

# The Ultimate Guide to Email Copywriting



# The Ultimate Guide to Email Copywriting

**The exact strategies and techniques we used to grow our blog from ZERO to 600,000+ email subscribers.**

Discover how to:

- Get 1,000 email subscribers in the next 4 weeks
- Send emails that readers can't wait to open
- Write sales emails that convert like crazy

We've done it. Now it's your turn. And we're finally ready to show you in this free guide.

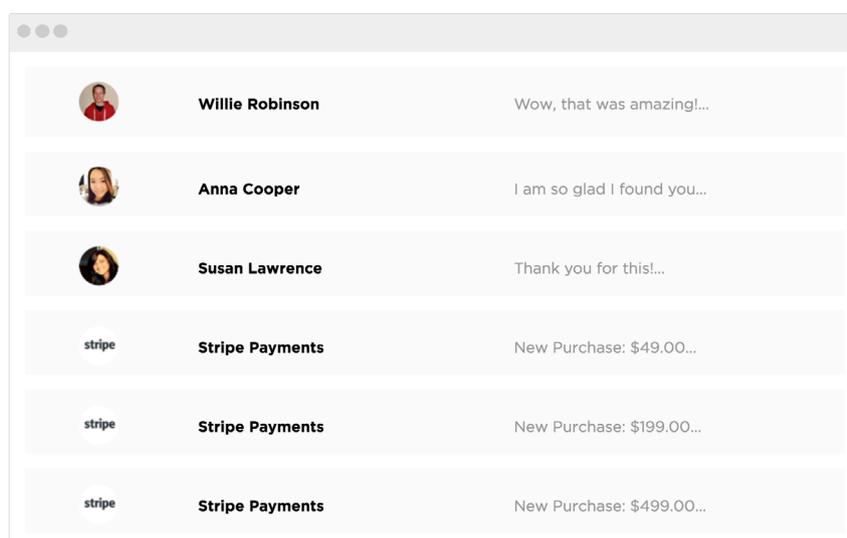
Do you ever look at your email list and wish it would double in size?

Do you hear stories about 30-40% open rates and wonder, "How do they do it?"

Have you ever spent 3 hours on a SINGLE email, only to hit send and then...crickets?

If so, I have good news for you. It doesn't have to be that way.

Imagine waking up, sitting down at your laptop, and seeing this in your inbox:



What are those?

That's a flood of responses to an email you sent yesterday. Your readers LOVED it! And a few of them are even buying your products.

Even though you're selling something, nobody is calling you sleazy or a sellout. In fact, your emails are a treasure in your reader's inbox.

This isn't a fantasy land.

This is the power of great email copywriting. And after growing my own email list from zero to more 600,000+ loyal subscribers, I'm going to show you how to do it, too.

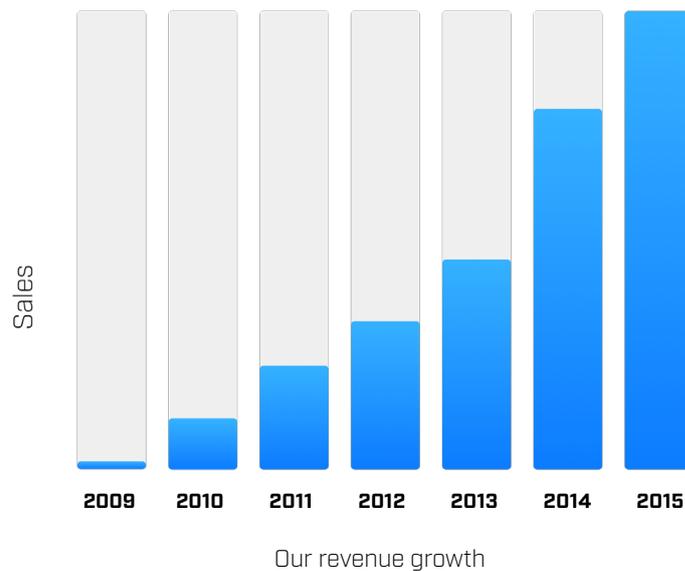
Let's get started.

## Who am I?



I'm Ramit Sethi, the *New York Times* best-selling author and founder of GrowthLab and *I Will Teach You To Be Rich* — a business that I grew from a dorm-room blog into a multimillion-dollar online business with over 30,000 paying customers around the world.

For the past 12 years, I've helped tens of thousands of people earn more money and start amazing businesses using psychology, systems, tough love, and no-B.S. action steps.



## Here's what we're covering in this free guide:

- Part 2: 3 reasons why email subscribers are the lifeblood of your business
- Part 3: How to get anyone to give you their email address
- Part 4: The anatomy of killer emails (with a breakdown of our most opened email ever)
- Part 5: Subject lines that always get opened (with proven templates & copy you can steal)
- Part 6: How to write emails that people read, buy from, and forward to all their friends
- Part 7: Next steps: Use copywriting to 2x your business in the next 18 months



## Part 2: 3 reasons why email subscribers are the lifeblood of your business

My friend John Lee Dumas runs the top-ranked business podcast [Entrepreneur on Fire](#). He asks this famous question to all his guests:

*“Imagine you woke up tomorrow morning in a brand new world, identical to earth, but you knew no one.*

*You still have all the experience and knowledge you currently have. Your food and shelter are taken care of, but all you have is a laptop and \$500.*

*What would you do in the next 7 days?”*

To me, the answer couldn't be any clearer.

**“Start building an email list.”**

Maybe you've heard this before: “The money is in the list.”

After 12 years of running an online business and generating millions in sales, I can tell you this is 100% true.

Here are 3 reasons why an email list is your greatest asset:

**1. Email outperforms every other marketing channel online. Period.**

One of the biggest mistakes I ever made was NOT building an email list from day one.

When I launched my blog 12 years ago, people would land on my site, read a few posts, and never hear from me again. Why? They had no way to join my email list.

And that ONE mistake cost me hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years.

How?

Email is the bedrock of my business today. It's by far my #1 source of revenue. It's how we launch new products and how we reach our customers.

Email is the engine that's generated millions of dollars for my business – more than every other channel we've used combined.

And it's not just our business that depends on email.

Turns out, having an email list has a 40X impact on your bottom line. Yes, you read that right.

According to a 2014 study by McKinsey and Company, for every dollar you put into email marketing you get back 40X more than you would through Facebook, Instagram, and almost every other marketing channel.

40X more revenue!

Don't repeat my mistake.

If you're serious about building an online business, an email list is critical.

## **2. You own your email list**

My good friend, Tim Ferriss, has over 1.3 million Twitter followers and more than 577,000 likes on his Facebook page.

Recently, I was a [guest on his podcast](#). And he asked me why I thought building an email list was so important.

My reason was simple: it's a huge risk to build a business on a platform you don't own.

Facebook can change its policies overnight.

Google can blacklist your site and cut your traffic in half.

But you own your email list. Nobody can take it away.

I could almost hear sirens going off in Tim's head as I said this.

Yes, he has a huge social following, but he doesn't control it.

Since our conversation, Tim's worked on growing his own email list.

But the moral of the story is this: don't leave your business in somebody else's hands. If you build your audience on some external platform, you're at their mercy. And you're not in control.

### **3. Email can sell to 10 people or 100,000 – automatically**

What's the worst possible marketing method?

Door-to-door selling. It's one person walking from place to place, pitching anyone who (hopefully) opens the door.

It's time-consuming and ineffective. Ugh.

I say door-to-door selling is the worst, but if you think about it, most marketing efforts are like this. You hand someone a flyer. You print a brochure. You talk to someone over the phone.

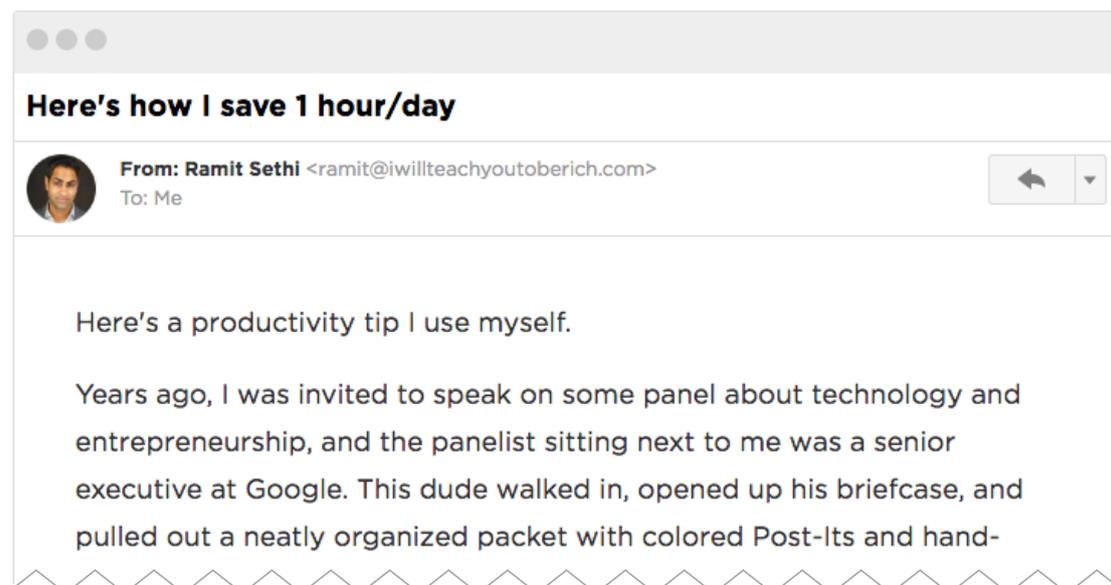
These messages are created once, seen/heard once, and then — poof — gone forever.

