

Find the buried contract in *years of messy files*

A client wants to take you to court. You know the contract exists, somewhere in a folder, a drive, or an email from two years ago. This is the exact setup and the exact instruction I handed Claude CoWork to find it, and everything else it dragged out of the mess on the way.

THE ONE IDEA

Do not search for one document. Hand over the entire workspace and ask for four things at once: an index of what you already own, every scrap of the dispute in one place, a list of where your own documents contradict each other, and your core documents rebuilt around how the business actually runs.

Step 1. Let Claude see your workspace

1. Open a new chat and toggle from **Chat** to **CoWork** in the input bar.
2. Press the **plus button**, choose **Connectors**, search **Gmail**, authenticate.
3. Do the same for **Google Drive**. If you use a call recorder, connect that too.
4. Click the **folder icon** below the text box and add your local Documents folder.
5. Pick your mode: **ask before acting** for a first run, **act without asking** once you trust it.

Permission rule of thumb: *read-only can always be allowed. Anything that writes or deletes should ask you every time. This job only pulls old work out, so read-only carries the whole thing.*

Step 2. Chat versus CoWork

In Chat you send messages and get answers, which means for a job this size **you** become the agent, feeding it files one at a time. CoWork is where you hand over the entire job: it opens the folder, reads the files, reads the email, and works across your whole workspace while you go do something else.

Step 3. The instruction

Swap the folder names for yours, and swap the four documents at the end for the ones your trade actually runs on.

THE FULL FILE AUDIT

Read every file in the Maple Row folder in my Google Drive and the My Documents folder on my computer, and every relevant email. Do not move, rename, or change anything in the originals. Build me one index of everything reusable this business already owns, grouped by type, and next to each item, name the exact file or email it came from. Pull everything tied to any client dispute, contracts, complaints, legal letters, into one place. Tell me where two documents disagree. Then rebuild four documents, the training, the pricing, the job checklist, and the complaint process, around how the business operates.

Notice what is missing: *the instruction asks for dispute paperwork, but never says a dispute exists and never names the client. It has to find that on its own.*

Partway through it will stop and ask you how you want the deliverables (answer: new Google Docs, in the folder) and which source wins where two documents disagree. That second question is the whole game. It found two pricing sheets that contradict each other and refused to guess which one is true.

Step 4. Pull the dispute into its own folder

Once the audit finishes, this is what turns scattered paperwork into something you can hand a lawyer without explaining anything.

BONUS PROMPT 1

Take the client dispute you just surfaced and create a separate folder for it. Copy every file tied to that client into it, contracts, quotes, checklists, complaints, emails, and legal letters, and leave the originals exactly where they are. Inside the folder, add one document: a timeline of events, in order, with the exact source file named next to each entry, and a short note at the end on what is missing or contradictory. Write it so I can hand the whole folder to my lawyer without explaining anything.

Say it plainly: *this organizes your paperwork. It does not tell you what your case is worth. That part is still your lawyer's job, they will just have a much better afternoon.*

Step 5. Make it run every month, without you

The mess is coming back. New quotes, new clients, new files, every week. So schedule it instead of doing this again in six months: click the arrow next to the task title, select **schedule**, and hand it this.

BONUS PROMPT 2

Run this same instruction on the first of every month. Add anything new to the index instead of rebuilding it from scratch, and tell me what changed since last time. Flag anything that looks like a client dispute, a complaint, or a legal letter, and flag any new document that contradicts one I already have. If nothing new turned up, say so in one line.

Scheduled tasks can run on Claude's servers now. Whether yours runs with the laptop closed depends on what it touches: a task that reads files from your computer stays local, so your machine needs to be open when it fires. A task that only touches email moves to the cloud fully.

BONUS: THE PERMISSION RULE, AS ONE INSTRUCTION

For this job, you can read anything in my connected Drive, my computer folders, and my email without asking me each time. Do not move, rename, delete, or overwrite anything in the originals. If a step would write, change, or send something, stop and ask me first, and tell me exactly what it would change before I answer.

IF YOU DO ONE THING AFTER THIS

Point CoWork at the single folder you dread opening and ask it for the index only. Not the rebuild, not the dispute file, just the list of what you already own with the source file named next to each item.

Want to know what else is eating your week?

The free AI Audit takes 2 minutes and shows you which tasks are quietly costing you ten hours a week, and what to hand over first. No call, no pitch, just the readout.

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