

## Video & Scriptwriting / Commercial Writing

Specify tone, pace, emphasis, and emotion for voice talent — production-ready direction for recording sessions.

Difficulty: Intermediate

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Voice Direction, Production

Updated: May 2026

Why This Prompt Exists

A great script read poorly sounds terrible. Most producers give vague direction like “make it energetic” — which means different things to different voice actors.

You get:

- voice talent guessing at tone (inconsistent takes, wasted studio time)
- no emphasis markings (wrong words stressed, meaning changed)
- pacing too fast or too slow (mismatched to format and audience)
- emotion wrong for the spot (sad read for exciting offer, etc.)
- multiple retakes because direction was unclear

But voice direction can be systematic:

- tone: energetic, warm, authoritative, conversational, urgent, calm
- pace: fast (150+ wpm), medium (130-150 wpm), slow (110-130 wpm)
- emphasis: **\*\*bold\*\*** for primary stress, *\*italic\** for secondary

- pauses: [BEAT] for short, [PAUSE] for longer
- inflection: rising (?) for questions, falling (.) for statements

Without direction, voice talent performs blind.

This prompt generates production-ready voice direction.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a voice direction specialist who prepares scripts for recording.

Your task is to add tone, pace, emphasis, and emotion markings to a commercial script.

Generate:

## 1. VOICE PROFILE

Attribute	Direction	Description
Tone	[Energetic/Warm/Authoritative/Conversational/Urgent/Calm]	[1-sentence description]
Pace	[Fast/Medium/Slow]	[Words per minute target]
Pitch	[High/Medium/Low]	[Energy level]
Gender preference	[Male/Female/Neutral/No preference]	[If specified]
Age range	[20-30/30-45/45-60/No preference]	[Voice character]

## 2. VOICE PROFILE EXAMPLES

Brand Type	Tone	Pace	Pitch	Example
Tech/SaaS	Conversational, confident	Medium (140 wpm)	Medium	"This is how work gets done."
Luxury	Warm, sophisticated	Slow (120 wpm)	Low	"Experience craftsmanship redefined."
Direct response	Urgent, enthusiastic	Fast (160 wpm)	Medium-high	"Limited time. Order now."
Healthcare	Calm, reassuring	Slow (120 wpm)	Low	"You deserve to feel better."
Kids/Family	Energetic, playful	Fast (160 wpm)	High	"So much fun you won't believe it!"
Financial	Authoritative, trustworthy	Medium (140 wpm)	Medium-low	"Built on decades of expertise."

### 3. SCRIPT MARKUP LEGEND

Markup	Meaning	Example
<b>**bold**</b>	Primary emphasis (most stressed word)	"You <b>**need**</b> this."
<i>*italic*</i>	Secondary emphasis (slightly stressed)	"It's <i>*really*</i> that simple."
[BEAT]	Short pause (0.5s)	"Here's the thing...[BEAT] it works."
[PAUSE]	Longer pause (1-1.5s)	"Imagine...[PAUSE] what could change."
...	Slow down, build tension	"And then... it happened."
[up]	Rising inflection	"Are you ready? [up]"

| [down] | Falling inflection | "That's the answer.[down]" |  
| [smile] | Read with smile in voice | "You're going to love  
this.[smile]" |

#### 4. MARKED-UP SCRIPT EXAMPLE

**\*\*Original:\*\*** "Are you tired of slow editing? Our software renders  
videos in half the time. Try it free today."

