

Class Workbook

How to Get Great Clients to Come to YOU!

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INTERNATIONAL FREELANCERS
ACADEMY

How to Get the Maximum Value from This Workshop

1. Print this guide ahead of time and fill it out during the workshop. This will help you stay focused and engaged during the session.
2. Before or during the workshop, think of one question you want answered. If I don't address your question, you can ask it live during the Q&A session at the end.

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

Getting Great Clients: What Doesn't Work

Many freelancers pour all of their time and effort into activities that don't bring them great clients. Here's what doesn't work:

- Going to random networking events and meeting entrepreneurs who don't understand the value of what you do or can't afford your services.
- Using Elance and competing at rock-bottom rates to work with lousy clients.
- Unfocused blogging. This includes blogging about topics that your clients aren't interested in. It also includes writing blog posts that teach others how to do what you do, as this will only attract other freelancers or do-it-yourself types.
- Only working with people who come to you. While some great clients may find you, you'll also get a lot of people who aren't ideal.
- Not doing enough marketing – especially when you're busy. If you're not getting your name out there, your flow of work will dry up and you'll have to scramble to get more clients.

A Better Way

- Guest blogging is about getting your content (articles and blog posts) placed in very targeted online publications.
- You gain excellent exposure to your target market(s). And the publication gets quality content in return.
- When done right, this strategy helps you attract high-quality clients who are mostly pre-sold on hiring you before your first conversation.
- It has the added benefit of being fun and relatively easy. And it can open up many additional doors for you (compounding effect).
- Many freelancers aren't doing this, and they're missing out on big opportunities.

7 Steps to Attracting Great Clients Through Guest Blogging

1. Get clear on your ideal client.
2. Identify blogs that you want to write for.
3. Reach out to the blog's editor.
4. Write the guest blog post.
5. Promote the blog post.
6. Measure your success.
7. Say "thank you".

Step #1: Get Clear on Your Ideal Client

Business-building exercise: Use the ideal client template to paint a picture of your dream clients. Don't pitch any articles until you complete this exercise.

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

Step #2: Identify Blogs That You Want to Write For

Here are my three criteria for selecting publications for guest blogging opportunities:

Criteria #1: Your ideal clients read the blog

- Check the blog's "About" page to see if it describes its target audience.
- Review the blog's comments and social shares to see who is reading the blog.
- Ask your clients what blogs they read.
- Search Google for blogs about your ideal clients' key topics.
- Don't write for blogs that mainly attract other freelancers.
- Don't do unpaid blogging for people who should be your clients.

Criteria #2: The blog should have a sizeable readership.

- Look for blogs with a large readership and lots of social shares.
- However, size isn't everything. It's more important that your ideal clients read the blog.

Criteria #3: The blog aligns with your expertise.

- Just because your target audience reads a blog, it doesn't mean the blog is the right fit.
- Look for blogs that will allow you to showcase your expertise to your ideal clients. Are the posts on the blog high quality? Would you want to be associated with this blog?
- When the blog is relevant, you'll also get high-quality links to your site and improve your rankings on Google.

As you become well known, you'll get approached by lots of blogs to guest post for them. Refer back to these three criteria to determine if each blog is a fit.

Business-building exercise: Use the Guest Blogging Tracking Worksheet to identify five blogs that you would like to investigate as potential targets for guest blogging. What are these blogs?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step #3: Reach Out to the Blog's Editor

Business-building exercise: Subscribe to the five blogs that you listed above. Start to comment on their posts and share their content on social media. Follow their editors on Twitter.

- It's a good idea to have an article or two on your website in case a blog editor needs to see a sample of your writing.
- Before you reach out to an editor, see if the blog has guest contribution guidelines. If so, adhere to these guidelines.
- If the blog doesn't have guidelines, it doesn't mean that they don't want guest contributions. Most blog editors need content. Find out who the editor is and get their email address.

Business-building exercise: Use the Guest Blogging Pitch Email Templates to craft emails to 1-3 editors.

DON'T do the following:

- Address your email to, "Dear Editor". Find out their name.

- Copy and paste the same pitch to ten editors. Customize your pitch for each publication.
- Talk about how getting published on their blog will benefit you. They don't care. Talk about how your guest post will help them.
- Overwhelm them with information. Keep your emails short and don't include any attachments. If you want them to check out a sample of your writing, provide a link to your website.
- Don't write an entire post and send it to the editor. It's better to send them a few ideas or an outline.

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

Step #4: Write the Guest Blog Post

Congratulations! If your idea gets accepted, you can write the post. Here are some guidelines that apply to most blogs:

- Follow their guest post guidelines.
- Write a strong headline – provide several title options.
- Use images, charts and graphs.
- Back it up with data.

- Send it to a proofreader. I use www.proofreadnow.com and www.promptproofing.com.
- Don't be offended if they edit it.
- Write a killer author bio that brings leads to your website.
- Make sure the blog gives you at least one link back to your website. Try to make this link a landing page where people can opt in to your list.

Business-building exercise: Use the Author Bio Checklist to create a bio that helps you attract new clients.

Samples

Here are two of my guest blogging posts to give you ideas:

“How to Get 200+ New Subscribers From 1 LinkedIn Article”

<http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2015/01/new-subscribers-from-one-linkedin-article/>

“5 Common Mistakes That Will Kill Your B2B Content Marketing Results In 2015”

<http://www.business2community.com/content-marketing/5-common-mistakes-will-kill-b2b-content-marketing-results-2015-01066135>

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

Step #5: Promote the Blog Post

Promoting your post shows the blog that you care about helping them reach a wider audience. It also helps you display your expertise and get your name in front of more clients. Here are some ways you can promote your guest blog post:

- Send it to your newsletter subscribers.
- Write a related article on your blog and link to your guest post. Don't reprint the post on your blog.
- Share it with your social networks.
- Post it in relevant LinkedIn or Facebook groups.
- Post it in the blog's Facebook or LinkedIn groups. If they post it, you can follow up with comments and questions.
- Print copies and mail them to your clients and potential clients.
- Email it to your clients and potential clients.

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

Step #6: Measure Your Success

Find out if your guest blogging efforts are paying off.

- What does success mean for you? Is it more clients, better SEO, more website traffic, etc.?
- When a potential client contacts you, ask how they found you. Are good clients coming from these guest blogs?
- Check your Google analytics to see if the guest posts are bringing more traffic back to your website.
- Pay attention to who is sharing your posts on social media. If they look like good potential clients, be sure to connect with them on these social networks.

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

Step #7: Say, “Thank You.”

Always thank the blog’s editor. You can email them, send them a handwritten card or thank them publically on social media.

Then, look for more ideas to pitch them.

Happy blogging!

Next Steps

1. To get started, use the Guest Blogging Tracking Worksheet to identify 5-10 publications that you would like to blog for. Make sure they meet your criteria.
2. Subscribe to these blogs and share their content with your social networks.
3. Pick 1-3 of these publications and follow their guest contributor guidelines. If they don't have guidelines, use the email templates to reach out to their editors.

Thoughts, Questions, Insights:

