week. How much you can sustain over months without your quality dropping or your energy crashing. Be realistic, not aspirational.

FOCAL POINTS

- How many clients can you serve at one time?
 - How many hours per week can you sustain, not just tolerate?
 - What other commitments does this coexist with?
 - What are the early warning signs that you are overextended?
 - What does your schedule look like when the business is running well versus when it is running you?
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QUESTION 11

What boundaries need to be in place for this to work, and what does success look like in the next 90 days?

Define the guardrails that keep this sustainable and the targets that tell you it is working. Be specific on both. Vague boundaries get crossed. Vague goals never get hit.

FOCAL POINTS

- What are your boundaries around availability and response times?
- What will you not do for clients, even if they ask?
- What financial target would make the next 90 days feel successful?
- What would your energy and stress level need to look like for this to be sustainable?
- What would tell you something needs to change or that this is not working?
- What is non-negotiable for you in how you run your business?