



**How to Reach the Unreachable,  
Get the Ungettable, and Dominate Your Inbox**

By Ramit Sethi



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## Welcome

There it is, right in front of you.

The email address of someone who could completely change the course of your life and career. If you could just get that person's attention and make your pitch, a whole new world of opportunity would open for you.

Years of struggle... leap-frogged.

Years of anonymity... avoided.

Years of frustration, busywork, underpayment, headaches... all overcome with one message.

That's a lot riding on one email.

Do you know how to write that email?

I can help.

I've sent millions of emails over the past few years, carefully studying the theory and application of what works. And I've been keeping track so I could share the results with you.

This book includes 50 scripts, with detailed notes on why they work. But first, I'm going to help you eliminate your bad email habits and rebuild positive, effective habits from the ground up.

When we're done, you're going to be able to use email to tap opportunities that seemed out of reach.

You'll know how to penetrate a busy person's inbox and build a relationship, while others will continue to send email after pestering email, never getting a response.

I'll show you winning strategies for meeting CEOs, journalists, and celebrities. I'll show you the best ways to introduce two people, coordinate lunch, and even get your friends to RSVP for social events.

In short, I'll give you the emails I've used to accelerate my career and even how to get more people to attend my parties. And I'll show you how to use them to achieve similar big wins in your life.

## What You Can Expect

If you've dreamed of having a mentor, you'll find specific scripts on how to approach one over email. If you've ever been frustrated that your job applications don't yield responses, you'll get specific scripts on how to get noticed. If you've ever felt frustrated by your colleagues when you are trying to get something accomplished, you'll see specific scripts for moving forward with or without them.

« Bottom line: Your career depends on writing good emails. »  
And they help your social life, too.

Whether it's emailing a group of friends aiming for an RSVP to an event, asking a co-worker out on a date, or delicately wording a "No" reply when someone asks for a favor -- you can get the response you're looking for. Here's a snapshot of some of what you'll be able to do via email by the end of this book:

- Set up calls and meetings with busy people
- Get what you need (when you need it)
- Follow up with (and impress) people you meet
- Break down barriers to communication and success
- Finesse tricky email situations
- Connect with influential bloggers and authors
- Boost your productivity
- Manage social logistics



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## The Problem with Email

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### **The world runs on email.**

Tens of billions of emails are sent every day. Yet most of these emails are poorly written -- and that includes yours.

You may know how to string words together grammatically, but that's different than using classic persuasion techniques to achieve your target goal -- like a response -- especially from busy people.

Ahh...busy people. If approached correctly, they can help you change your career and your social life. Yet most emails to busy people are convoluted, impersonal, and lack a clear call-to-action (CTA). And amidst hundreds of other emails every day, those emails will never generate a response.

**Imagine the inbox of a busy CEO.** He receives 200 emails from his co-workers, investors, and PR people. He fields another 50 emails from his family, friends, and college alumni. And then there are the 30-50 emails from random people -- plus the emails he didn't read the previous day.

Consider your own inbox. Chances are you aren't a CEO or even a particularly busy person and still you receive dozens of pointless emails each day.

So how do you make your email stand out? The initial email you send to a prospective employer, partner, or customer makes a crucial first impression.

Will you be making a positive one?

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## Why I Wrote This Book

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I receive over 600 emails per day. I have to-do lists a mile long, and am so overloaded that I ignore dozens of emails from people who may have great questions but I just can't answer them.

Yet I do respond to the best emails...the ones that stand out.

I know firsthand how powerful great writing can be. I wrote a New York Times bestselling book. I write material read by over 450,000 people a month. I regularly email my list of 150,000+ subscribers. I've won over \$100,000 in scholarship money with my writing. And I trained at Stanford, where one of my mentors, a professor who invented the field of "Persuasive Technology," taught me how to write emails that generate positive responses.

When I look back, my early emails make me cringe with how rambling and demanding they were. So I decided to spend several years learning the art and science of sending powerful emails. (I started with testing emails to friends and professors. It got easier as I grew a list of tens of thousands.) Now, after several years of real-world testing in my personal laboratory, I want to share the results with you.

As part of my other courses, I've shared a few of my email scripts and my students have used them to earn thousands of dollars on the side and land Dream Jobs. But I didn't want to just post them on the blog for anyone.

Truth is, there's more to writing effective, life-changing emails than copying a script. That's why I combined them in this book with never-before-released instruction on how they work. Over the years I have developed some proven email strategies. They are my favorites because they work.

## DON'T SKIP OVER THIS INFO TO GET TO THE SCRIPTS!

Understanding how and why they work is crucial. The scripts are merely examples of how effective emails should be written.

The key is understanding the psychology, so you can write your own powerful emails.

If you study the theory and scripts in this program, I promise you will be thrilled at the results. After a while, my scripts will become mere “training wheels” for you, since you’ll have the deep theoretical knowledge to craft your own winning emails for any scenario.

Let's start by getting inside the mind of a truly busy person.

## Inside the Life and Mind of a Busy Person

We're going to refer to "busy people" throughout this book, so let's be clear up front about who busy people are. As an example, Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo, described her schedule to FORTUNE MAGAZINE:



I use Gmail for my personal e-mail -- 15 to 20 e-mails a day -- but on my work e-mail I get as many as 700 to 800 a day, so I need something really fast...

I'll just sit down and do e-mail for ten to 14 hours straight. I almost always have the radio or my TV on...

