7 Proven Ways to Land Work From Current and Past Clients Using Warm Emails

~ Class Handout ~

Key Principles:

- It takes more than just asking
- Don't be fooled by the simplicity of these scripts
- Remember the power of "because"
- Offering *justification* is essential
- Suggested reading: *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* by Dr. Robert B. Cialdini

Technique #1: Going on Vacation

Benefits:

- Very effective and helping you land work fast
- Help pay for your next vacation
- Allows you to have a more enjoyable time off
- Avoids a ton of urgent requests when you come back

Make sure to:

- Be honest
- Use it sparingly
- Plan ahead (give your clients plenty of notice)
- Remind your clients as you get closer to leaving town

Sample Scripts:

SUBJECT LINE: Upcoming vacation

Hi Don,

Just a heads-up that I'm going to be out of town on vacation from July 1 through July 16.

I know you had mentioned that you had a few projects you were planning on starting soon. If you're ready to jump on those before I leave, I'd be happy to put them in the schedule. If not, that's fine, too. Just thought I'd let you know that I'll be away at that time.

Please let me know either way when you get a minute.

Thanks!
-Ed

Here's another variation on this script...

Hi Don,

A quick note to let you know that I'm going on vacation from 7/19 - 7/29, and I have some availability between now and then if you have anything you'd like for me to work on. You had mentioned a work order and service brochure in the email below.

Hope you're doing well.

-Ed

Technique #2: The Delayed Project

Benefits:

- Allows you to fill an unexpected gap in your schedule
- Helps clients get started on projects in their queue

Make sure to:

- Provide your reason for request
- Keep the tone calm, professional and conversational
- Show the client what's in it for them

Sample Script:

SUBJECT LINE: I'm available next week

Hi Lisa,

I was about to start working on a large project with another client, but it just got put on hold for at least a month.

So, basically, I have a big slot in my schedule! ;)

I know you had mentioned some case studies you needed to get written soon. I'd be happy to jump on those if the timing is right for you.

Just let me know either way, if you don't mind. That way I won't let that opening go to waste.

Thanks!
-Ed

Technique #3: Help Your Clients Plan Ahead

Benefits:

- Allows you to fill idle time
- Helps clients get started on projects in their queue
- Positions you as a true pro

Make sure to:

- Be honest
- Come across as confident and professional
- Avoid sounding as if you're begging for work

Sample Script:

SUBJECT LINE: Should we plan ahead?

Hi Angela,

I know fall is your busiest season. It's mine as well. So I thought I'd reach out and see if I could get a better idea of what you're planning (from a content development standpoint) and when you might need my help.

Just trying to plan ahead so I can be there for you when you need me.

Thanks!
-Ed

Technique #4: Take Advantage of Trigger Events

A trigger event represents a big event or change within an organization (or in that organization's industry) that creates an opportunity for you as a freelancer to either get your foot in the door or, if you're already working with that organization, to contact them about how you could potentially help them.

Here are some examples of GREAT trigger events:

- Positive or negative financial announcements
- New funding received
- New product or service announcements
- Expansions into new markets
- New initiatives within the organizations
- A new manager or director in the department you usually work with
- New activity on their website/blog (or lack of activity)
- An upcoming event the prospect is putting together or going to be attending
- Layoffs, downsizing, rightsizing
- Pending or recently enacted legislation
- Landing a very large or prestigious new client

Benefits:

- You're approaching client based on a certain level of need that makes them much more receptive to your services.
- Positions you as a true pro
- Shows the client that you pay attention
- Demonstrates that you care about helping the client

Remember:

- The possibilities for email scripts that are based on trigger events are endless
- How you approach your email depends on what event you're leveraging
- Get to the point quickly
- Be relevant
- Use solid trigger events only (don't stretch it)
- Tie what you do (or a particular service) to the event; don't expect the client to figure it out

Sample Scripts:

SUBJECT LINE: Article ideas based on FSMA

Hi Jim,

The recently passed FSMA gives us a ton of potential angles on why food & beverage companies can no longer sit on the sidelines when it comes to track and trace technology.

Here's just one idea based on this article:

[URL to a great news article I found]

This angle is different because it talks about traceability/supply chain info as a competitive advantage at the CONSUMER level, rather than as a way to enable regulatory compliance or brand protection.

