



Tapping Your Network

The final warm email prospecting strategy you'll want to consider is that of tapping your network of personal and professional contacts with a very personalized warm email.

When I coach new freelancers through the process of launching their business, this is one of the first strategies I have them implement—reaching out to people who already know and trust them. However, even if you've been in business for a while, this is something you may still want to consider.

In fact, I hear from established freelancers all the time who finally decided to reach out to key personal and professional contacts and were blown away by the referrals and introductions they received. So don't overlook this strategy because you may think it would make you look like an amateur. On the contrary! This approach can help position you as a real pro, especially if your outreach emails are carefully crafted.

In the Business vs. Outside the Business

As you start reaching out to people in your network and going through your contact list, the first thing you'll want to do is divide your contacts into two groups:

- a) People in your business (other freelancers, partners, colleagues, etc.)
- b) People *outside* your business (personal friends, relatives, neighbors, etc.)

And the reason is that you'll use a very different message when contacting people who already know and understand your business, as opposed to people who don't really understand what you do or whom you do it for.

Let's look at some examples...

In this first example, you were talking at a networking event with a lady by the name of Susan Penske. You and Susan are friends, and in this last conversation with her, she happened to mention that she might know of a couple of people who might be good prospects for you. So you promised to follow up with email, and send her the following warm message:

SUBJECT LINE: Great to reconnect!

Hi Susan,

It was great to reconnect with you today at the CLA meeting! Happy to hear that you're off to such a great year.

I'm writing to follow up on our conversation regarding the two contacts you mentioned in the healthcare industry who use freelancers. You mentioned Lori Davis and Ron Palmer.

Can you forward me their information when you get a chance?

Thanks!
[Signature]

Susan sent you the contact information for both individuals and gave you permission to use her name. So you turn around and send the following email:

SUBJECT LINE: Susan Penske sent me your way

Hi Lori,

I've known Susan Penske for a number of years. We both volunteer at the Publicity Club of Chicago. She recently mentioned that you use freelance designers from time to time.

As a freelance designer, I work exclusively with healthcare practices. My clients include Midwest Heart Specialists, VNA of Fox Valley, and Central DuPage Hospital. I also recently received a gold Aster Award for the external newsletter I designed for Midwest Heart Specialists.

Here's a link to a one sheet that explains more about what I do: [URL]

You can also see samples of my work here: [URL]

Would it make sense for us to connect? If so, please let me know when would be a good day and time to discuss.

Notice that this is an email exchange among people who already know the business and are familiar with freelance designers and what they do. In fact, one of them (your prospect) already works with outside designers. So the email can be very short and sweet.

Let's look at another example...

SUBJECT LINE: *Your dad told me you're at Brighton now!*

Hi Jim,

I saw your dad at a funeral last week. He told me about your current position with Brighton Publishing! Congratulations!

Since you and I talked several years ago at _____, God has led me in new directions, too. I went "on leave from call" to serve as a professional freelance copyeditor, intertwining my passions for faith, church, and Bible and excellent writing. I copyedit for interdenominational publishing companies, as well as editing Christian fiction and nonfiction for indie authors.

I understand that most Brighton positions are on site in Kingsport. I also know that many publishers find it more economical to use freelance copyeditors. Is this something Brighton has tried or considered?

To give you a sense of my abilities, here's a link to some of my work: [URL].

Would it make sense for us to reconnect by phone? If so, please let me know when I can give you a call.

Thanks, and God bless!
[Signature]

In this example, your conversation with Jim's dad was probably a little different than the conversation you'd have with either an editor colleague or someone who works with editors directly. In these situations you typically have to explain what you do in layman's terms. That way the referral source (in this case Jim's dad) can better understand and recall people who may be a good prospect for you.

In the example above that conversation took place in person. But if you had to do it via email, you'd have to simplify your "value statement" explanation so that Jim's dad would understand who would be a good prospect for you.

This next example illustrates this well...

SUBJECT LINE: *An update*

Hi Joe.

It's been a while since we connected. Hope you, Amanda and the kids are doing well. Last time we met for lunch, your oldest son was about to leave for college. I hope that went well and than he's adjusting nicely to college life at Georgia.

I'm writing because I've recently launched a commercial writing business, and I was curious if someone in your professional network could potentially benefit from my services.

Content marketing has gone mainstream. Yet companies are stretched thin and can't handle most of their content writing in house.

I can fill that need in an affordable way — whether it's website content or sales collateral, articles, reports, white papers or virtually any type of marketing content.

My ideal prospect is a business that sells something new, expensive or complex. Those are the factors that typically require lots of marketing and sales content.

*Here's a link to my website, where I have additional information:
www.XYZ.com.*

If you think of someone who meets these criteria, would you be willing to make a short email introduction? I assure you that I will treat anyone you send my way with the utmost respect and courtesy.

Thanks in advance, Joe. And don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions. Either way, let's catch up soon. I'd love to buy you lunch if you're available sometime over the next couple of weeks.

*Regards,
[Signature]*

You'll notice that this example is geared toward someone who may not fully understand what you do for a living. Because of that, and because of the type of relationship this person has with the recipient, note that it's longer than most.

Here's another one...

SUBJECT LINE: *Staying in touch*

Hi Greg,

You may remember me from Altiris and Symantec when I worked in product marketing. These days I'm helping technology companies create content marketing strategies that engage buyers and help them stand out in crowded markets. Since SageSoft also helps technology companies, I wanted to reach out to see if there might be opportunities to work together.

Quite a few of our former Altiris & Symantec colleagues have hired me to build their content marketing strategies. In fact, I recently helped Matrix21 with a thought leadership research report. Here's what their marketing VP said: "The most effective lead generation program for the U.S. we had ever done as a company. Very satisfied. Karen knows what she's doing and is a pleasure to work with."

You can check out my other LinkedIn recommendations at [URL]

Would it make sense for us to chat soon? If so, please let me know a good day and time to discuss.

*Best,
[Signature]*

Let's look at one more example...

SUBJECT LINE: *Grant Lewis suggested I contact you*

Hi Steve,

Grant described the dip that your brand credibility took after your sales expanded into mainstream stores. I am writing because I help apparel brands refresh their identity and image through branded graphic design and communication campaigns.

I recently helped ABC Footwear strengthen their Flexsole shoe market position in Europe and Asia through an in-store campaign. I also helped LC fashion move up one step in the fashion ladder by re-positioning and refreshing their visual identity.

*Here is a link to my partner's website describing our process for LC Fashion:
[URL]*

Would it make sense for us to connect?

*Kind regard,
[Signature]*

This is yet another example of a "Networker" warm email that leverages one of your relationships.

Again, the idea here is to leverage your contacts as best as you can. There's hidden gold in our relationships, and I've found that many freelancers are too shy or afraid to leverage them more. As you saw from the examples here, when done right and professionally, you'll find that your contacts will be more than willing to help you out.