I've been trying to figure out how to make time that was previously unproductive productive. If I'm driving my car somewhere, I try to get a call in to my family and friends then. Or during dead time when I'm waiting in line, I will hop on my cell phone and get something done.

My day starts around 9 A.M. and meetings finish up around 8 P.M. After that I stay in the office to do action items and e-mail. I can get by on four to six hours of sleep. I pace myself by taking a week-long vacation every four months.

I have an assistant, Patty, who handles calls from the outside, answers e-mails, letters, and requests. She does a great job with scheduling. In an average week I'm getting scheduled into about 70 meetings, probably ten or 11 hours a day. On Friday, Patty lets me out early -- around 6, and I go up to San Francisco and do something interesting.

From 4 to 5:30 every day that I can, I'll sit at my desk to answer any question that shows up on my doorstep. We have a big sign-up sheet outside. We joke that we should get one of those deli number tickers -- "Now serving No. 68!" But we have nice couches and power for laptops and things outside the door where people wait.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://money.cnn.com/popups/2006/fortune/how\\_i\\_work/content.1.html](http://money.cnn.com/popups/2006/fortune/how_i_work/content.1.html)

What can we learn from this?

1<sup>st</sup>

**First: Busy people are extremely busy.**

Before you email Mayer, or anyone in a similar position, appreciate her busyness. This is something I missed in my earlier days, when I would email a busy person and feel hurt that they didn't reply. Well, why should they? What did I offer that would separate me from the hundreds of other people emailing them that day?

Put another way, Marissa Mayer has a million other people she could be talking to. And because she's so busy and important, she doesn't have to answer your email -- or even read it.

Important people can get away without responding. But – but! – they also have gotten to where they are because they are professional and genuine and kind. Professional people read and respond to inbound communications as much as possible. Marissa Mayer wants to reply to your email, and she will, but only if you make it easy for her to do so and are politely persistent in your follow up.

2<sup>nd</sup>**Second: Busy people want you to understand that they are busy.**

I recently received a long email from someone I didn't know seeking career advice. At the bottom, the sender wrote:

BTW: If you happen to find yourself in the D.C. area sometime and are looking to grab a drink, let me know.

This is a classic mistake. Anyone who's even somewhat high profile is going to know many people in big metro areas like Washington D.C. Why would I be "looking to grab a drink" with someone I don't know? When emailing busy people, you need to show you realize they are busy and have many options. (A better option would be to carefully study the person you want to meet, realize that I love extremely spicy food, suggest 2-3 places, and offer to host me to show me the best Thai red-curry chicken on the East Coast -- which he would know I loved if he'd done his homework. How much more appealing is THAT than simply offering to meet for coffee?)

3<sup>rd</sup>**Third: Busy people are ready to say no.**

It's quicker and easier to say "No." Busy venture capitalist Brad Feld has stated that he says "No" sometimes 50 times in a single day! He's ready to say no. He wants to say no. No, no, no, no. But you want a Yes. I'll show you how.



**Email # 1**  
Commandment

Most emails to busy people should have one simple purpose: To allow the busy person to reply and say, “Yes.” Nothing more.

**4<sup>th</sup> Fourth: Don't let busy people intimidate you.**

It's important not to become overly deferential, or too intimidated to make contact in the first place. The worst they can say is “No.” (See point three above, and don't take it personally!) When my friend Ben was 15 years old, he emailed Marc Benioff, founder & CEO of one of Silicon Valley's hottest start-ups, Salesforce.com, and requested a breakfast meeting. Using strategies like those outlined in this e-book, Ben secured a breakfast, and Marc went on to write the foreword to his book four years later. Anything is possible if executed correctly.

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## Why Most Emails Get Overlooked

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### Example 1: Confused, vague email with no call to action

Rather than telling you why most emails get overlooked or forgotten, I'm going to show you.

Here are several examples of real emails with gaping mistakes. Each email includes an analysis of what's right and what's wrong. I changed names to protect the innocent and to not embarrass the writers.

## Ramit's *feedback*

GOOD INTRODUCTION THAT FLATTERS THE RECIPIENT AND QUICKLY PROVIDES A BIO OF THE SENDER

WHAT A BUSY PERSON THINKS: WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU WANT? WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS EMAIL? WHY DIDN'T YOU RESEARCH THIS ON YOUR OWN BEFORE EMAILING ME? UNCERTAINTY IS FINE – EVEN GOOD – WHEN IT COMES TO CAREER ISSUES, BUT IT'S NOT ATTRACTIVE TO EXPRESS IT IN YOUR FIRST EMAIL.

“SOMETHING LIKE THAT” SOUNDS EXTREMELY VAGUE. WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS PERSON ASKING FOR?

Hey Ben,

My name's Brad Tillson, senior finance major and entrepreneurship minor at Penn State University. Really enjoy your writing (as you can see from the shout out on my young but developing blog, bradtillson59.com)

Anyway, I guess you could say I'm feeling lost at this point in my young career. I've interned at Goldman Sachs the past two summers, and I'm feeling quite confused on what I'd like to do with myself post-graduation. I envision myself in a more creative, people driven career. I have the merits to go back to Wall Street, but I have no idea if that's what I like to do.

It sounds like that retreat you just took was awesome. I'd love to get involved with something like that in the future.

I'd enjoy chatting for a few minutes in the next week or so if you'd be available. For your reference, I've attached my resume.

