One Boundary Script Builder

Write one clear sentence for a specific limit, with a response you can use next.

Save a working copy. Open it in a PDF app that supports forms, fill it in, save, then reopen to check your answers. Use short phrases that fit the visible boxes; shorten an entry if a box is full.

1 Find the limit you can act on

Allow about 10-15 minutes for a first pass. Choose one real request or recurring situation. Work with the time, energy, money or access you actually have. This is one sentence to try, not a promise that someone else will agree.

What happened, and what is being asked of me

Describe one request in factual terms.

The resource that is limited

What is available, and what is already committed?

What I can decide or do

Include decisions that need someone else's approval.

A wish names what you would like. A request asks someone else to act. A boundary states what you can offer or what you will do within your authority. Sometimes the next move is to ask the decision-maker to set priorities.

Fictional examples

Work: two tasks share a deadline. 'I can finish the report or the slides by 4. Which should take priority?' Everyday life: a friend asks to borrow money. 'I can't lend money this month.' An explanation or alternative is optional; only offer one you want to give.

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2 Make the sentence usable

If speaking up could bring threats, violence or retaliation, prioritize a safer next step and appropriate support. You can use the action box for that step instead of delivering a sentence.

Try: 'I can [realistic offer], but I can't [limit].' Or keep it shorter: 'I won't be available after 6.' If the decision is not yours: 'To do [new task], what should move?' Write your own natural version.

My sentence

One or two short sentences. State only what you can stand behind.

If I hear an objection, I can say

Repeat the limit, ask for priorities, or buy time: I will check and reply tomorrow.

My next action

Say it, rehearse it, ask for support or take a safer step.

When and where

Choose a practical time and setting.

- [ ] The sentence fits my authority and situation.
- [ ] Any alternative I offer is one I want to give.
- [ ] I have considered safety and practical consequences.

Next: read the sentence aloud once, or take the safer action you chose. Remove blame and extra promises. The other person's response remains outside your control.

For other situations

This sheet can give you one sentence and a practical follow-up. Other situations may call for different limits and responses. Boundaries in Real Life is the related toolkit for working with boundaries across everyday situations. If useful, look for Boundaries in Real Life at www.directionbychoice.com.