

12 Done-For-You Email Scripts

Get Replies and Meetings Starting Tomorrow.

The amazing thing about email is that you can reach practically anybody in the world.

Yet most people never consciously learn how to use email well. Here we are, all with one of the most powerful tools in the history of mankind in front of us, on our phones, and available on the Internet, and most people — even professionals! — write astonishingly bad emails.

You've probably gotten an email before from somebody — whether a teacher, a coworker, or just a spammer — that you look at it and, when you're done, you're annoyed you spent the time reading it because there's no obvious idea what they want you to do with the email. Or, they wrote a novel and you now feel obligated to spend 15 minutes reading it.

Even worse is when I meet people who are looking to meet with somebody for feedback or to get a job or just to get a great mentor and they never shoot that person an email.

“What should I say? What if they don't reply? What if I say something that offends them?”

People stress out *way* too much about email, especially when emailing somebody for an opportunity. You might have learned in high school that mitochondria was the powerhouse of the cell, but you probably didn't learn how to send an email asking to meet, asking for an introduction, asking for feedback or to share something you wrote or produced, asking for an invitation, or just generally connecting with somebody whom you admire.

That's why I put together this guide. These are twelve of my most-used email scripts and templates.

Imagine getting your dream job and bypassing the entire resume and interview process for several companies because you emailed the owners with ease and got replies from them.

Imagine getting feedback on your career aspirations and writing from the founder and CEO of one of the biggest media empires the world has ever seen, all because you wrote a fantastic email to which she responded the next morning.

Imagine having a prominent billionaire investor give you feedback on your startup idea and then offer to be pitched for investment when that time comes, all because you didn't make the email mistakes many of your peers make.

Imagine writing a book and having one of your heroes write the foreword or offer quotations for the back cover because you wrote a compelling email to them.

Or just imagine approaching any email — a cold email, an introduction, a request, bumping a thread — as stress-free and not having to think about what you should write in this instance, saving you mental energy and helping you focus on what really matters for the day.

You don't have to imagine these things. These are all cases where the email scripts used here (and some of my higher-level connection strategy covered in one-on-ones) produced world-class results for normal people.

You have an amazing tool in your email inbox. **Learn to use it properly and you can open any door for yourself.**

Here's the thing about scripts...

Before I jump into the red meat of this guide, keep in mind that scripts are *frameworks* and *models* for you to use. All of the scripts in here are tested, proven, and reliable from tens of thousands of emails and hours upon hours of research.

That being said, if everybody uses the same script verbatim, *they look like scripts to the reader*. I was resistant to putting this guide together for a long time because I do really think that scripts are not enough. You have to have a sincere interest in others and what they are doing — and make a habit of that. (I changed my mind when I realized, sure, scripts aren't enough, but sending fantastic emails can really improve the quality of a lot of people's lives.)

Have you ever had a telemarketer call you or somebody come to your door and read off a script or a memorized script? No matter what they said, it came off as insincere and probably annoyed you. The same is true with email scripts.

So, throughout this guide, you'll see things like, ***[Insert sincere praise about the person's work]***, or ***[Insert your own story for why this resonated with you.]***. Obviously you don't want to just leave the brackets but you also want whatever you put in there to actually be *sincere*. Sincerity and “realness” go a long way with people. Most people don't mind taking a few minutes to reply to an email if they sense the sender is a sincere person who legitimately values their opinion. They get a little joy out of it.

Be sincere, be interested, and don't be sleazy and these scripts will go a lot further for you. Also, subject-lines matter less than most people think. If you have a central point of rapport or you were referred by a mutual friend, mention that. If you email them because of an article or book they wrote, mention that. Otherwise, use descriptive and brief subject lines.

1. **Get a phone call or a meeting with a very busy person.**

I'll just come out and say it: this will be the hardest one in the entire book. Very busy people guard their time jealously. You'll want to signal to them that you won't waste their time. To go from cold-email to a meeting or call with them depends on a lot of factors outside of how well your email is written (check back on ZakSlayback.com to find out how to maximize those other factors).