Thanks,  
Brad

WHY WOULD BEN WANT TO CHAT? WHAT WILL HE GET OUT OF THIS? WHY WOULD BE N CAR E WHAT BRAD WOULD “ENJOY”? THIS WILL BE A WASTE OF TIME.

This is a typical email from a young person who's not sure what to do with his life and is hoping for some personalized advice.

But busy people get emails like this multiple times per day. Why is Ben unlikely to respond to Brad?

-Brad may have read Ben's blog, but has not noted specific insights or references. He mentions the "retreat" but in a vague, unhelpful way.

-Brad says he's confused about his future, but doesn't mention any proactive steps he's taken.

-His email makes him sound tentative and unsure of himself. He says, "I'd like to get involved with something like that in the future." What does that mean? A smart person would have found similar events and gotten involved, then emailed the busy person for advice and connections. Busy people want to help do-ers, not talkers.

-Finally, there's no call to action. You'd like to talk on the phone? When? About what?

It could have been much different.

Brad's email exemplifies a dynamic at work anytime a lower-status person contacts a busy, important person: asymmetric information and false closeness. Brad knows a lot about Ben, the busy person. Ben knows nothing about Brad. Brad feels like he knows Ben and can be loose with his language. To Ben, Brad is a complete stranger randomly emailing him with a stream-of-consciousness email.

Like all interpersonal exchanges, there are clear power dynamics when you email someone: If you want something from them, you are lower-status. This profoundly affects email responses -- but once you learn to understand email power dynamics, your response rates will soar.

Email #2  
Commandment

When emailing, if you want something from someone, you are lower-status.

Example 2: Long-winded email with no point

This email was sent to a blogger by someone who read one of his ebooks online.

BUSY PERSON: WHERE DO I START IN THIS BLOCK OF TEXT? WHY DO YOU START TELLING ME ABOUT YOURSELF IN SENTENCE #2? WHO ARE YOU AND WHY SHOULD I CARE?




Charlie,

A friend sent me a link to your blog today. I've been reading and absorbing as much knowledge as I possibly can on there. It's been a fantastic source of ideas and inspiration. I'm currently a screenwriting major and have been getting the itch to have a script of mine made into a feature film. Your interests and strategies seem to line up with something I've been working on and brainstorming for the past few months. If you have any time, I'd love to get some feedback.

My dilemma, along with all new writers, is barrier to entry. Agents and production companies are inundated with unsolicited screenplays, a vast majority from those who aren't serious about the craft, looking to become an overnight success. The conventional wisdom of Hollywood is that, as a writer, you need to get representation. To get that representation, you must jump through a multitude of hoops, have connections, work your way up from the mail room, etc. Through this representation, he/she may not even care enough about your material to submit it around town. Not exactly the most preferable or direct route.

I'm planning to skirt around the establishment. That sounded a bit hyperbolic. I can explain.

PLEASE DON'T! THIS HAS ALREADY TAKEN TOO MUCH TIME AND I HAVE NO CLUE WHAT THIS HAS TO DO WITH ME.

**Example 2: Long-winded email with no point**

{email continued}

I'm shooting a trailer for the screenplay I've written. We're obtaining free use of an HD camera from a friend of a friend, casting with very talented/undiscovered actors around LA, and spending as little money as college students can afford by hiring professional sound/lighting guys. With the completed trailer, we're utilizing our (limited) connections to YouTube, Funny or Die, or Break to try and have it featured. My director and I also have a mildly popular entertainment blog, so we already have many of the top submitters on Digg/Reddit as well as sites like Gorillamask to help promote the video. We're also planning to design and develop a website for the fictional university from the screenplay. We'll update it with fake news and stories, as well as real updates about the process of getting our film financed, shot, completed and hopefully into theaters.

There are a few reasons for the trailer. One, it's easier for someone to watch a 2 minute clip than spend over an hour reading a screenplay. I've sent the screenplay to a few friends working as assistants at agencies/production companies but getting their boss to read it has been an entire barrier in and of itself. Also, the tone and delivery of comedy is difficult to feel without a practical example. We also think it's a great way for our potential audience/fans to get involved and spread it around. We're really looking to emphasize the last point because we'd love to have a built-in base to keep us motivated as well as to help market through word of mouth.

I took your invitation to email maybe a little too serious, so I apologize for the length. Thanks for your time.

-Kevin

This email is typical of a pointless, wordy email that a busy person would stop reading after the first or second paragraph.

See how he said “I apologize for the length” at the end? That’s a sign you’ve written too much!

Remember: A busy person can get along just fine if they ignore your email.

They won’t lose any sleep over it. It’s your job to convince them to pay attention -- not just stylistically, but with actual substance. Why did Kevin email Charlie? He never makes that clear. It appears he simply wanted to write a brain-dump of his project. 99% of the time, that’s not worth emailing a busy person. (I’ll cover the rare case when it makes sense to email a busy person an update about what you’re working on.) He might have gotten a response if he had actually formulated a specific question for Charlie. Or, even better, if he’d thought of a way to help Charlie.

Beyond strategy, his email *style* needs improvement: Notice how you didn’t even read the entire email? Not only is the email too long, it doesn’t use bullet points or other visual tools to keep a reader’s eye engaged. With an overhaul, Kevin would have gotten Charlie’s attention. Instead, this email was deleted after a quick glance.