But thanks to the power of email marketing and automation, you can write ONE great email and profit from it again and again.

Whether you have 10 people on your list or 100,000 subscribers,

email scales exponentially.

For example, I wrote this email in 2011:



Over 450,000 people have read that email in the last five years. All automatically. I didn't lift a finger.

When you put the scaling power of email to work, you'll have more time to focus on growing your business. That will help you generate even greater returns.

**NOTE:** If you don't have a business yet or don't know where to start, I put together a special report for you: **30 successful online business ideas**.

In the next section of the guide, I'll show you how to get people to join your email list in the first place.

**Just click the link below to see how you can turn existing skills into a successful business today**

[Download the list of 30 successful business ideas](#)



## **Part 3: How to get anyone to give you their email address**

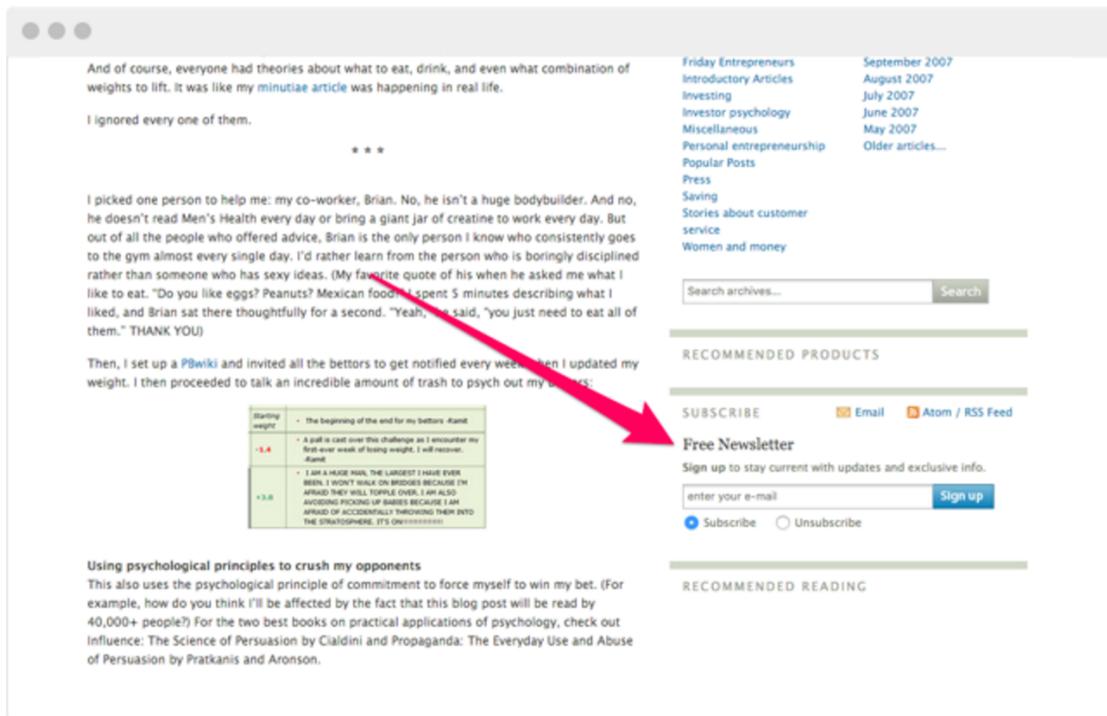
Let me ask you a simple question: Why should I (or anyone) sign up for your email list?

If you don't have a crisp answer, you're not alone. When most people get asked this question, they list of tons of obscure reasons. Or worse, they don't have an answer at all.

That's a huge problem.

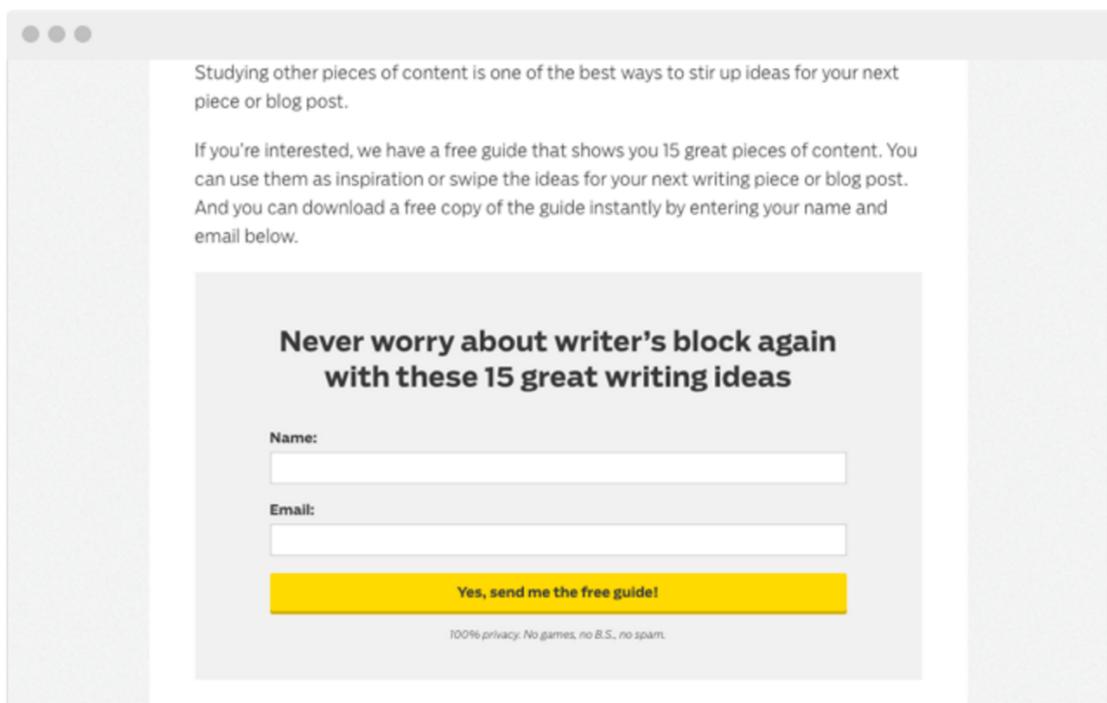
Because if you — the business owner — don't know, how can you expect your readers to?

I learned this the hard way. When I started my site, my opt-in copy used to be hidden in the sidebar with this horrible language:



Who wants another “free newsletter” in their inbox?

Fast forward to today. Now, I’ve learned how to create opt-ins that people want. For example, I included this opt-in at the end of a post on crushing writer’s block:



If you were crippled by writer's block, would you opt in for this?

Of course you would!

It's almost irresistible. It speaks to your exact needs. And it gives you an immediate solution to your problem.

You can do this, too.

**All you need is this proven, 2-step process:**

1. Create an irresistible offer or "bonus"
2. Sell the offer with ultra-compelling bullets.

Here's how to do it.

## **10x your response rate with an irresistible offer or "bonus"**

Whether you call them carrots, lead magnets, or bonuses, the key is to have the RIGHT one for your audience.

You can use a simple rule to figure out what the right offer is:

Identify your audience's single most pervasive and persistent problem...  
...then offer them the single most valuable, concrete and immediate solution.

The key word here is "single." Focus on solving 1 specific pain point for your readers and they will jump on your offer.

Here are 5 examples of "good" versus "great" opt-in bonuses. Notice how specific the great opt-in bonuses are:

▶ Opt-in Bonuses: Good vs. Great		
INDUSTRY	"GOOD" OPT-IN BONUS	"GREAT" OPT-IN BONUS
Men's fitness	"21 Ways to Deal With Sore Finger Joints"	"The 3-Step Guide to Ripped Abs"
Personal finance	"Taxes and Asset Allocation 101"	"The 12-Minute Guide to Automating Your Finances"
Aspiring lawyers	"How to Communicate With Law School Professors"	"8 Easy LSAT Cheat Sheets"
Career advice	"The Ultimate Career Survival Guide For When You're Feeling Lost"	"My 16-Point Interview Preparation Checklist"

### Here's how you can do the same:

Brainstorm a list of problems your audience has.

Next, think about which problems you have immediate solutions for.

For example, you shouldn't try to create an entire passive income system. That would be too in-depth.

But you could create a guide that helps someone find a profitable business idea. It solves the immediate problem and moves them closer to passive income.

That's the perfect crunchy tactic people want to opt in to your list for.

Once you have an idea for the problem you can solve, fill in this proven template to create a simple headline for your opt-in:

**"[PROBLEM]? Get my [SOLUTION] and [RESULT]"**

Here are a few examples of this template in action:

- "Tired of unsuccessful cold calls? Get my 3-part sales script and learn how to triple your sales"

- “Feeling tired all day? Get my power lunch recipe and beat the afternoon slump”
- “Sick of all the clutter in your house? Get my 12-part decluttering checklist and get your house clean and tidy”

See how that speaks to your audience’s pain? And see how immediate the solution is?

Now you’ve got an idea of WHAT your opt-in bonus should do, let’s talk about how to create one.

### **3 simple ways to create your first opt-in bonus**

#### **1. Write a free report or ebook**

Who hasn’t joined an email list for at least one free report or ebook?

They’re easy to create. All you have to do is write a short report (a few pages is plenty) and convert it into a PDF.

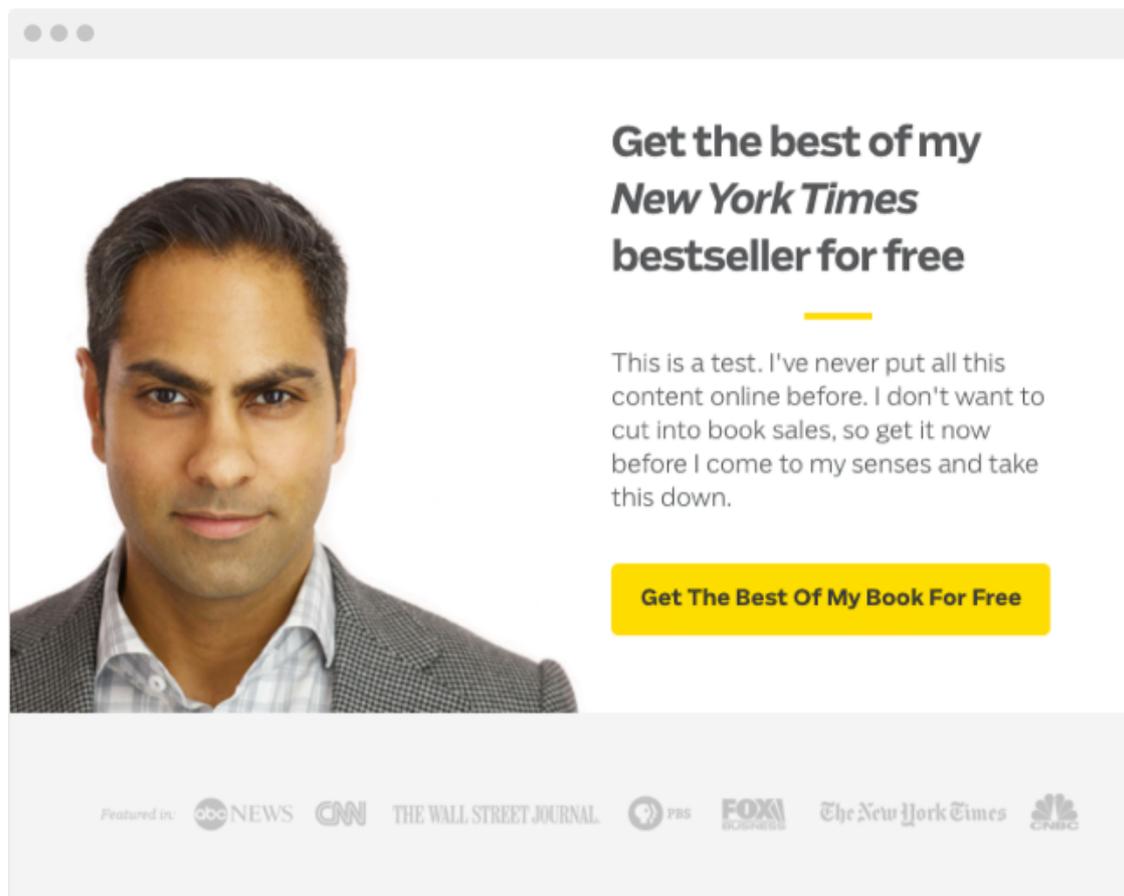
But don’t let the simplicity fool you into thinking they’re not effective. Some of our most popular opt-in bonuses are only 4 pages.

You don’t even have to write your report from scratch.

You could:

- Compile a bunch of your best blog posts into one easy-to-reference, easily digestible guide
- Pull pieces of content out of one of your existing products. For example, I often give away a free chapter of my book to new subscribers
- Interview experts on a subject and compile the answers into a report (many people are happy to do this as long as you provide a link back to their business)

Here’s an example from our site, where we give away the first chapter in my *New York Times* bestselling book:



Notice: We're crystal clear on what we're offering (a free chapter of my *New York Times* bestseller). And we're creating some urgency around opting in for this offer ("get it now before I come to my senses and take it down").

Also, notice that there's nothing else you can do on this part of the page. Yes, you can scroll down. But the action is clear: Push that button (yes, you'll have to give us your email) and you'll get a free chapter of this book — right in your inbox.

It's simple but effective.

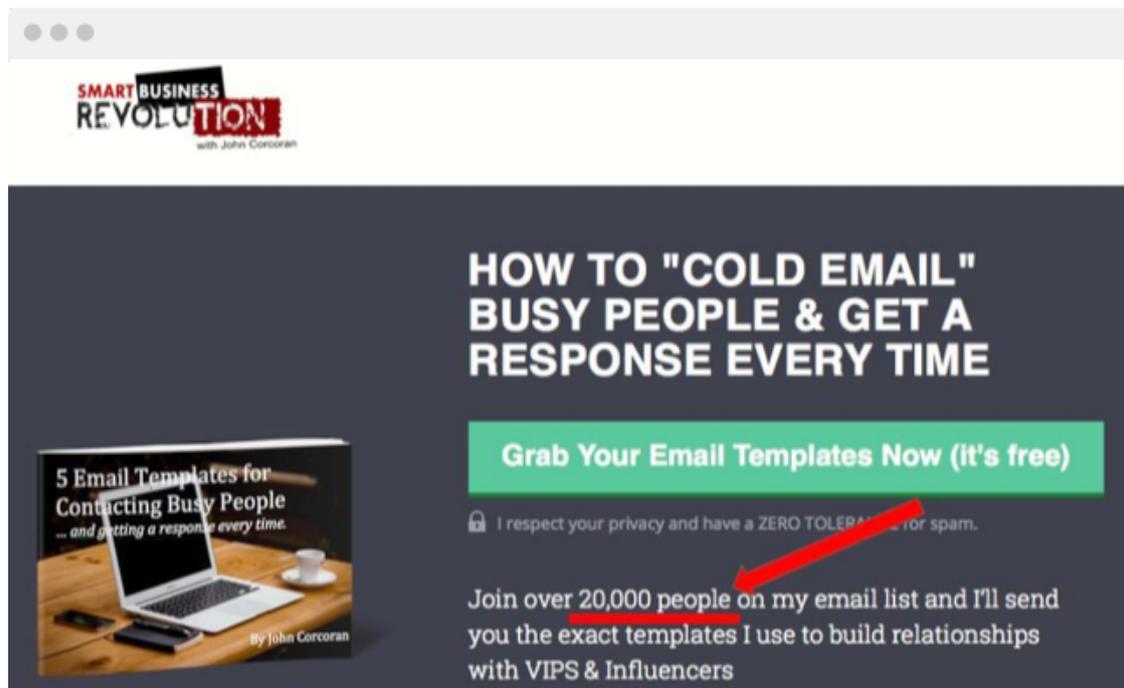
## **2. Give away a tool or some other "freebie"**

You can also give your readers a free tool — something tangible they can take and immediately use.

For example:

- If your audience is into creative writing, you could give away the actual template you use to write a post.
- If you help people with online dating, you could give away entire transcripts of texts you send — that your readers could swipe and use for themselves.

Here's an example of a free email template that one of our Zero to Launch alumni, [John Corcoran](#), gives away to his readers:



Notice:

- It's crystal clear both WHO this bonus is for (people who want to network with VIPs)
- And WHAT the promise is (email outreach templates). This is a perfect example of giving people a useful tool!
- The "Join Over 20,000 people" adds social proof and credibility to his offer

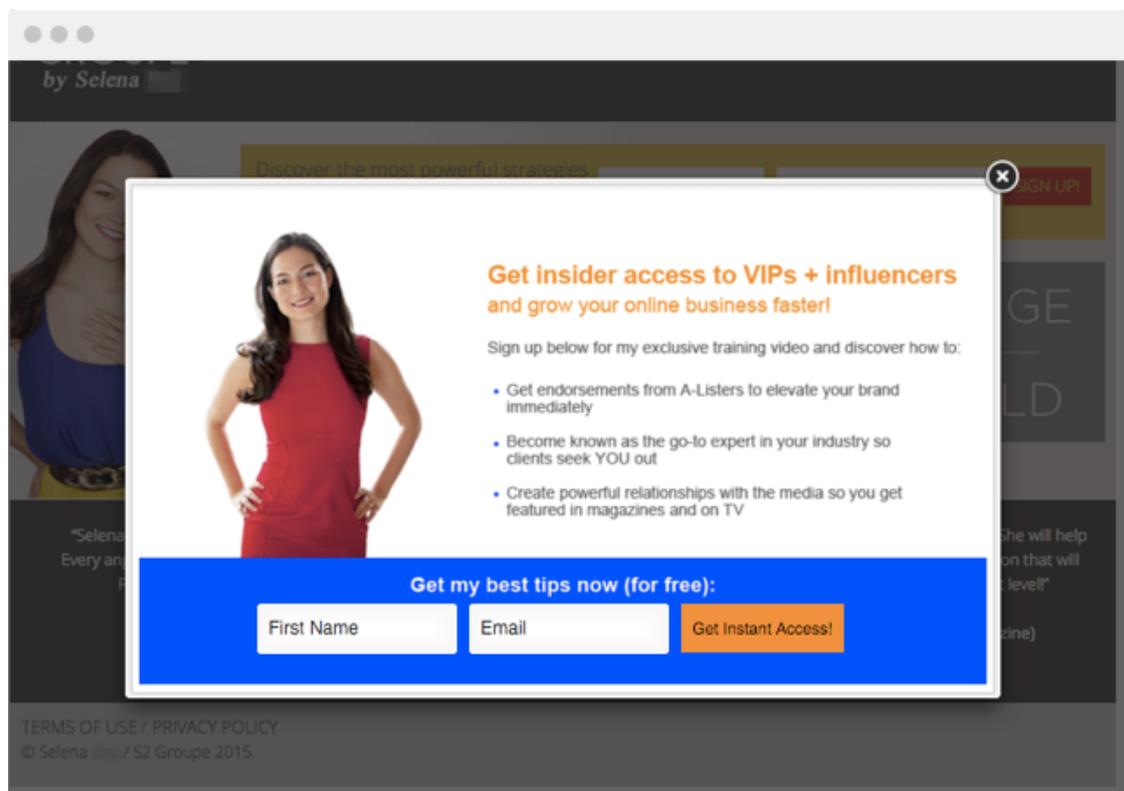
This is an awesome example of a tool you could offer to your readers.

### 3. Shoot a bonus video

Videos are another great way to entice readers to opt in.

Especially if you're good on camera or just prefer shooting videos over writing copy.

Here's an example of a video opt-in bonus from a Zero to Launch graduate, [Selena Soo](#):



Notice:

- She calls it an “exclusive training video,” not just a “video.” Why’d she do that? This isn’t just fancy wordplay — it’s about positioning your material in the best way possible.
- Also, pay close attention to the bullets she chose to describe the video. Who wouldn’t want clients seeking them out? Who wouldn’t want to be featured in the media?

The format for your videos can be simple. You can use PowerPoint and Camtasia to record them, as long as they’re delivering genuine

solutions to people.

That's HOW to deliver your opt-in bonus.

The final step is to make your offer irresistible with ultra-compelling copy to sell it.

## **The 3-Step Fascination Formula to grab people's attention**

Here's how this works. Start with the main benefit of your opt-in bonus. Then take it through the following process:



Step 1: Pump the energy level up to 110%



Step 2: Add a surprise or counterintuitive "twist"



Step 3: Add as many specific and vivid details as possible

Let's run through it once, using an example of a bonus for career seekers. One potential benefit might be:

### **"Get your dream job"**

This copy isn't "bad." Who doesn't want to get their dream job?

But it's flat. And it's generic.

Let's give it a makeover with the 3-Step Fascination Formula.



## **Step 1. Pump the energy level up to 110%**

When you're writing opt-in copy, you've got to have energy behind it. Take it to the extreme.

Why?

People browsing the web are basically sleepwalkers. They sleepwalk from site to site until they find something that jolts them awake.

The solution? Pump the energy WAY up.

So let's go back to the original bullet you might put beneath your opt-in offer:

**“Get your dream job”**

How could we pump this up with more energy?

How about...

**“Find and land your dream job”**

Hey, that's not terrible. But we can go one step further:

**“FIND and LAND your dream job in months instead of years”**

Now we're talking! This copy isn't perfect, but this is a good start.

Let's take a look at the next step.



## **Step 2. Add a surprise or counterintuitive “twist”**

It’s not enough just to sell the benefits of your offer.

You also need to pique your reader’s curiosity. The best way to do that is to add something surprising or counterintuitive to your copy.

So how would we pump up the bullet we were working on before:

**“FIND and LAND your dream job in months instead of years”**

How could we make this more intriguing?

Maybe this:

**“FIND and LAND your dream job in months instead of years — even if you don’t know what your dream job is”**

Wow! If I were a looking for a better job BUT had no idea what my dream job was, I’d want this.

There are several ways to add intrigue to your offer. You can:

- Add an “even if” statement (“learn how to network... even if you’re an introvert”)
- Give a warning (“miss this critical step and kiss your job offer goodbye”)
- Hint at a secret (“most men go on dozens of dates and NEVER know they’re doing this wrong”)
- Name a technique (“my [Briefcase Technique](#) that helped me land job offer after job offer”)

Note: It goes without saying that whatever your twist is, your material

has to deliver. Don't make promises you can't keep.

Which brings us to the last step...



### **Step 3. Add as many specific and vivid details as possible**

There's one more thing we can do to take our bullets to the next level, and that is to make them as specific and vivid as possible.

Let's recall the previous bullet:

**“FIND and LAND your dream job in months instead of years — even if you don't know what your dream job is”**

This isn't bad. But it doesn't conjure up an image in your mind.

How could you take this copy and make it more vivid and specific?

Let's take a look at 3 different tweaks we could make to make the copy more specific:

**“FIND and LAND your dream job in 6 months — even if you don't know what your dream job is”**

**“FIND and LAND your dream job in 6 months — even if you're up against people with 10+ years of experience”**

**“Flood your inbox with job offers — even if you have zero experience, want to switch industries, and have no network to help you out”**

That last one is strong. You can imagine getting emails with job offers — right in your inbox.

Now let's take a step back and compare the original bullet with the one we've just created for our opt-in:

**“Get your dream job”**

vs.

**“Flood your inbox with job offers — even if you have zero experience, want to switch industries, and have no network to help you out”**

Which sounds more compelling? Which would more likely to convince you to sign up?

Here are a few more real-life examples of before and after bullets:

Before	After
“How to get a job”	“How to find and land your dream job in 6 months or less — even if you've been fired before or have no experience”
“How to read female body language”	“How to pick up on subtle body language clues that 99% of men don't even know exist”
“How to get more traffic”	“Send a site-crashing number of leads back to your site with this little known ‘Google Hack’”
“How to reduce inflammation”	“How this nutrient-rich superfood can help you eliminate burning stomach pains — even if you've taken medication for years”

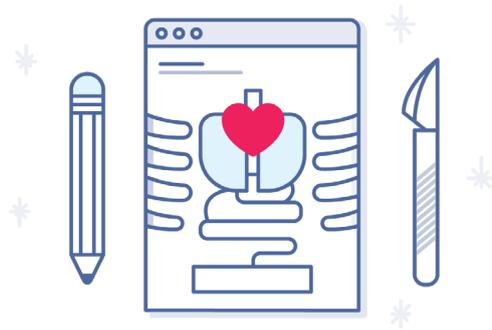
*Writing mouth-watering bullets isn't magic. It's easy, using this) 3-step formula. ([Tweet This](#))*

Once you have your opt-in copy squared away, you'll want to start driving traffic to your site.

If you're interested, we created a free report on the 21 best traffic-boosting strategies that helped us grow our blog from ZERO to more than 1 million monthly readers.

Just click the link below for instant access to this free report today.

[Get the special, free report on 21 traffic and sales boosting strategies – today!](#)



## Part 4: The anatomy of killer emails

If you're like most people, millions of questions run through your head when you think about sending an email to your readers: How long should it be? What size font should I use? Where should I put my graphics? Is this good enough to publish?



My advice?

Relax! These are minor details. Right now, there are just a few key things you need to think about when preparing to write an email.

Let me show you what those key pieces are.

To do that, I'm going to break down our most opened email of all time — one that was read, loved and shared by our readers.

# Everything you need to create a killer email

Let's take a look at one of my favorite emails and I'll point out the key pieces every email needs:

## 1 An intriguing or eye-catching subject line

That's the first thing people see when your email comes into their inbox.

The job of a subject line is to get people sucked into the email. For example, look at one of my favorite examples of a subject line I wrote: REJECTED: Guy at farmers' market shuts me down.

Even though it's one of the shortest pieces of your email, it's the one part that you should be willing to spend the most time on.

Get it wrong, go unnoticed.

Get it right, get it read.

## 3 The opening line

The first line is where people who opened your email decide whether or not to keep reading it.

There's a reason opening paragraphs are often called "teasers" — they're meant to show just enough to make the reader want to see more.

Take a look at my opening sentence: it's about a funny quote I heard from the CEO Carl's JR. Aren't you curious what the quote is? Will you keep reading to the next line?

How often do you get emails like this?

Keep your reader engaged with every line of the email from top to bottom, and they'll keep reading all the way to the very end.

REJECTED: Guy at farmers' market shuts me down



From: Ramit Sethi <ramit@willteachyoutoberich.com>  
to Me

6/8/2015

Hi Robert,

One of the funniest quotes I've ever read came from the CEO of Carl's Jr. He was interviewed about his business and got asked about healthy eating in America.

"My opinion is that the media is the main supporter of healthy eating. We're certainly not hearing it from our customers," said Andrew Puzder, who is the CEO of CKE Restaurants, the parent company of Carl's Jr. and Hardee's." And [surveys] show that while consumers say they want to eat healthier, what they actually want is a big juicy burger," Puzder said during an interview Tuesday with CNNMoney.com.

HAHA!