With so many consumers into sustainable/green living, organics, fair trade, local foods, etc., this is certainly becoming a hot topic. And since the biz is so competitive, retailers are using this to get an edge.

Anyway, I'd love to discuss some article ideas sometime next week, if you're interested. The time to get these out to the media is now, while the topic is hot and top of mind.

Thanks!
-Ed

Technique #5: Bring a Hot Idea to the Table

Benefits:

- Truly sets you apart
- Shows client you really care
- Stands out in a crowded Inbox
- Allows you to "create" projects that didn't exist previously
- Keeps your name "top of mind" (so they call you for the next one)

Script Sample:

SUBJECT LINE: Lead generation idea

Mike,

Here's a thought-leadership and lead generation idea: write a 5,000-word e-book.

You can use it as a lead generation tool, a way to nurture longer-term leads, the basis for a presentation, etc.

Plus, it can become the precursor for your printed book. I know you've wanted to write something for a while. Doing an e-book first could be a logical stepping-stone, and it could make the process of writing the actual book easier. (Plus, I know of a great writer who could help you do this ;)

Just a thought. Hope you guys are doing well.

Cheers,
-Ed

Technique #6: Spread the Word About a New Service Offering

Benefits:

- Much more effective way to spread the word about new service

Make sure to:

- Provide a personalized example of how the new service will benefit THEM in particular
- Tie it somehow to client's challenges and/or objectives

Script Sample:

SUBJECT LINE: Though this would work well for you

Hi Darcy,

Not sure if I had mentioned this in our recent conversations, but I'm now writing white papers.

I had an idea on a topic that could be very effective for you guys, in terms of generating more and better-quality leads. It has to do with the recent surge of iPad adoption in construction jobsites.

Anyway, you had mentioned a few months ago that you were looking for better ways to generate leads, and I think this could be a winner for you. Let me know if you'd like to discuss this idea further.

Thanks!
-Ed

Technique #7: The "Loss Leader"

Benefits:

- Offers a low-cost and low-risk option to the client
- Makes it easier for client to "add on" higher-end services
- Builds trust and credibility
- Brings some income in the door

Make sure to:

- Take a closer look at your services
- See if you can offer a smaller or less-comprehensive service that will give clients a sampling of your expertise and how you work
- Keep the fee low enough to make it easy for client to say "Yes!"
- Think of it as a cost of doing business (cost of marketing/sales)

Sample Script:

SUBJECT LINE: Low-cost way to improve your website

Hi Deb,

I know we've talked in the past about revamping your website. But I also know that cost is an issue.

So I wanted to run an idea by you that I think will give you a lot of what you need for a fraction of the fee we discussed:

My new website audit service.

This package includes a thorough evaluation of the website structure, copy, message, search-engine optimization and usability — plus a full page of recommended changes or adjustments.

You get all my detailed her findings and recommendations in a very attractive report that is easy to read and understand.

All this for just $500.

Let me know if this sounds like something you'd like to discuss further.

Thanks!-Ed

Remember:
- The purpose of this email is to "fish" for interest only
- If she replies with any level of interest, you can then take the conversation to the phone
- Your email must be relevant and personalized

Technique #8 (Bonus!): "Chasing the Mover"

Benefits:

- You're contacting someone who's already worked with you and who may have opportunities in a new organization.

Make sure to:

- Search through your client contact list
- Search LinkedIn for other possibilities
- Expand your search to those you've worked with directly, (not just hiring managers)
- Remind them of your value
- Tell them what you've done since you worked together
- Give them an idea of how you could help now
- Keep it brief
- Get to the point as quickly as possible
- Provide link to a couple of great samples
- Offer to reconnect

Sample Script:

SUBJECT LINE: Saw that you're now at Briscoe

Hi Marcie,

I just came across your name this morning and saw that you're now at Briscoe. Great to hear! Hope all is well with you and your family.

Since we worked together at ABC Co., I've worked on a number of animated illustration projects for other training companies, including Fillmore, Ameritraining, KnowledgeWorx and others.

Here are some samples of that work: [URL]

Would it make sense to reconnect to see if I can help you at Briscoe?

Thanks! -Ed