## Test Your Email Skills

I love testing. On any given week, I'm running split tests of tens of thousands of emails to my email list. (A split test simply pits one type of email against another to see which produces a winning result.) I study subject lines, lengths, visual styles, and most importantly, positioning and copy. After seeing literally thousands of test results, I'm still surprised -- as is any serious practitioner of testing.

What separates most people vs. people who consistently test emails to find the best result?

Most People: Whip out an email "they think will work" without ever taking the time to systematically study what works and what doesn't.

You: Treat writing emails as a skill. It's something that you can work on and get better at.

You can test emails to see what works by simply emailing enough people and varying your subject lines, content, and general approach. You don't need statistical validity. You just want to get a rough sense of how effective (or ineffective) certain approaches are.

Here are three simple split tests to do right now to get a sense of how strong your email skills are. These will establish a baseline against which you can compare your new skills.

- Email someone busy who you respect and ask to have lunch with him.
- Email five of your friends and ask for feedback on something you've written.
- Email five of your friends and try to set up an event this weekend (movie, dinner, etc). Save these emails and track the following things:

Did you get a response from all recipients?	
How long did it take?	
# of back-and-forth emails until resolution	

Email conversion rate is (# of people who take a target action / Total # of people you email). So if you emailed 10 people to come to your party, and 4 attended, that's a 40% conversion rate. Now that you have a baseline, you'll be able to test emails to drive that number higher.

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## **7 Essential Strategies for Writing Emails That Get Responses**

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Here are a few powerful email strategies that you need to use if you want responses:

- 1.The 5-Minute Straight-jacket Technique
- 2.Hack the Person's Mind
- 3.The Ramit 1-2 Punch
- 4.The UNODIR Strategy
- 5.Strategic Updates
- 6.Power Dynamics and the Wide/Narrow Formula
- 7.Social Proof

I'll show you what they are and how to deploy the ones that are appropriate to your message. From now on, every time you email someone, you'll have these tools in your "email quiver" to selectively use.

## 1 The 5-Minute Straitjacket Technique

Before you touch your keyboard, I like to use the 5-Minute Straitjacket Technique, which means I turn off my phone, close my laptop, and think about the person I'm trying to influence. Ask yourself:

- Why am I emailing this person? Do I have a short-term, transactional issue or am I looking to build a long-term relationship?
- What does this person I am emailing want? More success with his business? Help creating videos for his blog? Or opportunities to mentor young people?
- Is this the right person for me to be contacting, given my goals?
- Is now the right time to send this email?
- How will I know if this email is a success?

Unfortunately, too many people simply jump into an email by brain-dumping whatever's on their mind. STOP DOING THAT! This person is not your therapist or diary. In fact, it's intellectually lazy to simply vomit what's on your mind into an email. Show the busy person respect by carefully thinking about THEM and THEIR GOALS before writing yours down.

And when you do -- when you take a few quiet minutes to think strategically -- you can dramatically increase your response rate.

**USE THIS WITH:** People you just meet; people you casually know; people you don't know at all but aspire to get something from.

**DO NOT USE THIS WITH:** People you intimately know (close friends, contacts) as you don't always have to have a goal with them.

## 2 Hack the Person's Mind

My friend Charlie Hoehn coined the phrase “hacking someone’s mind,” but master communicators have been doing this for generations. Here is Charlie describing, in depth, how he managed to engage -- and get hired by -- extremely busy people.

Watch the video here: <http://charliehoehn.com/2009/01/08/how-to-hack-someones-mind/>

It's simple: Do your homework! Learn everything you can about the person you're contacting. The more you know about the person, the more personal your communication can be, and the greater the likelihood of a positive response. At the minimum, to research a person you should:

- Read their blog archives
- Read their Twitter account
- Do a Google search on their name and company
- Do a Google News search on their name and company
- Do an IceRocket.com blog search on their name and company
- Read their online bookmarks (e.g. delicious.com)
- Visit their company web site, especially the About Us section
- Check their LinkedIn profile
- Check their Facebook profile

Also, don't forget to get their email address. It's usually somewhere online, especially on personal web pages or blogs.

Sound like a lot of work? It is!

This is what separates email winners and losers. By the end of your research, you should try to have a handle on as many of the following points as possible, especially if you're trying to build a long-term relationship:

- His career background and trajectory.
- The details of his job day-to-day as much as possible.
- His personal interests: what she reads, what she does on the weekends, her favorite books, articles, movies, and other cultural tastes.
- His relationship status. (Someone who is married with kids thinks about her life/time much differently than someone who is single.)
- Mutual friends you may have. (Via Facebook and LinkedIn.)

Yes, it takes some time. But the people who invest the time hacking minds consistently get access to top-quality people. Acquiring this information beforehand is important for a few reasons:

First, it makes it more likely that you'll be able to build rapport with the person when you communicate with him. For example, if through your research you discovered he competed in the Olympics as a ping-pong player, when she casually mentions his interest in ping-pong, you can make the connection and probe deeper.

Second, when you're informed, you won't ask basic, dumb questions. For busy people, this is one of their top annoyances: having to address a question that they have already addressed elsewhere. How many times do you think I've been asked, "What should I do with my money?" Too many times. Way too many.

Most importantly, once you've hacked the busy person's mind, you're more likely to know what will catch his attention, what you can offer him, or what he is responsive to.