**\*\*With Direction:\*\***

`Are you [up] \*tired\* of **\*\*slow\*\*** editing? [BEAT] Our software renders  
videos in **\*\*half\*\*** the time. [PAUSE] Try it \*free\*  
today.[down][smile]`

**\*\*Voice Profile:\*\***

- Tone: Energetic, conversational
- Pace: Medium-fast (150 wpm)
- Emphasis: "tired," "slow," "half," "free"

#### 5. EMOTION MARKING

Emotion	Vocal Quality	Marking
Excited	Higher pitch, faster pace	[excited]
Concerned	Lower pitch, slower	[concerned]
Reassuring	Warm, steady	[reassuring]
Urgent	Faster, sharper consonants	[urgent]
Playful	Bouncy, varied pitch	[playful]
Authoritative	Steady, even, confident	[authoritative]

## 6. PRODUCTION NOTES

- Microphone technique: [Close/Distant/Medium]
- Breathing: [Natural/minimal/emphasized for effect]
- Pronunciation guide: [Any difficult words with phonetic spelling]
- Character notes: [If playing a specific role or persona]

## 7. COMMON VOICE DIRECTION MISTAKES

Mistake	Why It Fails	Correct Approach
"Make it energetic"	Subjective, varies by actor	Specific pace and pitch
No emphasis markings	Flat read, no dynamics	Mark key words
All words emphasized	Nothing stands out	Emphasis on 5-10% of words
No pauses	Rushed, hard to follow	Add [BEAT] at transitions
Wrong pace for format	Mismatched to audience	Match pace to brand and platform

### INPUTS:

Script (raw):

[PASTE THE COMMERCIAL SCRIPT]

Brand tone:

[E.G., "Friendly, trustworthy, slightly humorous"]

Target audience:

[E.G., "Busy parents, 30-45"]

Format:

[TV / RADIO / DIGITAL VIDEO / PODCAST]

Length:

[15 / 30 / 60 seconds]

RULES:

- Mark emphasis on 5-10% of words (too many = none stand out)
- Add [BEAT] at natural transitions (between hook and interest, etc.)
- [PAUSE] for bigger shifts (between sections, before CTA)
- Rising inflection [?] for questions (sounds more engaging)
- Falling inflection [.] for statements (sounds confident)
- Read markup aloud to test (if it sounds unnatural, adjust)
- Include pronunciation guide for brand names or technical terms
- Match pace to format (15s = faster, 60s = can be slower)

How To Use It

- Mark emphasis on 5-10% of words — too many emphasized words means none stand out.
- Add [BEAT] at natural transitions — between hook and interest, between interest and desire.
- [PAUSE] for bigger shifts — between sections, before the CTA.
- Rising inflection [?] for questions — sounds more engaging and conversational.
- Falling inflection [.] for statements — sounds confident and authoritative.
- Read the markup aloud to test — if it sounds unnatural, adjust the markings.
- Include a pronunciation guide for brand names or technical terms — voice talent needs to know how to say them.

- Match pace to format — 15-second spots need faster pacing, 60-second spots can be slower.

### Example Input

**Script:**

“Are you tired of forgetting what you learn? Our app uses science to help you remember. Join 500,000 happy learners. Download free today.”

**Brand tone:**

“Friendly, encouraging, smart”

**Target audience:**

“Lifelong learners, 25-45”

**Format:**

“DIGITAL VIDEO”

**Length:**

“30 seconds”

### Why It Works

Most scripts are handed to voice talent with no direction — resulting in mismatched tone, wrong emphasis, and wasted studio time.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- voice profile definition (tone, pace, pitch, gender, age)
- script markup legend (emphasis, pauses, inflection, emotion)
- emotion marking (excited, concerned, reassuring, urgent, playful, authoritative)
- production notes (mic technique, breathing, pronunciation, character)
- pace matching (fast for 15s, slower for 60s, by brand type)

### **Failure modes this prevents:**

- Voice talent guessing at tone (inconsistent takes, wasted time)
- No emphasis markings (flat read, wrong meaning)
- Pacing wrong for format (too rushed or too slow)
- Emotion wrong for spot (sad read for exciting offer)

**This improves on:** “Make it sound good” direction. Marked-up scripts produce consistent, professional reads.

**Related to:** CW-01 (AIDA) for structure; CW-02 (Adaptor) for length-specific pacing.

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