Still, a well-written email here is like having a business card or a resume. Having one might not get you the opportunity - but **not having one will lose you the opportunity.**

Script:

***Suggested Subject: Per [your article in OUTLET/mutual connection/
point of rapport]***

Hi [Their Name],

***My name is [Your Name]. You don't know me, but [some point of rapport
- did you go to the same school? Are you a fledgling upstart in the
same industry? Do you know the same people? You want to break
down the perceived cost of meeting with you here. Make this short.].
[OPTIONAL: sincere compliment about their work.]***

***I'm going to be in [their neighborhood or city] [next week/next month/
etc.] and would like to buy you coffee and ask you [specific set of
questions]. It will take no more than 30 minutes of your time.***

I understand you're quite busy, so I'm happy to make time at your convenience.

Thanks for taking the time to read my email.

[Your Name]

Example:

Subject: Per Professor Rosenstein @ MSU

Hi Jake,

My name is Claudia, you don't know me but I'm also a Michigan State (class of 2012!) alum. I've heard fantastic things about your fundraising skills and am looking to start a company myself. I was referred to you by Professor Rosenstein, who spoke highly of you and your company.

I'm going to be in downtown Detroit next week all week for some meetings. I'd like to buy you coffee and ask you some questions about finding the right investors and crafting the pitch. I promise it will take no more than 30 minutes of your time.

I understand you're quite busy, so I'm happy to make time at your convenience.

Thanks for taking the time to read my email.

Claudia

This email is short, to the point, establishes a point of rapport, and is respectful of the other person's time. It communicates that you are aware that this person's time is valuable and you do not want to waste it.

This is *the only case* in which it is okay to leave scheduling open-ended¹. If the person replies with a few days, *then* you want to get more specific with times.

¹ See my article here for how to get on the calendar's of busy people: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-get-calendar-very-busy-people-without-being-pain-zak-slayback>

Your job is to establish the connection first and then go lock it in once they express interest. This script is proven to help with that.

2. **Get feedback on an article or art.**

Getting feedback from an expert, a mentor, or somebody you respect on your creation — whether a blog post, art, or some other *short*-form creation — can be the difference between creating a top-notch creation and something mediocre.

When sending an email to a prominent, busy person for feedback on your creation, you want to *make it as easy as possible for them to reply*. This script with pre-canned responses is a reliable model. From here, you establish open communication with them and can go for more in the future.

Script:

***Suggested Subject: Per [your article in OUTLET/mutual connection/
point of rapport]***

Hi [Their Name],

My name is [Your Name]. You don't know me, but I'm [some point of rapport - did you go to the same school? Are you a fledgling upstart in the same industry? Do you know the same people? You want to break down the perceived cost of replying. Make this short.]. [OPTIONAL: sincere compliment about their work.]

I [wrote an article about X/created Y kind of art] and would appreciate your quick feedback. Based on a quick skim of the [article/art] do you think I should focus on:

[Option 1 element to improve.]

[Option 2 element to improve.]

[Option 3 element to improve.]

I appreciate any thoughts you might have. Thank you!

[Your Name]

Example:

Subject: Per Choose Yourself, from a fan whose life you changed

Hi James,

My name is Josh and I am also a writer in the personal development space (although I'm just getting started!). I'm a big fan of your work, Choose Yourself was revolutionary for me and one of the books that got me to quit my miserable cubicle job and decide to launch my own business.

I wrote an article about the psychological cost of quitting here (link). Based on your experience quitting and talking to others who quit, which of these do you think is the hardest part for people?

- 1. Telling their families/friends.*
- 2. Taking a hit to their pride and quitting before something is finished.*
- 3. The unknown of how they'll get a reliable monthly income.*

I appreciate any quick thoughts you might have. Thank you for taking the time.

Josh

This format follows a template called **pre-canned responses**. When James gets this email, he can be running between gates at an airport, eating lunch, sitting at his desk, or sitting in the bathroom and easily reply, "It's usually 2." and get Josh a response. Pre-canned responses are effective low-cost templates for getting help from others.

3. **Get feedback on a business or book.**

More time-intensive than getting feedback on an article and a bigger ask than having somebody roll ideas off their head, you can get people to give you feedback on bigger projects like businesses or books.

Here's the trick: instead of sending them the entire book or asking them about the entire business, identify *one part* on which you could use their feedback. Don't overwhelm them by asking them to pick apart the entire business unless you already consider them to be good friends.

Script:

***Suggested Subject: Per [your article in OUTLET/mutual connection/
point of rapport]***

Hi [Their Name],

My name is [Your Name] and I'm [some point of rapport - did you go to the same school? Are you a fledgling upstart in the same industry? Do you know the same people? You want to break down the perceived cost of replying. Make this short.]. [Optional: sincere compliment about their work.]