This guy took a question on healthy eating...and got them to print a promotion for "big juicy burgers" in a national article. I love you, CEO Andrew.

Personally, I go for In-and-Out Burger.

It's funny, but there's also a lot of truth to what he said. Critics love to tell companies to do things....  
...that nobody actually wants to do.

For example:

- Food activists say companies "should" add healthy food to their menus...but when they do it, people don't buy it!
- There's a great podcast episode where some people urged dating sites to remove photos so users could have a more "real" experience, absent of biases and racism.

(In fact, when a dating site tried this, people reported liking their dating experience more.) The problem? The vast majority of people hate it. Turns out in dating, looks are important.

You see how easy it is for random critics to tell businesses what they "should" do...without knowing the full story?

It's not just for businesses -- we've all been there. How many of us have parents who told us that we needed to major in engineering or go to med school? (Non-Asian people, ignore that last sentence.) How many of our friends think it's "weird" that you read self-development? Or that you "really need" to try this one diet?

I've been guilty of being a critic, too.

## 2 The personal greeting

My goal is for every email to feel like I'm writing to one person.

And one of the best ways to make an email feel personal is to include someone's name in the opening line.

I mean if I saw you in real life, wouldn't I say -- "Hey, NAME -- how are you?"

So why should emails be any different.

With today's email service providers, it's easy to include. And it makes a world of a difference for the emails you send.

Years ago, I went to a farmers' market where I saw a guy selling t-shirts. Now, imagine an Indian guy walking into a t-shirt stall. It's like letting a dog loose with 500lbs of meat. The dog is not going to pause and think about the ramifications of his daily macronutrients or the burden of eating now vs. saving for later. He's going to eat.

Similarly, an Indian person is going to negotiate.

After a lot of back and forth, here's where the t-shirt guy and I ended up: The shirt cost \$10. I offered \$8. He said no.

Now, let's assume something for a minute. If the guy pays \$4 to get those shirts, and I offer \$8, shouldn't he take it? After all, he's making money -- \$4 to be exact.

So why wouldn't he take it? It makes no sense, right?

In the next few emails, I'd like to take you through the fascinating world of business. We'll start at the farmers' market, but we're going to go up to multi-billion-dollar businesses, too.

How do CEOs make the decisions they make? How did IWT go from a simple blog to a multi-million-dollar business? What's changed as I went from a blogger to CEO?

So many people think business is a bunch of arcane numbers and P/E ratios, but that's not true. Business is strategy, competition, and psychology at the highest levels. If it works, it's great. If it doesn't, you go extinct.

Whether or not you run your own business, I'll show you some fascinating insights into how businesses work -- and how you can use their systems and psychology for your own life.

(If you run a business that generates between 6-7 figures, you'll want to pay special attention. Send me an email if you do.)

For now, think about why that farmers' market t-shirt guy rejected my offer for \$8. Any ideas?

[Leave your comment here or just reply to me.](#)

-Ramit-

**P.S.** Next week: How did IWT go from a blog to a real business? How does a CEO engineer growth? And what was even more important than multiple million-dollar products as I grew IWT?

#### 4 Stories that explain why you're writing

"Words tell, stories sell."

Some of my best emails -- even the ones selling something -- start with a compelling story.

We all want to see how the story unfolds -- and that's precisely why so many effective sales emails and engagement pieces start with them.

Like this one where I talk about going to a local farmers marketing and being shut down.

If you're not a natural storyteller, don't worry about that. I'll show you how to write in a way that connects with people in part 5 of the guide.

For now, just know that the same kind of juicy stories that you like to read or tell a friend are what go into making a great email.

#### 6 The personal sign-off

This adds a personal touch to your emails. And even when you're sending them to thousands of people at a time, it will remind your readers that you're the one behind the message. You're the one trying to help them overcome key issues in their lives.

It's YOU -- not some man behind the curtain.

#### 5 A call to action.

All good things come to an end.

And when you've said your piece in your email, you need a strong call to action.

Whether it be to simply engage, click or to buy -- you need to direct your audience to some sort of action with your emails.

#### 7 A good P.S.

Surprisingly the P.S. is one of the most valuable pieces of real estate for your emails.

When people aren't sure if an email is worth reading, they'll sometimes skip straight to the bottom to look for the pay off.

So if you have something really important you should stick it there.

Sometimes, we'll stick a tiny sales link in the P.S. of an email or link to register for a webinar. And that one link in the P.S. has been worth tens of thousands of dollars to our business.

So don't just treat this as a toss in.

## These strategies will work for your emails

Take a look at what one of our Zero to Launch graduates, Graham C. learned just from implementing a few of the strategies we teach in his emails:



**Graham C.**  
Went from food stamps to \$460,000/year

***Sales shot up 44% the next month...***

*"I took what I learned, re-wrote sales pages and emails for my 3 most popular courses, wrote a brand new email auto-responder funnel based on his 5-day sequence, and sales shot up 44% the next month (and every month since)."*

Check out the strange way Graham shot up his sales — without even having a product. [Read the full story](#)

Next, we'll dig into one of the most important parts of getting your emails read: your subject line.



## **Part 5: Subject lines that always get opened [with proven templates & copy you can swipe]**

What was the subject line for the highest opened and highest earning email in history?

**“Hey.”**

Yep. It was that casual and straightforward.

How’s that possible?

For starters, it came from Barack Obama, the President of the United States of America. So that explains a huge piece of its success.

I mean, honestly...

How often do you get an email from the President, just saying “Hey.”? And the better question is, would you open it?

Compare that all those coupons you get from LOFT or Macy’s.

How many of those do you open? 1 out of every 10? Or worse, do they just sit in your spam folder?

What’s the difference? And how can you write emails that always get opened? That’s what we’re covering in this section.

## **The slippery slope that gets your readers to open and keep reading**

One of the most famous copywriters of all time, Joseph Sugarman, said your copy should be “a slippery slope.” What he meant was, your reader should read the first line of your copy and then immediately slip down to the next line, slipping to the next line and so on.

And your subject line is the top of the slippery slope, like this:

# The Slippery Slope of Email

How to get your audience hooked and keep them reading

## 1. Subject line

Stops your audience cold and forces them to keep reading. Their thought should be: TELL ME MORE!

## 2. Lead

Keep them captivated with an interesting statement.

## 3. Body

Get them even more captivated with a fascinating story or example

## 4. Call to Action

Get them to click, like, share, or buy from you



**The key takeaway is this:** every line of the copy should keep the reader sliding down a slippery slope. Every word must earn its way onto the page. But the whole process starts with a great subject line.

Needless to say, a great subject line can have a huge impact on your business.

We know this to be true. We're always testing to see what words resonate with our readers. One of the ways we do this is to write different subject lines for the SAME emails and see which get opened.

Here are a few of the email subject lines we've tested against each other. See if you can guess which ones performed best:

### **Test #1**

A: Exactly what to do to start an online business

B: Behind the scenes of my "online business playbook"

### **Test #2**

A: \$11,476 in one day — here's how (Zero to Launch closes at midnight)

B: Enough info. Time to decide. (Zero to Launch closes tonight)

### **Test #3**

A: Ramit Learns to Dance

B: Ramit Learns to Dance (IWT case study)

In every instance above, subject line A was opened by at least 3,000 more people than subject line B. Imagine the impact on the number of buyers, the number of shares, or the number of replies that leads to.

You can engage far more people simply by tweaking a few words.