**USE THIS WITH:** Anyone new you're meeting: Research him, figure out his motivations or frustrations, how you can solve them and fold that into your request

**DO NOT USE THIS WITH:** People you intimately know (close friends, contacts) as you already know what they want

Email #3  
Commandment

Before you ask a busy person a question, make sure they haven't answered it elsewhere.

### 3 The Ramit 1-2 Punch

Here's a counter-intuitive technique I discovered to get email responses from busy people. Use this when you have a complex subject to address via email. A few years ago, I wanted to get help on a book proposal I had written. I decided to email eight of my mentors/advisors/experienced-author friends and ask them to evaluate my book proposal. Even though it was a lot of work -- about 40 pages to review -- these were close friends, so I was confident they would be willing to help.. I put together a highly tactical email -- complete with headlines, dates, detailed descriptions, and the attachment -- and sat back to await the feedback. Three days later, I'd gotten terrible results. Here's what the well-intentioned but poor-performing email looked like:



EACH EMAIL WAS SENT INDIVIDUALLY TO REDUCE DIFFUSION OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ENCOURAGE RESPONSES.

From: Ramit

To: Mike

Subject: Review my book proposal -- by Friday, February 2nd?

Hi Mike,

I want to ask for a favor. I recently got invited to submit a book proposal from 3 major New York publishers for my book on college recruiting, and I'd love to get your thoughts on the book proposal. I know you've been through this before so I'd REALLY love your feedback. Here are the details.

#### **The project**

Along with two friends from MIT, we're putting together a book teaching companies how to recruit ambitious college students. This book will feature case studies on best practices for recruiting top college students (highlighting top companies like McKinsey and also lesser-known companies who nab the best), a step-by-step plan for reaching the best without busting the bank.

#### **What I'm looking for**

-Your feedback on the book proposal: It's currently 35 pages. We've included a detailed outline, marketing plan, competitive analysis, and sample chapter. What do you think are the biggest weaknesses? Where can we improve it? Because this is our first book proposal, I'm sure there are a lot of weaknesses.

-We've developed the sample chapter about 70% of the way, but I wonder if you think it's better to submit as-is or spend an extra two weeks to complete it?

-Blue-sky: Are there any suggestions you'd make to turn this into a killer proposal?



What a beautiful email! It even has headers!  
Bold fonts! Wow!

I was shocked when I was ignored by eight close mentors and advisors, and I received zero responses. Zero! I thought these people liked me.

Well, if one person doesn't respond, I just acknowledge that they're busy. When eight people don't reply, I know I did something wrong.

So what was going on in the minds of my readers?

What a busy person thinks:

"Oh god, this is going to take a lot of time. I'll do it later (marks as unread)."

My readers subconsciously responded to several problems with this email:



{email continued}

**Attachments**

- The book proposal ("Book Proposal.doc") is attached
- A supplementary guide with FAQs on the book guide

**Deadline**

The deadline is 3 weeks away, on Friday, February 2nd.

If you have any questions, please let me know by email or phone (415-555-5555) any time.

Is this OK?

Thanks,

-Ramit

- Despite its organization, it is way too long
- It asks multiple questions. Ideally, an email like this should contain ONE CTA (call-to-action). If multiple questions are necessary, they should focus on one CTA.
- The date is far enough in advance that it's easier to shelve this -- and forget about it -- than to trigger a response

There are a couple redeeming characteristics of the email – organized section headers and sending a personal copy to each person. Remember, though, ultimately, it doesn't matter what you think. What matters are results. After waiting a week and planning a new approach, I sent out a new email to the same group of people.

The compliance rate (or percentage of people who responded) soared to nearly 90%. And every person who responded to the first email responded to the second, more detailed, email. That is an astonishing difference in response rates.

I modestly call this the “**Ramit 1-2 Punch.**”



From: Ramit  
To: Mike  
Subject: Quick question

Hi Mike,

I'm working on a book proposal and wanted to see if I could get your feedback. Can I send it your way (I'll include a few specific questions I'm looking for your thoughts on)?

Thanks,

-Ramit

When sending a complex email, always send an icebreaker email to encourage commitment. Once someone responds to the first (and extremely short) email, they are dramatically more likely to respond to the complex follow-up email. Some caveats:

-Use this technique carefully. You don't want to get the reputation of someone who always sends a short email, then follows up with a 10-page email that requires 3 hours to answer. If you constantly have emails that require complex responses, you may want to use another medium besides email.

-Reduce the number of questions in your email. If I were to rewrite that email today, I would include fewer questions in the body of the email. If I absolutely had to get multiple questions answered, I would move them inside the document, or perhaps ask them in a new, separate email.

## TEST THIS!

Some people are skeptical of the Ramit 1-2 Punch. Others see immediate value. Don't take my word for it. The best way to see if this works -- or not -- is to test it. Here's how: Think of a complex email that you'd like a response to (e.g., "Can you give me feedback on this website?" or "Can you fill out a survey for me?"). Split-test 10 people in 2 groups. The first, "complex" group, will receive a highly detailed email where you ask them to take action. The second, "1-2 Punch" group, will get a simple 2-3 sentence email, with a follow-up if they indicate they're interested. Measure the response rates. I'm willing to bet you'll be surprised.

## The UNODIR Strategy 4

Tired of bureaucracy? Use the UNODIR Strategy to get something done at work.