I'm [writing a book/launching a business about/around X] and, given your expertise on [X], I was hoping you could give me some quick feedback or pointers. Anything's appreciated.

[Specific issue addressed in a short section of the book or specific issue with your business.] [How/what/why question about that thing]?

[Option 1 element.]

[Option 2 element.]

[Option 3 element.]

I'm happy to send along [the chapter/the deck/the executive summary] if that would help give you context.

I appreciate your thoughts. Thank you!

[Your Name]

Example:***Subject: Per Your Work For Women Like Me - Thank You!***

Hi Arianna,

My name is Sara and I'm just getting started in my career as a writer. You've been a source of inspiration for me through this process of navigating negotiations and meetings. Thank you for everything you've done for women like me.

I'm writing a book about getting started in journalism as a woman without any formal journalism training. One of my chapters is on overcoming unfair expectations others have of you in the office. In your experience, what's the biggest problem women face?

- 1. Not asserting themselves enough in meetings with others.*
- 2. Taking the assignments that are given to them without counter-offering.*
- 3. Not negotiating strongly enough for assignments and pay.*

For context, I'm happy to send along the excerpt from the chapter if you would like to see it.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

Sara

Like the above script, this script makes use of pre-canned responses but also leaves open the door for the other person to request to see your long-form work.

A common mistake is to immediately send along the entire deck or chapter without the other party even acknowledging your request. This is a mistake because they get the email with the 10 page chapter or 15 page deck attached and that raises the perceived cost of adequately responding to the email. They decide to come back to the email “when they get time,” but as busy people, they never get the time. Your email goes unresponded-to.

This email breaks the ice. If you get a positive response to this, you can *then* see if they’d like to go deeper in checking out your book or deck. Don’t start by overwhelming them with too much information. There are few things worse than getting an email from somebody who seems sincere and worth helping and they request you check out a 45-page document first.

4. **Get a specific introduction from mutual friends.**

Have you ever had a friend ask you to do an introduction to somebody else and had to ask yourself, “how the heck do I describe my friend in a way that makes sense for both of these people?” Or have you been asked to do an introduction for somebody and it ends up being so much work figuring out how to do it that you feel like you really had to go out of your way to do the introduction? If you make it hard for them to do, they may put off doing it entirely.

This is exactly what you want to avoid making other people feel when you ask them to do an introduction for you. By asking them to do an introduction, especially to a very busy or important person and especially if they themselves are very busy or important people, you want to make them feel like it was seamless. *This also goes for asking for introductions between people at the same business, i.e., if you need to be handed off from one executive to another.*

Follow this script to make it that any introduction you ask for as easy as copying and pasting.

Script:

Suggested Subject: Intro to [person to whom you want the introduction]?

Hi [Friend's Name],

I [saw/remembered] that you know [Person you to whom you want an introduction]. Would you be willing to introduce me to [him/her]?² [Reason you want the introduction³].

Here's a quick blurb about me you can send along:

[Quick, casual blurb about you.][One-to-two sentences about why you want to speak to that person.]

Let me know if any of that isn't clear or if you need more info from me before you can do the introduction.

Thanks!

[Your Name]

² Make sure you include this question. If you leave it open-ended like, "I was wondering if you could introduce me," you make it easier for that person to deflect your question. Even if the answer is no, you want a reply from them saying why not.

³ **Make this very clear and pointed. You do not want your friend thinking you are going to waste this other person's time. There are few things worse than getting an introduction from a friend and the person being a total time-suck. Smart professionals guard their introductions jealously, too, so you want to make clear they will not regret introducing you.**

Example:***Subject: Intro to Joe Lehman?***

Hi Leon,

I remembered that you know Joe Lehman over at the Mackinac Center. Would you be willing to introduce me to him? I'm developing a new program for reaching out to potential donors for nonprofits and would like to interview a few nonprofit executives and fundraisers. Joe immediately came to my mind.

Here's a blurb you can send along:

Zak develops education and training programs that help professionals accelerate their careers with real-world skills. You may have seen him at one of our events in 2015. He's building a product that will help fundraisers connect to high-value donors and investors. He was hoping he could ask you no more than 30 minutes' worth of questions.⁴

Let me know if any of that isn't clear or if you need more info from me before you can do the introduction.