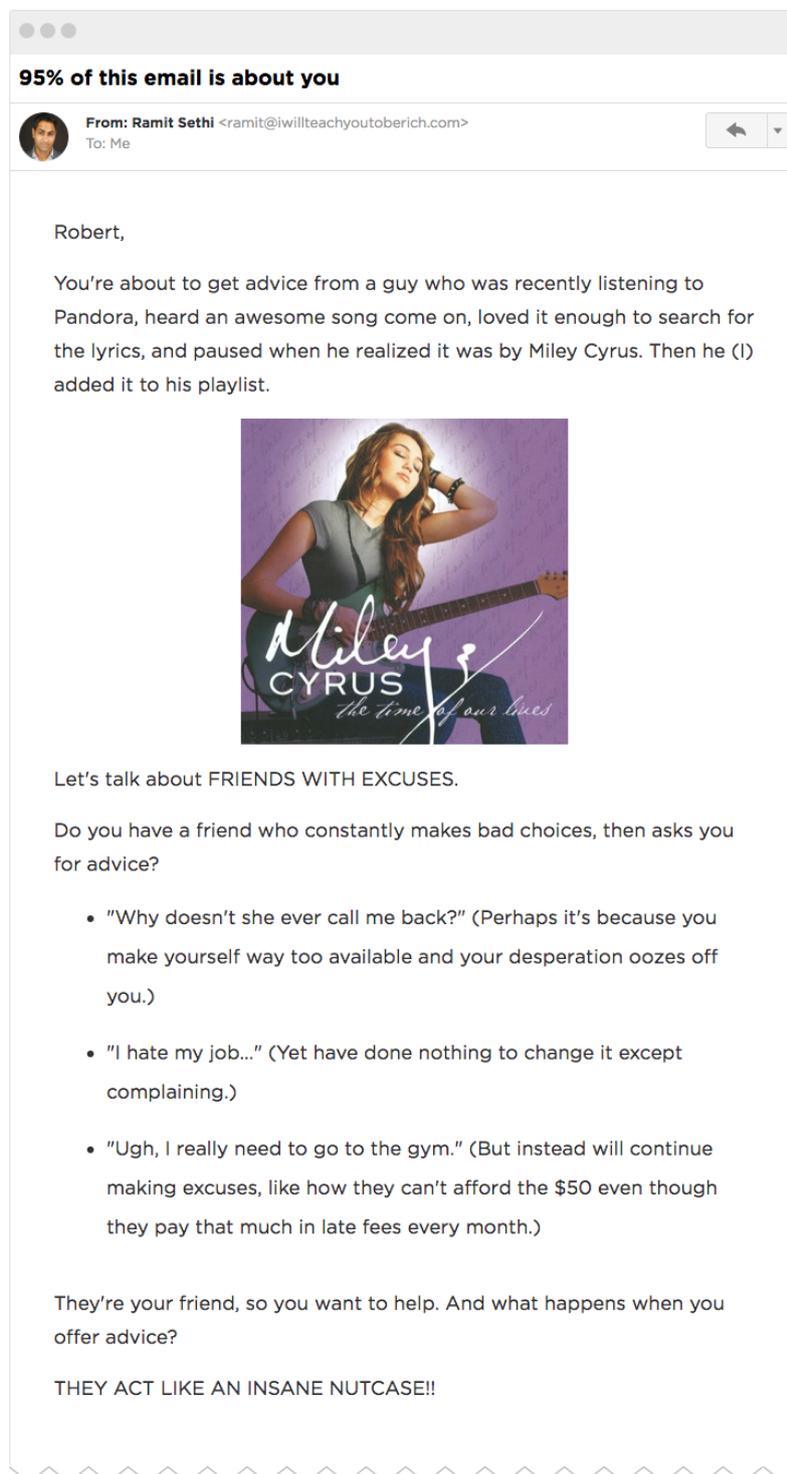
The words in your subject line matter. Use the right ones and more people will listen to what you have to say, buy the products or services you're selling, and even refer their friends and family to you.

Now how do you find the exact words to use in your subject lines?

Let me show you.

## Personal sounding subject lines dominate

The emails I write to my readers are extremely personal. For example, I've written emails where I talk about listening to Whitney Houston in the gym or jamming to Miley Cyrus on Pandora.



It's casual and it's fun.

Even though my emails go out to more than 600,000 people, I always write them like I would if I were writing directly to ONE person.

That's why I use personal subject lines. Rather than using marketing words and strange language, I write the subject lines just like I would to a close friend.

Take a look at 3 of our top 30 performing subject lines of all time and their open rates:

Subject Line	Open Rate
We're launching a new site	20.01%
Lol, thanks for the advice	19.24%
Ahh, god this question	18.52%

What do you notice?

They're all super casual — just like how you'd write to a friend.

One of my greatest joys is when I hear people say “Ramit, sometimes I'll be reading your emails and think ‘Did he write this to just ME?’”

### **So — why does this work?**

Nobody likes to be sold to.

When's the last time you willingly and excitedly watched a commercial selling you something?

But when's the last time you opened a text or an email from a friend?

All the time.

So the question is: How do you cut through the noise, get noticed, and, eventually, sell to your readers?

And the answer is: Don't try to sell them. Just get your message read.

The only way to do that is to be more personal.

This is the opposite of most marketers' emails, whose writing screams of desperation.

Think of the emails you LOVE reading. Are they overt sales pitches? Or are they something else?

Treat your readers accordingly.

## **The exact process we use to write subject lines that get 20%+ open rates and generate millions of dollars in sales**

For every subject line that gets sent to our readers, hundreds never see the light of day. Even with years of experience under your belt, you can't expect to sit down, write one polished subject line and send it to your list.

You have to dig through mountains of dirt (bad subject lines) to find that one nugget of gold (a great subject line).

We always start with at least 3 blank spaces to write subject lines for every email we create.

So we'll start with a blank template like this:



Subject	<input type="text"/>

Then the brainstorming begins. We'll just start writing out as many subject lines as we can think of, without stopping ourselves. When we start writing, it's a stream-of-consciousness.

For example, I might brainstorm up to 15 possible subject lines for an email about earning more money like this:

Subject	Earn more money
Subject	Earn more money - right now
Subject	Want to make more money?
Subject	Cool new way to earn money on the side
Subject	You gotta see this trick for earning money on the side
Subject	Legit or a scam? You tell me if you think you could make money with this
Subject	How to make money fast - without getting caught in a scam
Subject	I can't believe people pay him to do this...

And on and on.

See why coming up with so many options is important? The first couple of subject lines sucked. But as I kept brainstorming — near the bottom of the list — some of these subject lines turned out strong.

For example, I like this last one: **I can't believe people pay him to do this...**

It's intriguing. And I could see myself sending that to a friend.

Most of the time that's all you need for a great subject line.

Having said that, sometimes it's tough to know what to say. You can sit around racking your brain all day long...but nothing seems to stick.

If that happens to you, don't worry. There are some proven copywriting formulas you can fall back on.

## **Timeless subject line templates you can steal**

Lots of people have written about headline formulas before (see [here](#) and [here](#)). As a general rule, I'm not a fan of them. They can come across as generic — if you're not careful.

I mean how many times have you seen “7 productivity secrets” or “10 ways to reduce stress.”

Headlines like this work a few times, but after awhile of seeing the same old recycled headline formulas, it gets old.

And it trains your readers not to engage with them.

Not to mention, how robotic it is when every email starts the same way: “10 ways to...”, “9 things you...”?

That's why I try to avoid formulaic headlines and subject lines when I can.

But let's get real. Sometimes you need a template to fall back on. They can help you if you get stuck, or help you get you started with some fresh ideas.

For that, I have 3 timeless templates I recommend. These templates have stood the test of time. They don't rely on tricky structures or cheap listicle clickbait. They present the most desirable things to your reader in a way that's (1) compelling and (2) overcomes a key objection.

## Timeless Formula #1

The only way to **[Achieve Desirable Thing]** without **[Doing Undesirable Thing]**

### Examples:

The only way to **wake up productive** without **feeling tired or losing sleep**

The only way to **eat healthy food** without **being hungry all the time**

The only way to **earn more money** without **giving up your full-time job**

And from that template you can mix things up. For example, you might put a twist on the first subject line to say this:

*“So you wanna wake up productive, huh?”*

Or since our original desirable thing was “wake up productive,” we could make the subject line even more powerful by using a real example of what waking up productive means. Like:

*“Get more done by noon than most people do all day”*

Now that’s powerful. That’s how this template can help you refine and tweak your idea for a great subject line.

## Timeless Formula #2

*[Do Hard Thing] in [Short Period of Time]  
even if [Shortcoming]*

### Examples:

Start a profitable side business in 30 days even if you have no idea right now

Double your business in 18 months even if you suck at writing and sales

Prepare a delicious meal in 20 minutes or less even if you've never cooked before

## Timeless Formula #3

*[Achieve Desirable Thing] Like [an Expert]  
Without [Something Expected]*

### Examples:

Dunk like LeBron James without being over 6ft tall

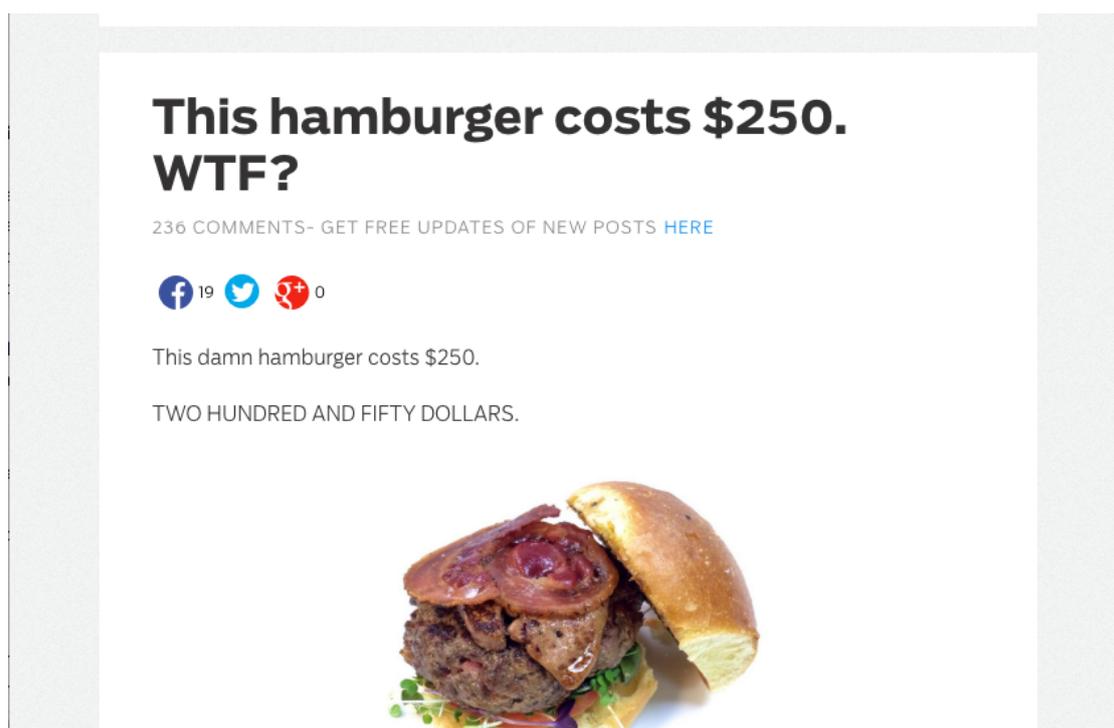
Get arms like Arnold Schwarzenegger without any training

Start a business like Mark Zuckerberg without any computer skills or special connections.

