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Asking for Reviews and Replying to Them

When and how to ask for a review, with templates for WhatsApp, SMS, email and an in-store card, then reply templates for excellent, mixed and negative reviews, and steps for handling abusive or fake ones.

For: Any business with a Google profile or a page people review, and whoever answers customers. Level: Beginner

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Why you need a plan for reviews

Happy customers rarely write a review on their own; unhappy ones often do. So a good business can look worse online than it really is if it never asks. And replying to reviews is not only a conversation with the reviewer, but with everyone who reads it later before deciding.

When to ask

- **After a clear moment of satisfaction:** a customer thanked you, came back, or a job ended well.
- **Close to the experience:** the same day or the next, not two weeks later.
- **Once:** one friendly request, and at most one reminder for someone who promised and forgot.

Never offer a discount, gift or prize draw in exchange for a review, never write reviews yourself, and never ask relatives or staff to. Google's policies prohibit this, and reviews can be removed or the profile affected.

Review request templates

WhatsApp after delivery

Hi [name], so glad you liked [product/service] 🙌
If you have a minute, a Google review helps others find us:
[review link]
Thank you!

Short text message

[Business name]: thanks for visiting today! Your opinion matters, and we'd love your review here: [link]

Email

Subject: How was your experience with [business name]?

Hi [name],

Thank you for choosing [business name] for [service]. We hope it went as you expected.

If you have two minutes, we'd love to hear your thoughts on Google:

[Button: Write a review] → [link]

And if anything wasn't right, just reply to this email and we'll follow up personally.

Thanks,

[name and role]

Card by the till

Enjoyed your visit today?

Scan the code and tell us on Google 

[QR code for the review link]

[Business name]

Reply templates

General rule: thank the person by name, mention something specific from their review, and end with an invitation. For negative reviews: acknowledge, apologise for the experience, and move the fix to a private channel.

Reply to an excellent review

Thank you, [name], for your kind words! We're so glad you enjoyed [what they mentioned].

See you soon at [business name], and do try [another product] next time.

Reply to a mixed review

Thank you, [name], for your honest feedback. We're glad [the positive they mentioned] was good, and sorry that [the issue] wasn't what you expected. We're [what you will actually do].

We'd love to make it up to you on your next visit; reach us on [number].

Reply to a negative review

[Name], we're sorry your experience wasn't what you deserved.

That's not the standard we want for our customers, and we'd like to understand what happened and put it right.

Please contact us directly on [number/email]; [manager's name] will follow up with you personally.

Reply to a rating with no text

Thank you for your rating, [name]! Glad to have you with us; see you soon.

Abusive or fake reviews

1. **Check first:** look up the name and date in your records. Many reviews that look fake are real, just written in anger.
2. **If it is real:** reply with the negative-review template and follow up privately.
3. **If it breaks the policies** (abuse, personal information, a competitor, or nothing to do with your business): report it from your Google profile, and post a short, calm reply that accuses no one.
4. **Do not delete or argue:** a public argument does more damage than the review itself.

Reply to a review you cannot trace

Thank you for your feedback. We couldn't find a visit or order matching what you describe, and we'd like to understand more.

Please contact us on [number] so we can look into it.

Example

Illustrative example

An invented restaurant in Tripoli received a two-star review: "Food is good but the order was an hour late." The owner replied the same day: she thanked him for his comment on the food, apologised for the delay without excuses, said they had added a delivery driver at peak hours, and invited him to call the restaurant. Anyone reading that reply sees a business that listens and fixes things.

Common mistakes

- **Mistake:** identical copy-paste replies. **Fix:** the template is a start; always add a detail from the review itself.
- **Mistake:** answering negative reviews defensively. **Fix:** a short apology and a fix in a private channel.
- **Mistake:** asking everyone, repeatedly. **Fix:** one request at a moment of satisfaction.

About the author — Mohamad Charafeddine is an entrepreneur from Tripoli, Lebanon: founder of the Passion digital marketing agency, president of Takaful Youth Association, and founder of digital platforms. He trains individuals and teams in applied AI and marketing.

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