Like many people, I've often wanted to bang my head on my desk while trying to get something done at work. That's because everyone believes they need to have a say in something, leading to too many worthless opinions stopping projects from going anywhere. When you really need to get something done and you're tired of waiting for everyone to weigh in, that's when you want to apply the UNODIR Strategy.

**But be warned:** You can get in trouble for this, so be sure you know what you're doing. As with many innovative acronyms, this one comes from the military.

Use this only when you (1) know you're right and (2) need to keep a project moving forward regardless of your co-workers' multiple opinions.

Here's an example of the type of stalled emails you see at work all the time:

To: John, Jed, Carrie, Mike, Nicole

Hi guys,

Do you think we can launch the new FAQ tomorrow at 11am? I'm eager to get this out...

-Ramit

This email opens the door for delays and inaction by inviting responses like, "Have you confirmed that marketing is included appropriately?" and "Is the EOS check done with engineering?" Ugh!

"UNODIR, or "UNless Otherwise DIRected" is a military acronym used to describe the practice of not checking with the officers in command whether it is acceptable to do what you want to do. Instead, you simply file a report outlining what you'll do and drop it into the bureaucratic apparatus, stamped UNODIR. The nature of red tape is such that there is almost no chance of anyone seeing your report until it is way too late."

-- <http://everything2.com/title/UNODIR>

Here's a revised email using the UNODIR strategy:

## Ramit's *feedback*

NOTICE HOW THIS EMAIL DOES NOT END WITH A QUESTION MARK...BECAUSE YOU REALLY DON'T WANT AN ANSWER. ALSO NOTICE HOW I EMPHASIZE "STRONG," WHICH WILL MAKE ANYONE THINK TWICE ABOUT RESPONDING WITH A MINOR COMPLAINT. FINALLY NOTICE THE INTENTIONALLY BLAND SUBJECT LINE.

If you use this strategy, just be sure you're right. Even though you gave your coworkers a heads up, if you jumped the gun, you'll be held responsible, especially since you documented it. (Then again... you never get ahead without taking risks.)

From: Ramit  
To: John, Jed, Carrie, Mike, Nicole  
Subject: FAQ

Hi guys,

Unless there's a **STRONG** reason not to launch, I'll be launching the new FAQ tomorrow at 11am. We've added the last files, checked the links to ensure they're working, and **we're ready to go.**

Thanks,

-Ramit

## 5 Strategic Updates

How do you build upon a successful meeting and email exchange? By staying in touch, of course. This is one of the most challenging -- and important -- strategies of all. You want to keep the lines of communication open.

A good rule of thumb is to send quarterly updates by email. You also want to meet in person or talk on the phone as frequently as seems possible. Of course you need to keep in mind that this is a busy person and he might not want a new BFF. Only contact him as often as he seems receptive to and cater your updates to his preferred style. Email? Blog posts? Figure out what works for him. Make it about HIM. Some great opportunities to check in are when you see his name in the news, or read an article he wrote or was quoted in, or you read an article about a competitor that you thought he should know about. It's very unimpressive to send a blank note saying "Hey -- what's new with you?"

In general, send relevant notes from your meeting, interesting industry stuff you came across, notes from conversations you had that would be interesting to him...anything that shows you're thinking about him and offering him valuable information. If you're not looking for a reply, say so. If your update is purely informational, include the words "No reply necessary" up near the top. Later in this guide, you'll find examples of real newsletters and email updates.

**USE THIS WITH:** Everyone you're interested in having a relationship with, no matter how small. For the seemingly unimportant, include them on an automated newsletter update list.

**DO NOT USE THIS WITH:** For someone who's clearly expressed that they're not interested in working with you (this is extremely rare)

#### Email #4 Commandment

Most people stay in touch too little, not too much. Busy people get a lot of email. The marginal cost of each additional email is minimal. When in doubt, send it. But make it good!

## 6 Power Dynamics and the Wide/Narrow Formula

Congratulations! You got a “Yes.” But it’s not over yet. Just because a busy person has agreed to meet with you doesn’t mean it will happen. Especially since it’s so easy to drop the ball during the scheduling process. Screwing up the logistics process is a prime example of what I call the “Failure of the Last Mile.”

The quintessential example of last-mile failure is when a person spends hundreds of hours planning an event, thousands of dollars on catering and chairs and speakers...and then forgets to send an email the day before reminding the attendees to actually show up. The event is a flop because the event planner missed that very last step, the “last mile.” So let’s make sure that doesn’t happen when scheduling the meeting:

- Respect the power dynamic. You reached out to him. You are asking for his time. That means you should proactively offer to meet him at his location of choice and at a convenient time. To suggest a coffee shop near your office can seem aloof and even arrogant.
- Work around the busy person. Use their time zone (don’t make them think). Explicitly offer to work around their schedule because they are busier. And acknowledge how many emails they probably get, so you’d be honored to get even 10 minutes of their time.
- Wide/Narrow Formula. Be explicit that you can work around his schedule and meet any time -- but help him decide by suggesting specific times. For example, you might say, “I’m totally free on Monday and can accommodate your schedule. How does 3 PM work?” This technique works for content, too. For example “I’d love to talk about all of those things, but I think you’d particularly enjoy hearing about my trip to China.”

Your goal is to minimize the back-and-forth of emails!

**USE THIS WITH:** Anytime you’re trying to schedule a meeting with someone who’s agreed to meet you.



## 7 Social Proof

I've saved the most powerful technique for last: The best way to break through a busy person's inbox is to get introduced through a trusted referral.