Thanks!

Zak

⁴ Notice that this isn't overly-formal. You want the recipient to feel like he's being introduced by a friend to an interesting person, not that your friend is introducing a speaker at a conference. If you have specific things you want to communicate in the intro, feel free to include them here.

5. **Get introductions from an acquaintance.**

This is different from the previous script. The previous script is about getting a *specific* introduction from somebody who is an intermediary between somebody you and a specific person you want to know.

This script is for collecting introductions more generally. You can also use this in-person at events and after meetings. I used this technique to grow my professional network from whatever I absorbed from my mentor to thousands of professionals, entrepreneurs, and investors across the world.

The key here is the same as above: make sending the intro as easy as copy-and-paste for the person from whom you're requesting and give them the impression that you won't make them look bad. A good way to do this is to combine it with a follow-up message from a meeting or a call.

I include a second example in this script because it is a ridiculously powerful tool for traditional business networking and for personal growth networking. Script 1 is for a writer who wants to meet potential mentors and advisors. Script 2 is from a new sales executive who is trying to grow his network for his employer.

Script:

Suggested Subject: Per our conversation/meeting/event

Hi [Their Name],

[Sincere, relevant reminder of who you are/context for the email.]

Seeing as [Appeal that communicates your desire to meet some new people relevant to what you are doing], would you be willing to introduce me to 2-3 people who you think would be interested/be able to help me? [What you want to ask them].

Here's a quick blurb about me you can send along to make it easy for you:

[Quick, relevant blurb about you.][Context for why you want the introduction and what you'll do with their time.]

Let me know if that isn't clear or if you need more info from me. I appreciate you taking the time to do this.

Thank you!

[Your Name]

Example 1:

Subject: Per tonight's workshop, help out a fellow writer?

Hi Nick,

It was a pleasure seeing you today at the writing workshop. Congratulations on being published in National Geographic! I'm looking forward to reading your article.⁵

Seeing as I am just getting started in writing professionally and how well-connected you are to writers in the Cincinnati area, would you be willing to introduce me to 2-3 people who were helpful for you when getting started? I want to ask them how they overcame Imposter Syndrome at the beginning.

Here's a quick blurb about me you can send along with the intro:

Monique is an aspiring professional writer just getting started on writing in other outlets. Here's her blog (link). She's been published at (outlet) and writes about the forces behind the real estate scene here in the midwest. She wanted to ask you a few questions about overcoming Imposter Syndrome and I thought you might be a good person to speak to her, given how much you've helped me.

Let me know if that isn't clear or if you need more info from me. I appreciate you taking the time to do this!

Monique

⁵ A little intro paragraph like this gives the person context for who you are and starts out by sincerely complimenting them. If you can't think of a sincere compliment, don't make one up. People see through insincerity quickly and it will backfire on you.

Example 2:***Subject: Per Today's Meeting - Intro to Other Partners?***

Hi John,

Thanks for taking the time to meet with me today. I love what you're doing at Stemmify — I think it will be a fun partnership for our companies.

Seeing as I'm not well-connected in the Seattle startup scene yet, would you be willing to introduce me to 2-3 people for whom a partnership with our business could make sense? I'd like to sit down with them like we sat down earlier today.

Here's a quick blurb about me you can send along with the intro:

Josh is the business development director for Ammplify ([link](#)), a growth marketing company that focuses on building lead funnels and amplifying content creation for med-tech companies. We spoke today and had a good conversation. He's in Seattle until Monday of next week and I thought you might want to talk to him before he heads out of town.⁶

Let me know if that isn't clear or if you need more info from me. I appreciate you taking the time to do this!

Josh

⁶ Note the time-limiting factor here, “[h]e’s in Seattle until Monday of next week...”. This gives some sense of urgency to at least reply to the introduction and get a call on the calendar, even if that doesn’t happen before Josh leaves town.

6. Make an amazing impression in your follow-up email.

The key to an excellent follow up is that it happens within 24 hours of the meeting or call, while your conversation is still fresh in the recipient's mind, and that it covers all of the bases discussed in the meeting, ***including things they mentioned they would do.***

If the call or meeting was lengthy and included a lot of details, a follow-up email should also be lengthy. I regularly send follow-up emails to conversations that are thorough and detailed, linking to resources mentioned, ideas floated, and organizing the email in a way that is easy for the other party to follow. Here's an small excerpt from a follow-up I recently sent to an entrepreneur who wanted feedback on creating more content:

Pleasure speaking this morning. Thanks for filling me in on what you're building.

