



Warm Email Prospecting for Freelancers

Meaningful Connections—Why You Need Them

Let's recap where we are at this point.

- So far, **you've defined your value and created one or more value statements**, (which is something you're going to use in the next module, by the way!)
- **You've also identified your ideal client profile** (or profiles) and started creating one or more very targeted lists based on these profiles.
- **Finally, you've started to find contact names and their email addresses** using some of the creative research techniques and resources we covered in the last module.

So you have a rough message... a list of prospects... and contact information for some of them.

Technically, you could go ahead and start sending out emails at this point. And that's what most people would do—and that's if they even went through the trouble of doing all the research you've done so far.

But if you do this—if all you do is start emailing these prospects based on the information you have so far—your response will still be severely limited. Not only that, but your emails could be perceived as spam because they will lack the personalization that really makes them stand out and have the prospect take notice.

There's something missing. We haven't uncovered and communicated a meaningful connection for each prospect.

In other words, we haven't found a really good reason we can give them as to why we're contacting them.

Now, I know that may sound a bit nebulous. So let me explain what I mean with a quick story.

At one point in my sales career, I was selling software to construction companies. Because the company I worked for was very small, there were only two of us selling this particular product. Which meant that we divided the U.S. into two territories—North and South. I had the Southern territory, which included all the states from California, Nevada, Utah and Colorado, all the way East to the Carolinas, and everything south of that.

That's a very large territory, no matter what you sell. It's a lot of ground to cover. But it was doable because our product was a narrowly targeted software applications, so the market for it wasn't as big as it sounds. Not only that, but most of our demonstrations were done over the phone and with WebEx, which is an only demonstration tool.

Anyway, every once in a while I'd come across a prospect in my metropolitan area. And in one particular occasion, I came across a prospect that happened to be located less than 2 miles away from my house. What are the chances of that, right?

Well, I got all excited about this (mainly because I hadn't presented our software to someone in person in a couple of weeks by that point). So I came across this prospect at an industry association meeting, and I told him that I should really stop by and see him and do a demo of our application... *because I lived just 2 miles away from him!*

In other words, I used the excuse of location as a reason for setting an in-person appointment. I thought for sure he'd say "yes!" I mean, why not, right? Well, I eventually got the appointment, but it took months of trying. And in the end, he never bought from me anyway.

And what I learned from that experience is this: **Just because you think you have a good reason to approach a prospect doesn't mean the prospect will see the value of talking with you or hiring you.**

So in my example, I thought that close proximity to his office alone was a good enough reason for the prospect to want to see me. But in reality, that didn't matter. If he didn't really have a need for my product, I could live next door to him and it still wouldn't make sense for him to meet with me.

So you may have a list of chemicals manufacturers in your area—and that may be an excellent target market for you. But just because you're close by doesn't mean the prospect is going to care.

Or forget location. Just because chemical companies are one of your main target markets doesn't mean they've going to see value in that if you approach them by telling them that you work with chemical companies.

So what's missing? What do you need to really make an impression and increase your chances of getting a response? **You need to make a relevant and meaningful connection.**

So going back to my software sales example, rather than using the proximity excuse, I should have looked for something more meaningful. For instance, what if I had done some research in the local business chronicle and learned that this company just landed a HUGE, high-profile construction project?

Well, that would give me a great connection point—a meaningful and relevant piece of information I could use in my email to tie the potential value of my product to. And that's because my product was designed to create and track all the documentation in a large project. So the fact that they landed a huge construction project would have given me a legitimate reason to approach them. Because I had something that could help them run that project better.

Or let's bring it back to the world of freelancing. Say I'm a freelance public relations professional and I just helped one of my clients go public. I was heavily involved in helping that company get the publicity they needed to attract potential buyers, get acquired by a much larger company and transition them over to that large company. Well, I could use that bit of relevant and meaningful information in an email to other prospects in that same industry or in a related industry as a reason to hopefully start some dialogue. After all, even if they're not looking to get acquired, the fact that I helped a company they recognize get to that level of success is probably a good-enough reason for them to want to learn a bit more about me.

Relevance is HUGELY important when email prospecting. In fact, I recently came across a study from Doubleclick showing that *57% of email recipients considered a message to be spam if it was irrelevant to the needs of their business.* And this was true even when the messages came from vendors they knew well. So I can't stress enough the importance of relevance with your email prospecting efforts—and that's why I'm going to be harping on that through the remainder of this program. If you get anything out of these lessons, I hope you remember that without relevance, you'll be labeled as a spammer and this strategy will simply NOT work for you.

So that's what this module's about. We're going to talk about different ways of finding and developing that meaningful connection with your prospect in order to make your emails truly WARM and EFFECTIVE!

I'll see you in the next lesson.