



The 'Get Better Clients' Roadmap Summary Handout

The Root Cause of Most Freelancing Challenges

Most of your problems as a freelancer can be traced to one thing: a lack of (or not enough) good clients.

Getting better clients is the **keystone** of freelance success. It's the one critical item that impacts the rest of your business in a massive way!

Consider these scenarios:

- Want to put an end to the feast-or-famine cycle? Get better clients (and more of them!).
- Want to command higher fees? Get better clients.
- Want to get paid on time every time? Get better clients.
- Want to attract better prospects? And want more of these prospects to become clients? Position yourself to get better clients.
- Want to stop chasing after clients? Position yourself in a way that gets great clients to come to *you*.
- Want prospects to get back to you with a decision faster? Go after better clients.
- Want to cut back your workload without sacrificing your income? Get better clients.

In some cases, "getting better clients" is not the direct solution. But it solves your problem ***indirectly!***

The 6-Step Roadmap to Better Clients

Ed's Get Better Clients Roadmap is the byproduct of growing his own six-figure freelance copywriting business and his coaching work with nearly 300 freelancers at all experience levels since 2012. This under-the-hood perspective has enabled Ed to see what truly works in the marketplace today.

The *Get Better Clients Roadmap* is designed to meet you where you are today and help take you where you want to go.

A Powerful Guide for Improvement and a Reliable Diagnostic Tool

Besides being a reliable guide for business improvement, the *Get Better Clients Roadmap* is also a powerful diagnostic tool.

As a freelance professional, it's important for you to develop the diagnostic skills of a savvy auto mechanic. Doing so enables you to reach and maintain high performance levels. And when performance falters, knowing how to identify and address the root cause will help you rebound much faster.

The *Get Better Clients Roadmap* has six steps (or stages). They are:

- Stage 1: Clarify
- Stage 2: Reprogram
- Stage 3: Prospect
- Stage 4: Attract
- Stage 5: Convert
- Stage 6: Optimize

Stage 1: Clarify

This is all about **defining, clarifying and communicating your value**. More specifically, getting clear about:

- What you do
- For whom you do it
- What makes you different
- Why those differences matter to your target audience

If you can't get clear about what it is you do, whom you can best serve and why you're the best option for your target audience, how can you expect your prospects to figure this out on their own?

The most successful companies and solopreneurs in the world understand this, which is why they obsess over their positioning and how that's communicated.

The five key milestones for developing mastery in this stage:

1. Uncovering your sweet spot
2. Defining your best strategic positioning
3. Drafting a powerful internal value statement
4. Writing website copy that clearly communicates your value
5. Internalizing an elevator pitch you can deliver naturally

Stage 2: Reprogram

This stage is all about **shifting your thinking**. It's about reframing the way you **think about** yourself, your value to your clients, what's possible in your business, and what it would take for you to land better clients and do work you love.

In other words, it's about shifting your mindset. But to be clear, "mindset" is not about wishful thinking, maintaining a positive attitude, repeating affirmations, or watching the movie *The Secret* and waiting for good things to happen.

When we talk about a mindset shift, we're referring to an upgrade that involves both a shift in expectations and a shift in the way you take action.

Freelancers who consistently land great clients **have learned to expect their level of success as normal**.

You do the same thing every day. You *expect* a certain outcome with a high degree of confidence. And you do this in everyday activities.

Think about a recent errand you did. Say you went grocery shopping this past weekend. What did you do?

You probably made a list, and you got in your car, drove to the store, bought what you needed, drove back home, put your groceries away (as you snacked on that bag of pretzels that *wasn't* on your list) and went about your day.

You expected to achieve your intended outcome, didn't you?

It's no different in your business. If you're earning \$50,000 a year, you're very likely taking actions that create that kind of outcome. The freelancer earning three times that amount is expecting three times the result.

This is called the Law of Certainty. Because it's *certainty* (and action) that shapes your outcome.

The five key milestones for developing mastery in this stage:

1. Understanding the “better clients” mindset
2. Developing habits and routines that help you grow
3. Developing a clear set of values and standards
4. Developing a decision-making process that’s aligned with your values and standards
5. Identifying and clarifying your WHY

Stage 3: Prospect

This is all about knocking on the **right doors** the **right way**.

Inbound marketing can be extremely effective. But for most freelancers, it’s also important to have an outbound *prospecting* strategy in place—especially if you’re trying to take your business to the next level.

Prospecting buys you time. It gives your inbound marketing strategy time to take hold and start bearing fruit. And it gives you more control over the clients and projects you work on.