There's a lot of potential for building out an inbound funnel for both sides of your marketplace through strong content.

Per our call, here are some of my recommendations. **This email is a bit lengthy.** They're really in no particular order. You can start making posts about content interns now.

1. Merge your email lists. If some of those 2250 accounts deleted the app for any reason, you want to be able to follow up with them when you add new content.

2. Make your site CTA email-centric. We'll want to bring in new traffic to your site and find a way to capture them so that you can get them to download the app *once* you have more content on it.

If you or the other party mentioned introductions during your conversation, you can combine this script with the introduction scripts above.

Script:***Suggested Subject: Per Our Call/Meeting***

Hi [Their Name],

Thanks for [meeting/talking on the phone] today. [Sincere compliment about something mentioned during the conversation].

OPTIONAL: I wanted to follow up with some of the resources and notes I mentioned during the call/meeting.

[Notes or resources you mentioned during the call typed out in a digestible format for the recipient].⁷

OPTIONAL: I (also) wanted to follow up on some of the resources/people you mentioned, like [Resource A] and [Resource B]. Could you please send me more info/links on that/those?

Let me know if there's anything I didn't mention here that you'd like more info on or if you have any questions.

Thank you,

[Your Name]

⁷ This is where, if they were contacting you for advice, you should include the advice. For example, I might talk to a young entrepreneur on the phone about doing business development and writing copy for outreach emails. This is where I would send him examples of how I would write emails in his case, how I might re-do some copy on landing pages, or specific people I mentioned during the conversation. I use bolded numbers instead of bullet points, as I find that bullet points tend to get cluttered and overwhelming in email clients. See my example screenshot on the previous page.

7. Get your writing shared by busy people.

One of the best ways to get new traction to your website, blog, or writing in general is to get prominent people whom you reference to share it. Whether these are A-list celebs like Tim Ferriss or just popular Twitter users you follow, you can use this script to increase your chances that they recognize your work and share it.

The key here is, like most of these scripts, to *be sincere*. While most busy and prominent people do have an economic motive for building their platforms, many of them also do it because they enjoy making a positive impact on their readers and listeners. If you show them how they positively influenced you and how you appreciate their work, they're more likely to share your writing (not just because it helps amplify their own work).

The flip-side of this is that if the person you want to share your work is not really relevant to the writing you want them to share, it will be harder to have them share it. If you write about homeschooling and you want a productivity guru to share your piece, you mostly have to rely on their goodwill. But if you write about homeschooling and want a prominent homeschooling blogger to share your writing, link to them and express your gratitude for their work in your email you send them.

Script:***Suggested Subject: [Their Work] Helped Me, Thank You***

Hi [Their Name],

My name is [Your Name] and I'm a longtime reader/fan/listener of your work. [Sincere, tangible compliment about their work and how it has positively impacted your life⁸].

*I actually took some of the ideas you talk about in [content] and wrote about my experience applying them here (**link to your article**). Specifically, I thought [**specific thing about their content**] was particularly helpful.*

You are free to share this with your audience⁹ — I want others to be able to get the positive impact that I got. Regardless of that, though, I wanted to thank you and let you know that your writing/speaking/content made a tangible impact in my life.

*Thank you,
[Your Name]*

⁸ Most content-creators *love* seeing this. It's one thing to have people tweet and reshare your articles. It's another thing to have somebody directly contact you and tell you about how they have been positively impacted by your work. It also makes for great new material!

⁹ Note that this is not directly asking them to do so (which feels transactional) but also gives them permission to share if they want, which means you don't have to do a back-and-forth with them where they ask for permission first and hope they then follow up.

Example:***Subject: Your Writing Inspired Me to Pursue My Dreams***

Hi Ashley,

*My name is Sam and I'm a longtime reader of your blog over on Medium. I've been following you since you first got on the platform in 2015 after coming across a piece of yours published at LifeLearning and I get excited anytime I get a notification that you've published something new. Your experience quitting grad school, traveling the world, **and** building a business at the same time inspired me to quit my deadening-cubicle job and get a job working for a startup I love.¹⁰*

I actually used some of your fear-setting exercises you tweaked from Tim Ferriss and wrote about using them here (link). This was the thing that got me off the edge and helped me start building the life I love today. Thank you for writing about it.