I cannot emphasize this enough: Getting an introduction from someone trusted by the busy person dramatically increases your odds of a positive response. For example, using a subject line of "Mike suggested I get in touch" virtually guarantees a response from a busy person. This is because:

- Busy people use their social network as a filter for credibility ("If my friend Mike recommends him, they're probably good")

- As a courtesy, busy people will generally accept a small meeting or phone call if one of their contacts suggests him, even if they immediately know there's no interest. ("Well, I'll meet this guy as a courtesy to Mike since he's helped me out in the past. It can't hurt for five or ten minutes.")

### HOW A BUSY VENTURE CAPITALIST VIEWS REFERRALS

"While we accept business plan submissions from everyone, we've found that the most effective introduction is from someone who knows you and knows us. We place a much higher priority on deals that are referred/endorsed by people we know and trust. That includes people employed by existing First Round Capital portfolio companies, lawyers, accountants, entrepreneurs, bankers and recruiters. We also are big fans of LinkedIn – if you use LinkedIn, please feel free to reach out to us through your network."  
<http://www.firstround.com/contact/>



Here's how to leverage a shared, trusted connection:

First, ask your friend for the best way to contact your target. Does she prefer email? (Probably.) Is there a particular time that works best? Is she on vacation for the next two weeks? Ask your friend for any suggestions.

Next, if you're comfortable, ask whether your friend would mind making an introduction, or if he'd allow you to use his name in your initial email ("Mike suggested I get in touch"). You'll have to explain why you're interested in contacting the target person. Don't be disappointed if your friend declines to introduce you -- I've done the same when my friend asked me to introduce him to a Very Busy Person and I knew it would be a waste of time.

Finally, if the email is extremely important (e.g., getting admission to a graduate program via a professor's recommendation), use a technique I learned from one of my mentors at Stanford: Ask your friend to send an unsolicited, short email to the target singing your praises. For example:

"I heard Ben is applying to your company as a designer. Just wanted to let you know that he's terrific -- great design skills, but more importantly, he's superb at communication. Let me know if I can answer any other questions.

-Ramit"

I've done this and helped secure positions for many people at many companies. It is a powerful technique.

Note: don't overdo your requests to your own contacts to send emails like this (and when you do ask them, always pre-write the email so they can edit it as desired).

Key point: When contacting a busy person -- especially an extremely busy person like venture capitalists or celebrities -- using common, trusted connections is virtually the only way to guarantee a response.

**USE THIS WITH:** For extremely busy people when you have a CLOSE contact with one of their CLOSE contacts.

**DO NOT USE THIS WITH:** If you don't have a CLOSE contact with both of you. Also, don't use this more than once with the same person.



## Nuts & Bolts: An Email Style Guide

The above strategies will help you design emails that have the best chance of being read and responded to. These style guidelines will help you actually write them.

Much of this seems commonsense, but in my experience of reading tens of thousands of emails, these guidelines are frequently ignored. Just getting these right can set you apart from the unwashed masses.

### 1. Write a compelling subject line

The subject line is the first, and sometimes the only, thing people read. And it's your best shot at standing out from all the other emails clogging up the inbox.

**Here are some terrible subject lines:**

Greetings  
-Hello  
-A question  
-Coffee?  
-Hi  
-Excited to email...  
-Help!

**Here are some excellent subject lines:**

- I'm going to be in town next Tues – are you available?
- Greetings from a blog reader and fan; question about ING Direct
- All you need to know about Philadelphia (and a small question)
- Hello from SF-based aspiring pet entrepreneur

That's right. Take up the whole subject line.

Perhaps even ask a question. You want to set the right tone by being clear and direct in your subject line. MailChimp, an email marketing company, has done various studies on what makes an effective subject line (in terms of the percentage of respondents who actually open the email). Here's what they say:

So what's our advice for email subject lines? This is going to sound "stupid simple" to a lot of people, but here goes: Your subject line should (drum roll please): Describe the subject of your email. Yep, that's it...

When it comes to email marketing, the best subject lines tell what's inside, and the worst subject lines sell what's inside.

## 2. The opening and close

The friendliest way to open an email is “Hi [name of recipient],”. A more casual but sometimes acceptable approach is “Hey [name of recipient],”. Don’t use “Dear [Mr. or Ms. Name of recipient]. This is too formal for most emails.

Don’t close emails with “Regards.” Too generic. Or “Cordially.” It’s too cold. A better option is “Thank you.” Or even “Thanks.”

## 3. Tone of voice

A mistake younger people often make is they are too formal in tone. You should tailor your tone to the type of business or corporate culture of the person you are contacting. Banking/New York=more formal, Internet start-up/SF=more casual. In most cases, the tone of your professional emails should be precise and serious, but also casually confident. Confidence: “I look forward to hearing from you soon!” (vs. “I hope to hear from you soon.”) Friendliness: “Hi Dave,” (vs. “Dear Dave,”). “How was your vacation?” (vs. I trust you are well.)

Certain words or sentence constructions can affect tone. The phrase “I would be happy to do X” implies that you are doing the other person a favor, or at the least you are implying you are gracious enough to be happy to comply with their request. If you are the lower-status person, never tell the other person you “would be happy to meet.”

## 4. Formatting

Bad formatting can scuttle even the most helpful, interesting email. Use paragraph breaks and bullet points liberally to make your email easy to read.