These are all pretty good subject lines. They speak to your reader's needs in a clear, crisp way.

You don't need to reinvent the wheel every time you write. But if you can come up with a memorable subject line, your readers will never forget it.

Consider this memorable subject line:



It breaks all the rules and doesn't follow any template. It got hundreds of comments and my readers LOVED it.

Compare that to this subject line, which anybody could write:

# 10 Ways Millionaires Set Their Goals

Meh...

You can use the templates as a guide, but you should let your OWN voice shine through in your subject lines.

## **The subject lines we used to grow our email list to 600,000+ people:**

One of the best ways to write great subject lines is to look at what other successful people are doing.

So we put together a list of our top 30 subject lines of all time. Some of these emails have directly led to millions of dollars in sales, while others have gotten our content featured in major media, like Business Insider, Huffington Post, and even *The New York Times*.

If you're interested, I'd love to send you a copy of the full list. You can use them as inspiration for your own emails or simply add them to your personal swipe file.

Just click the link below and I'll send you the full list of our top 30 best subject lines of all time.

[Download IWT's 30 Most Successful Subject Lines of All Time](#)



## Part 6: How to write emails that stand out in a crowded inbox

In this section, we're going to dive into how to stand out in a crowded inbox.

The good news is that you don't need to be an English major or grammar nerd to do this well.

But you do need to understand the key parts of great email copy. Look at the difference it made for one of our successful graduates, Felicia:



**Felicia S.**

Call To Action student  
earning \$10k+/month

### ***Accelerated my business 10x...***

*"I honestly believe that knowing how to write great copy accelerated my business 10x faster and why I got the results I did in that short amount of time."*

See how she continues to grow her business without even bringing on new clients. [Read the full story](#)

Now, let's talk about the three things you must do if you want to write a great email.

## 1. Your emails shouldn't be about you

This is the number one mistake businesses make in their emails. They blabber on and on with a bunch of me-focused copy. And the reader's eyes glaze over as they delete the email.

Here's an example:

### About ██████████ Financial Services

We are a full-service financial firm committed to helping people pursue their financial goals. We offer a wide range of financial products and services to individuals and business owners. We believe you will be better able to identify your goals and make sound decisions to help reach them by our providing sound financial information.

ZzzZzzZZz boring.

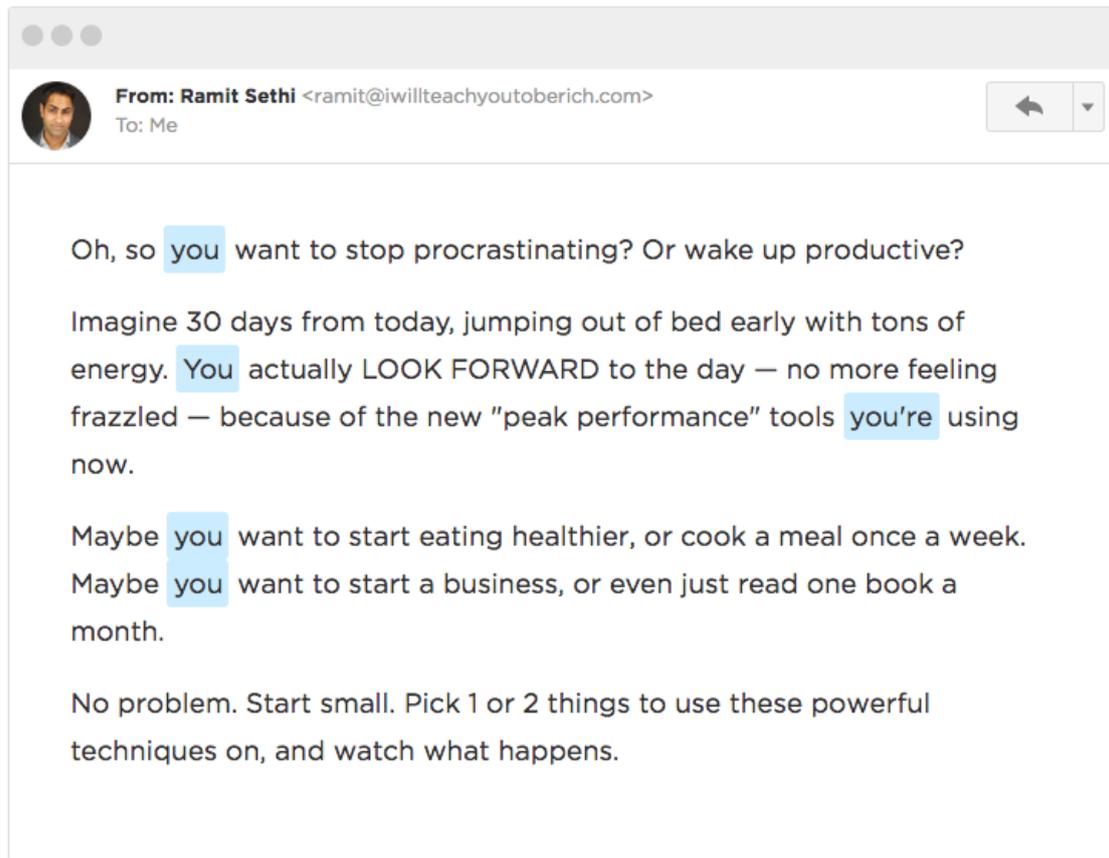
All of that copy is focused on the company.

My gut reaction (as a reader): That's great for YOU, but how does this help ME?

**THE PROBLEM:** Your readers don't care enough about you and what you do. They care about themselves and what you can do for them.

**THE SOLUTION:** All of your email copy should focus on your reader's needs and wants.

Here's an example of the right way to write reader-focused copy, from an email I wrote announcing a new [Ultimate Guide to Habits](#):



What do you notice?

All of this copy is focused on the READER. From the subject line all the way through the body of the email.

It's all about "you."

This simple change in perspective makes the copy much more powerful.

Instead of just saying, "Here's a new PDF guide. Download it here," we explained how the guide can help the reader beat procrastination, wake up productive, and radically change their life in the next 30 days.

That's how you should be writing all of your emails: focusing on your reader's needs.

This is the first rule of writing better emails. If you only make this one tweak, it will make all of your writing 10x more powerful.

## 2. Write conversationally: Introducing the Bar Stool Test

Imagine you're sitting at a bar with your closest friend. You're having a few drinks and chatting away.

After a few minutes, your friend asks you, "What does your business do again?"

Would you say, "My mission is to drastically reduce process inefficiencies for our valued clients"?

No way!

He'd look at you like you were crazy.

So what would you do? You'd take a sip of your drink and say, "We help business owners save time and money by cutting out the middle man."

Nothing fancy. Just simple words and stories.

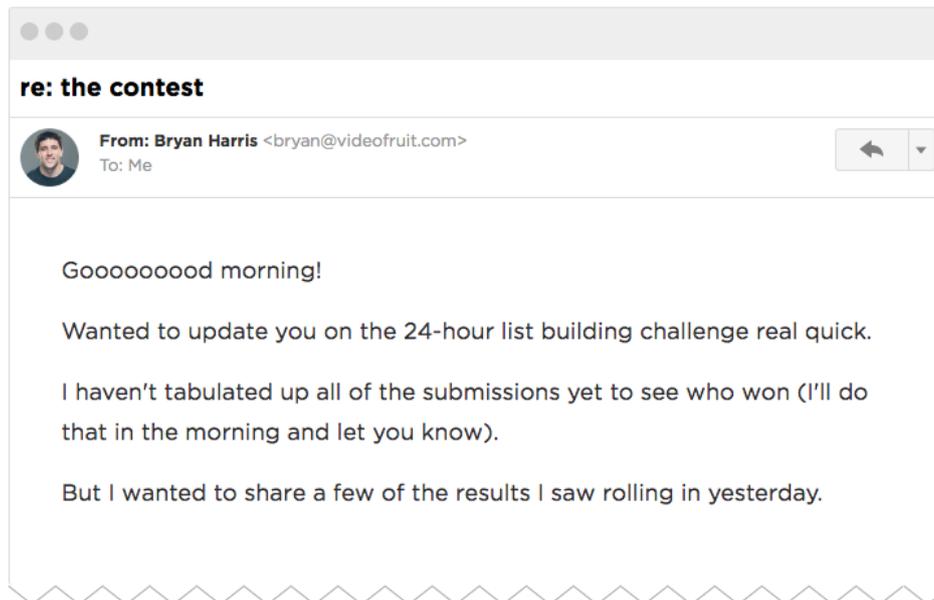
Good email copywriting works the same way.

It's not super-dense technical material. It uses short sentences and reads the way people talk.