You're free to share my experience using these with your audience — I want others to be able to get the positive impact I got. Regardless of that, though, I wanted to thank you and let you know that you positively impacted me.

Thank you,

Sam

¹⁰ While this is on the lengthy side for an opening paragraph, it reads as if it is from an **actual reader** of the author's and not just some schlub perusing Medium looking for people with big platforms. Trust me, as a writer, I can tell when somebody is just spamming out emails to people with 10,000+ followers and when somebody is an actual reader. The first group doesn't get a reply. The second group does.

8. Get guest published on a blog.

Writing a guest post on other bloggers' sites allows you to drive new traffic to your own company, site, or product without spending money on advertising all while building up your profile around a topic.

The people who own popular blogs get a *ton* of inquiry about guest posts on their blogs and most of it is terrible. Either the pieces are poorly written, poor fits, or they writers did not read the guidelines on guest post submissions. This opens up an opportunity for you — if you send a clear, quick email that communicates you are familiar with the guidelines and shows them publishing your work won't be a mistake, you can land guest posts quickly and painlessly.

Before sending this script, check the specific blog's requirements for guest submissions. Most blogs do not accept republished posts as guest submissions, so you want to send them a Word or Google Doc (again, check their requirements) with an original piece. If the blog is based on Wordpress (viewing the source code should show you this), you should suggest sending along a .txt document to make it easy for them to republish. Most also request that you send along a short bio to be published with the piece.

Script:

Suggested Subject: Guest Submission for [Blog Name]

Hi [Blog Editor's or Owner's Name],

My name is [Your Name] and I [quick credentials¹¹]. I enjoy reading your blog and I wanted to send along a submission for a guest post.

To make this as easy as possible for you, I had three areas I thought would be relevant to your blog:

[POST AREA 1]

[POST AREA 2]

[POST AREA 3]

Let me know which of these interests you and I can send along a .txt document so that you can simply copy and paste it into Wordpress.

Thank you,

[Your Name]

¹¹ These don't have to be fancy. It can be as simple as, "I write on X topic regularly and have a following of Y people."

Example:***Subject: Guest Submission for BecomingWhoYouAre***

Hi Hannah,

My name is Gustavo and I am a writer on personal development through the lens of physical fitness. I enjoy reading your blog — it gives me a different perspective on personal development that I don't get in my circles — and I wanted to send along a few submission for a guest post.

Based on what I've read on your site and what I can write, here are a few suggestions:

- 1. Using sentence completion exercises to build your self-esteem.*
- 2. Using visualization exercises to build your confidence.*
- 3. The common mistakes people make around thinking about self-esteem.*

Let me know which of these piques your interest. I can put together a post and send it along in a Word doc, per your submission guidelines.

Thank you,

Gustavo

9. **Get published on a big publication.**

Getting published on a major outlet usually requires a different approach than being published as a guest blogger. For bloggers, they want to see that your post will help the credibility of their blog and increase their reach. For publications, they want to see that you're already credible. Many have submission forms. For the ones that don't have submission forms, the best approach is to email the editor or somebody on the editorial partnerships team.

Most publications prefer original pieces unless stated otherwise.

In this script, notice that you want to make clear to them that you are an experienced writer that other publications take seriously (if you aren't an experienced writer yet, start by getting published as a guest blogger on blogs larger than your own).

Script:

Suggested Subject: Article Submission for [Outlet]

Hi [Editor's Name],

My name is [Your Name] and I am [Writing credentials¹²].

I wrote a piece that your readers might enjoy that I'd like you to consider publishing at [their publication]. It's tentatively titled [title¹³].

I've attached a Word doc/Here's a link to a Google Docs document.

Let me know if you're interested in publishing it. I can also go ahead and promote the pieces to my own platform [OPTIONAL: tell them the size of your platform¹⁴].

*Thanks for your consideration,
[Your Name]*

¹² Where have you been published? How many followers do you have? Have you been published at other major outlets?

¹³ Some editors will change titles, but letting them know the tentative title is a good way to let them get an idea of the subject matter without having to click through to the piece.

¹⁴ Best to do this only if you have more than 1,000 committed people on your platform, i.e., email list, followers on your blog, Medium, etc.