Consider the following outbound prospecting strategies:

- Reactivation (of dormant and past clients)
- Tapping your network
- Active referrals
- Direct mail
- Warm email prospecting
- Cold calling
- Online job boards
- Agencies
- Complementary freelancers
- Shock & awe campaigns

The key is finding a mix that works well for you, as indicated in the first milestone below.

The five key milestones for developing mastery in this stage:

1. Determine the right mix of inbound and outbound marketing for you
2. Develop your marketing mix for outbound prospecting
3. Create a prospecting plan and schedule you can follow consistently
4. Turn prospecting into a habit
5. Track your progress and make needed adjustments

Stage 4: Attract

This stage is all about **drawing quality prospects to your business on a consistent basis**. It's all about *inbound* marketing—also known as attraction marketing.

Attraction marketing is all about leaving a series of strategically placed “breadcrumbs” that lead high-quality prospects to your business.

Strategies to consider include:

- Writing a newsletter
- Writing a blog
- Nurturing longer-term leads
- Using strategic social media
- Writing guest article
- Publishing a book
- Doing public speaking

The beauty of attraction marketing is that the dynamics of the interaction are completely different from outbound prospecting. To a certain extent, prospects come presold when they contact you. That's powerful!

And when done right, this kind of marketing can bring in a steady stream of prequalified prospects who are ready to discuss working with you.

But it can't just be an afterthought. For attraction marketing to work, it needs to be a focused and concerted effort.

The five key milestones for developing mastery in this stage:

1. Publishing an irresistible lead magnet
2. Deploying an email collection method
3. Creating a front-end productized service
4. Deciding on (and deploying) your traffic-generating marketing mix
5. Driving targeted traffic to your website

Stage 5: Convert

You've knocked on doors and gotten the attention of some good prospects. And you've attracted some high-quality prospects to your business through some strategic inbound marketing.

This stage is all **about closing more of the right opportunities**.

A November 2014 survey of nearly 1,500 freelancers revealed the following:

- 33% of freelancers are closing fewer than three out of 10 of the projects they quote. In other words, out of every 10 projects they quote, seven or more go to someone else or go nowhere!
- Only 17.1% are closing 80% or more of the projects they quote.

These ratios are not bad in many traditional industries. But when you're a solo business, closing 20%, 30% or even 50% of everything you quote or propose presents some big problems.

It's time-consuming to quote work and create proposals. So it's demoralizing to land only a small percentage of the opportunities you chase.

However, things begin to change very quickly when you realize that not every prospect and every project is "winnable."

When you have limited time and resources, you have to focus on winning the clients and projects that are winnable.

This enables you to spend less time and energy on opportunities that aren't winnable and more time and energy on those that *are* winnable.

The five key milestones for developing mastery in this stage:

1. Implementing an effective and efficient prospect qualification process
2. Developing a master fee schedule
3. Pricing and presenting your services strategically
4. Employing an effective follow-up process
5. Negotiating and addressing objections with confidence

Stage 6: Optimize

Optimizing is all about creating greater *leverage* for your business. More specifically, it's about ***getting more and/or better results with less effort.***

For example:

- Having better results with less effort in your outbound prospecting
- Getting more and better-quality prospect inquiries with less work
- Closing a greater percentage of the opportunities you pursue
- Bringing other resources into your business that enable you to multiply your efforts

The six key milestones for developing mastery in this stage:

1. Nurturing longer-term prospects
2. Getting more repeat business
3. Landing profitable retainer agreements
4. Selling high-profit service packages
5. Scaling your business without adding complexity
6. Reducing and preventing burnout

How Do You Follow and Implement This Roadmap?

This orientation is merely an introduction to the Get Better Clients Roadmap. The execution plans inside Get Better Clients Academy contain the strategies, techniques and step-by-step instruction you'll need to implement to start achieving mastery in each of these stages.

With the orientation materials you'll find a **self-assessment in a PDF file**. Take that assessment now. It will show you the best starting point for you in the roadmap, based on where you are in your business today. And it will also tell you where to go from there.

To summarize, your next steps are as follows:

1. Print and go through the self-assessment today.
2. Use the results to find your best starting place (stage) in the roadmap.
3. Pick an execution from inside that stage.
4. Carve out two hours in your schedule this week or next week to go through that material. Schedule it as you would a doctor's appointment. Commit to going through that execution plan as if your success depended on it.
5. Implement one idea or strategy from that execution plan right away.

Focus on taking small, deliberate action every week.

Don't try to do too much at once! Instead, start in the stage that's best suited for you right now. Work through the execution plans in that area. And make a commitment to yourself right now that you'll carve out at least a few minutes every week to study and apply what you learn.

It's all about baby steps. Take those baby steps every week. Focus on what you can do TODAY to improve your business. You'll be surprised by how quickly these small actions compound over the course of the next six, 12 and 18 months.