A good test is to read everything you write out loud. If you find yourself thinking, "There's no way I would ever say that," trash it and start over.

Great emails feel like a conversation between you and your best friend.

Check out this email from [Bryan Harris, of the popular blog VideoFruit](#). This is a perfect example of writing conversationally to your readers:



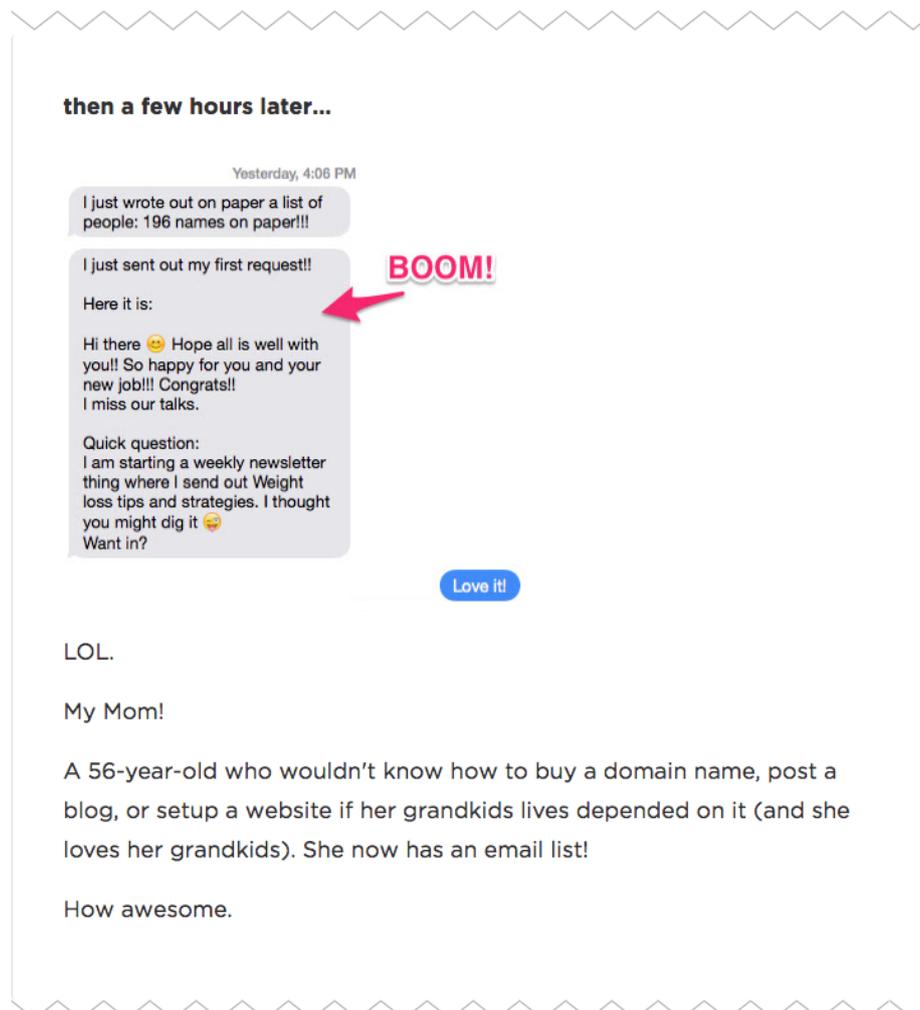
Bryan can be nerdy. So while “tabulating submissions” isn’t something we would all say, it’s a perfect fit for his personality. That’s the key. Here are a few things to notice about this email that you should add to your copy toolbox:

### **The subject line: “re: the contest”**

At the time, Bryan was hosting a 24-hour list-building contest for his readers. So this was a relevant subject line. Unlike most marketers, who’d use gimmicky subject lines like “LAST CALL,” look at what he did. He wrote simply. He didn’t even use capital letters. That’s the kind of email you’d get from a friend. Important to note: he was about to start selling something at the time. But do you get that feeling?

### **The lead**

He starts this email with a casual “Goooooooood morning!”? Then, very casually, he showcases some of the results from REAL people. How relatable is that? You’re sucked into this email from the opening words all the way to bottom — where he’s pitching you to join his mini-course.



### **I also love the screenshots of texts — from his MOM!**

This is so good. He not only includes tweets of his students going through the challenge, but he shows you a text he got from his 56-year-old mother, who's also giving it a shot. I don't know if anyone can read that and not smile. It's fun.

Keep this in mind when writing your emails: it's a conversation.



**Danny M.**  
IWT graduate and  
professional  
copywriter

*“[What] I learned from Ramit was that it’s not only okay to be myself when writing copy – it’s a must in order to truly connect with your audience...”*

*Here are a few examples of concrete results I’ve been able to achieve because of all this:*

- I often get 50 or more emails per day from people who’ve read my material and love it*
- My emails often get forwarded hundreds or even thousands of times over (I can see this through AWeber...)*
- My course has now brought in over \$100,000 this year – most of it pure profit*

*So yeah, [Ramit] taught me a few things about copywriting. ;)”*

[Read the full story](#)

### 3. Bring your email copy to life

Vague copy is a one-way ticket to readers unsubscribing. Take a look at these simple edits to turn vague copy into specific copy. Notice how much more powerful the specific copy is when you read it:

**Boring:** “I don’t like commuting.”

**Specific:** “Every single day, I wake up and think, ‘Oh God, I can’t take yet another 45-minutes of sitting through gridlocked traffic just to get to some job that I don’t even like.’”

**Boring:** “You’ll have freedom and flexibility.”

**Specific:** “Want to take a break from work and see a movie at 1pm on a random Wednesday? You can do that. Have a friend in town and want to meet him for lunch? You can do that, too – and no, you won’t have to ask your boss if it’s okay.”

**Boring:** “You’ll look great.”

**Specific:** “You’ll finally be able to fit into your high school jeans and be the envy of all your friends.”

These edits will make people feel like they know you, like you’re their friend, who they can laugh with and open up to.

That’s key to getting your emails opened and read.

## **Putting it all together**

In this section, we talked about three ways to improve your email copy.

- Make your emails about your readers — not just about yourself
- Use the Bar Stool Test
- Bring your vague copy to life with specifics

These tweaks are simple. They’ll get people to click and read.

But that’s not enough to make them buy. To get the sale, you need to structure your emails in a specific order.

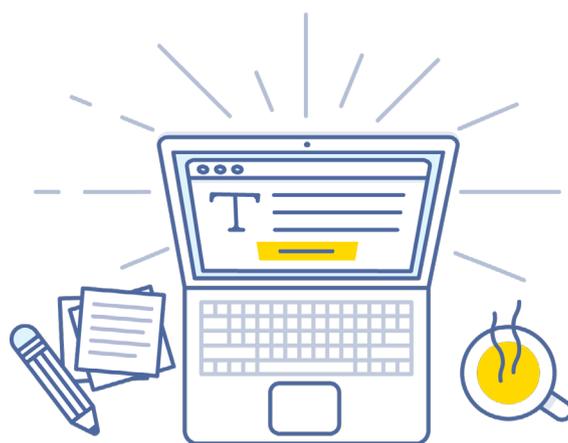
Which is why I recently released our 5-day email funnel that generated \$400,000 from a single launch.

It’s filled with all the numbers, details and the exact funnel behind the launch that generated \$5,524,714 over the span of 6 days... all for free.

You can APPLY the lessons from this funnel to get higher sales in your next launch.

Once you’ve grabbed the \$400k Email Funnel, go on to Part 7 and take the last step to 2x your business in the next 18 months.

[Download the entire word-for-word email funnel that generated \\$400,000.](#)



## **Part 7: Next steps: Use copywriting to 2x your business in the next 18 months**

You've learned some of the key mindsets and strategies you need to create great emails from scratch.

And you've seen how to do it in days or weeks, instead of the years and years it took me.

But now it's time to go from writing single emails, to using them to double your business in the next 18 months.

Every business uses copy — whether you know it or not. Every word on your website, your Facebook posts, your emails, blog posts, is some form of copy. It's the first thing your customer sees and the last thing they remember.

But great copy isn't about being a great writer. I know plenty of brilliant writers who can't write a page of good copy. And I know plenty of people who never thought they could write, who can create fantastic copy.

Because great copy isn't about being clever or smart. It's about connecting with your audience.

And that means learning how you can:

- Uncover exactly what your readers want
- Turn a boring blog into a traffic & lead-generating machine
- Grow your email list and create a sales machine that sells for you 24/7

*Successful people invest in their success ([Tweet This](#))*

I give away tons of free material about these topics. And I even have a full course that shows you everything from the psychology of great copy — to detailed breakdowns of email funnels, blog posts, and sales pages — how to write great copy, get good, and move on.

I only open the course 2x per year, but if you want more of my free material, and to get a heads up when it opens again, enter your email below.

Sign up now, and I'll send you a special video: How to create mouth-watering blog posts, emails, and sales pages...without actually writing anything.



**Bushra A.**

Zero To Launch  
graduate, earned  
\$50k in one month

***We had never heard of you and bought on the spot...***

*There were people who bought from me, and they emailed me to say, "We had never heard about you. We landed on your sales page, and we bought on the spot."*

[Go to the video on how to create mouthwatering blog posts, emails, and sales pages...without actually writing anything.](#)