Example:***Subject: Article Submission for Jezebel***

Hi Lucy,

My name is Sophia and I am published writer on topics related to career development for women re-entering the workforce. My writing has been featured at The Toast, VICE, and Bustle.

I wrote a piece I thought your readers at Jezebel might enjoy and that you might publish. It's tentatively titled, "How These Three Women Went from Teen Moms to Corporate Executives Before 30."

Here's a link to a Google Drive Doc of the article.

Let me know if you're interested in publishing it. I can also promote it to my own email list when it launches — about 2,000 readers interested in women's professional development.

Thank you!

Sophia

10. **Get a job interview, even if they aren't hiring.**

Most people check a company's career page and, if they see the company isn't hiring for something they want to do, stop there. You don't have to stop there. Most companies are interested in bringing on talented people so long as they can show that they will create more value than they extract from the company.

The key to sending a good email soliciting yourself to do work for a company is to communicate that you're on top of the ball, have a sense for what they do, and can learn quickly about their needs.

This script works for everything from pitching yourself to be a freelance consultant to being a contributing writer to getting a chance to do sales for the business.

This one does require some front-loading of work. If you just blast out the same script and the same sample work or proposal to every company, you won't get many replies. If you do some front-loading of work, focus on tuning in details about specific companies, you might send fewer emails overall but you will get a higher positive response rate.

Start by emailing the highest-ranking person in the organization you can find. They will either ignore your email (which you can ping them on repeatedly, see the next script) or they will forward you along to a subordinate. If you're trying to sidestep traditional processes, it's better to focus on outcome-oriented individuals like executives than process-oriented individuals like HR managers.

Script:

Suggested Subject: I want to work for you/[company]!¹⁵

Hi [Their Name],

My name is [Your Name] and I am [your area of expertise or credentials]. I've been following [their company] for a while and love what you do. [Sincere compliment about their company or a specific piece this person has written online].

I noticed [potential opening or gap in the business that you can see based on your personal research¹⁶]. I know you aren't hiring for [whatever role would address that specific problem] but I wanted to pitch myself to you anyway. I created [something that shows you can fill that gap], which I attached here.

In addition to creating collateral like this, I would also get started by [doing X, Y, and Z, all specific examples of work to create value for the company], and would be happy to work on any additional new projects you want to start up.

¹⁵ This is really the only email here where I think the subject line really matters. If somebody sends me, "I want to work for you!" and I am a busy executive whose duties include hiring talented people, that email **must** be opened.

¹⁶ Think to yourself, "what are their pain points? What are the weaknesses that I can see right now?" Chances are these are things they're already aware of but just don't have the resources to cover with current staff. Even if you misfire and it's not actually a pinpoint for them, most businesspeople respect an entrepreneurial person who has the gall to offer some collateral to them without being told what to do.

Is this something that would help you?¹⁷ Regardless of whether or not you have the bandwidth to bring me on, please feel free to use the attached collateral.¹⁸

*Thanks for taking the time to read my email,
[Your Name]*

¹⁷ This is important. “Let me know!” is way too open-ended. I’ve had emails and chains go on much longer than they needed to than if I had just asked the person, “does this interest you?” If they say “yes,” or “maybe,” or at least not “no,” then call their office to get a time on the calendar to speak with them.

¹⁸ This signals good faith and trustworthiness.

Example:

Subject: I want to work for you for free!

Hi Chris,

My name is Matt and I'm an aspiring marketer. I've been following your company for a few years and have enjoyed the content you put out. I know I'm not the only one — your article about bootstrapping a software service company was really inspiring to me. I think way too many people go and raise a ton of money without knowing what they'll do with it. Bootstrapping keeps them scrappy.

I noticed that you guys don't have an email capture on your site. You have a newsletter subscription capture on your blog and an "inquire for more info" button on the main page, but nothing in between that would be good for people who aren't quite ready to inquire but do want to get more info. I went ahead and typed up a PDF download that you can hook up to Mailchimp or CovertKit and let readers download in exchange for their email address. It's a collection of some of your best blog posts.

I'd like to help you capture more leads and segment those into actual prospects and leads to maintain with an email list. I've organically built my own list to over 2,000 subscribers in a year. I'd also be happy to work on any other marketing or content-related projects you want to start.

Is this something that would help you? If not, please feel free to use my attached document anyway.

Matt

11. Reminder to reply if you didn't hear from them.



Most people send an email to a busy or important person and then when they don't immediately hear back, assume the person willfully ignored them.

This is rarely the case. Usually what happens is that the person either didn't see your email at all or saw it, made a mental note to come back to it later when they got the time, and just never got the time. You can minimize the likelihood of that by understanding the incentives of busy people. Sometimes you can't help it, though, and they're just too overwhelmed to reply right now.

Sending a friendly and respectful follow up in a thread is a quick way of letting them know that they have yet to reply to your email and to try to get them at a time when they aren't overwhelmed.

Note: Send this email as a REPLY to your original email. **Do not start a new thread.** If you start a new thread, now that person has to *go find the original email*. Part of what you are doing here is moving the original email to the top of their inbox for their convenience. Use this until they reply or tell you off.

Script:

*Hi **[Their Name]**,*

I just wanted to bring this back to the top of your inbox in case you didn't get a chance to see it yet. Let me know if something isn't clear in the email or if you need more info from me.

Thank you!

[Your Name]

Example:

Hi Luke,

I just wanted to put this at the top of your inbox in case it got buried with the end-of-the-week rush. Let me know if I wasn't clear or if you need more info from me.

Cheers,

Zak

12. Interview a very busy person.

Interviewing other people for your blog, podcast, or article is a great way to not just get on that person's radar but also to amplify your platform through *their* platform. Most people enjoy being interviewed and are happy to do it if they perceive that you are not going to waste their time and that you will make it enjoyable.

As with most platform-oriented asks like blogging and guest-posting, the bigger your own reach, the bigger person you can reach. If this is your first post or interview, you probably won't get Tony Robbins or a sitting senator. You can accelerate your growth up the value-chain with great emails, though.

You can interview people over email and have them type their responses up or you can interview them over Skype, Zoom, or the phone. Whichever one you choose effects how you should frame the script. For that reason, this script is really two scripts, so there are two scripts and examples that follow.

Script:***Suggested Subject: Interview Request for [Media Name]***

Hi [Their Name],

*My name is [Your Name] and I run [Your blog, podcast, website, etc.].
We currently reach [info about your platform or demographics].*

*I'm emailing you because I'd like to interview you for the blog/podcast/website.
[Sincere compliment about their work and why they would be
relevant to your audience].*

FOR AUDIO: *Interviews only take [time] and can be completed at your
leisure from the comfort of your computer. I will send along all the necessary
information before the interview.*

FOR EMAIL: *I'll send along the questions via email and you can reply at your
convenience. If it makes sense, I may ask a few follow-up questions from there.*

OPTIONAL: *I've interviewed [past guest] and [blurb about how
enjoyable and/or valuable the past interview was for the
interviewee¹⁹].*

FOR AUDIO: *I'm happy to record at your convenience, should you accept my
invite.*

¹⁹ This is important. If this person does interviews often or is asked to do interviews often, the chance to be interviewed isn't as important to them as enjoying the interview is. My old mentor Isaac Morehouse landed a number of interviews on his relatively young podcast by promising his interviewees that it would be the most enjoyable interview they've ever done.

Please let me know whether or not you'd like to join me. I'd love to have you on.

[Your Name]

Example for Audio Interview:***Subject: Interview Request for Doers Podcast***

Hi Jason,

My name is Zak and I run a podcast called Doers, where I interview entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and interesting people doing things that other people talk about doing but never do. We're just getting started with the podcast but have a growing audience.

I'd like to have you on the podcast. Although I usually don't interview academics, you are a prolific writer and publisher and the aspiring academics and grad students in my audience would enjoy and benefit from hearing from you.

Interviews usually last no more than 45 minutes and can be completed from the leisure of your home or office. I'll send along more info beforehand.

I'm happy to schedule at your convenience, should you accept my invitation.

Please let me know if this piques your interest. I'd love to have you on.

Zak

Learn the skills to get ahead in your career. Join me at ZakSlayback.com

- **Never miss an opportunity again** because you don't know “the right people.”
- **Build a world-class network**, meet anybody you want, and grow your platform without ever having to go to a “networking event” or making business cards.
- **Consistently create emails that convert**, get you meetings, and help you accelerate your success.
- **Say goodbye to sleazy “networking”** and become somebody to whom others bring opportunities.
- **Learn how to use the skills you already have** to open up new doors for yourself.