Also, send it in plain text rather than HTML so it can be easily read on a mobile device. For VIP emails, I like to send myself a test to make sure it's readable and any URLs are clickable.

## 5. Use correct grammar and spelling

Lazy typos signal laziness.

Use proper punctuation and capitalization. Don't use lower case "i"'s or texting abbreviations. An email should be more polished than a text message. Always proofread your email. Let the reader focus on your well-crafted message, not the fact that you still do not know the difference between "its" and "it's."

You would think I wouldn't need to say this, but I do.

## 6. Be PC

If you don't know a person, you shouldn't make unnecessary religious or political or racial references. Even ending an email "God Bless" can offend. Keep your emails professional.

## 7. Write well

Use active, not passive voice. (Instead of "Your feedback would be appreciated," say, "I would like your feedback.")

Sound like a human being. The easiest way to do this is to write like you talk. If you read your email out loud and find it awkward, that's a good sign you're writing too formally.

### Email #5 Commandment

Proofread your email. Sloppy writing can destroy an otherwise perfect email.



## When It's Time to Hit Send

You wouldn't believe how many people email complex questions to a busy person on a Friday afternoon. Why? Why would you send something requiring lots of work to someone on their way out for a weekend?

The answer: "Oh...I didn't think about that."

If you don't think about the busy person, you lose. To maximize your chance of receiving a response, email a busy person when they're most likely to read and process it.

-Do NOT email a busy person on Monday morning

-Do NOT email a busy person on their birthday (unless it's a simple happy birthday message)

Instead, think when they're most receptive. Maybe at lunch? Maybe Sunday night when they're prepping for their week?

In general, I like to email out Monday afternoon or Tuesday mornings. You avoid the Monday-morning weekend purge, and give your contact a few business days to get to your email and reply. Plus, you may be able to complete a great back-and-forth volley that same week.

I recommend you don't email a busy person via Facebook Messages or any other social network (unless that's what they've publicly stated they prefer). Track down their real email address. Only resort to a different messaging system if you don't get a reply.

## « THE RISK WITH GROUP EMAILS »»

There's a term in psychology called "diffusion of responsibility." It refers to group situations where responsibility is not explicitly assigned and therefore nobody does the thing that must be done. Everyone thinks, "Someone else will deal with it." This is the force at work when you send emails to multiple recipients. If you email five people at once with a question, "What do you think about the attached document?" the chances of receiving a reply are significantly less than if you email each person individually. Do group emails if you want to efficiently convey information to many people. Do not do group emails if you want a response from each person.

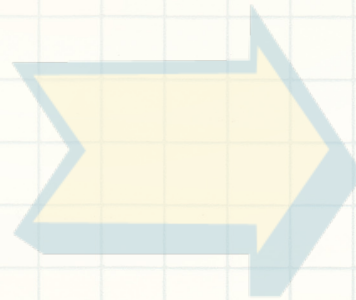
You now have a toolkit of strategies to use for various email situations. Be selective and test what works in various situations. With time and experience, these tools will become intuitive and extremely effective when emailing busy people. Now, let's get to the proven email scripts!

Whenever you try to set up a call with someone, always propose meeting times in THEIR time zone, and then parenthetically note your local time to eliminate possible confusion. If they're on the East coast, say "3:00 PM Eastern (12 noon pacific)." Believe it or not, the small barrier of having to convert time zones is often enough for a busy person to say, "Ugh, I'll do this later" and never come back to your email.

Email #6  
Commandment

Always convert times to the busy person's time zone.

Now let's go to the scripts



## **Set Up Calls and Meetings with Busy People**

### How to set up a phone call

Talking to a busy person on the phone can be the best way to establish a relationship. And once you know them, you can use phone calls take your relationship to the next level. But calling out of the blue just isn't an option. You need to schedule your call in advance.

This is trickier than you might think. We know people who've tried to schedule a call with a busy person, and after repeated back-and-forth scheduling emails, the busy person simply gave up and said, "Sorry, I just don't have time." Your goal is to minimize the back and forth and make it easy for the busy person to find time to talk to you.

Here are a few parameters to keep in mind:

You (the lower-status person who wants to talk to the busy person) should initiate the call, but provide your phone number in case they want to speak to you right now.

By the way, don't get offended by my use of the phrase "lower-status."

Let's be candid: If you want something from someone else, in this situation you are lower-status. Whether it's less famous, less wealthy, less successful, less important, or less busy, that's just the way it is. Remember, YOU want something from THEM. It's important to recognize this and work around the busy person's schedule. That means: Don't ask them to call you, don't ask them to work around your schedule, don't make them come up with a bunch of times that work...don't make them think!

## Ramit's *feedback*

QUICKLY INTRODUCE YOUR REFERRAL -- IF YOU HAVE ONE -- AND YOUR AFFILIATION.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS EMAIL, THE PITCH IS IRRELEVANT. THE POINT OF THIS EMAIL IS COORDINATING THE PHONE CALL, WHICH I OUTLINE IN THE NEXT SECTION.

ALWAYS SPECIFY A SHORT TIME PERIOD. A BUSY PERSON IS LESS LIKELY TO OBJECT TO A MINIMAL TIME COMMITMENT TO A TOTAL STRANGER.

I LIKE 3 CHOICES, AND I TRY TO PROVIDE ONE ALL-DAY OPTION, AS WELL AS TWO NARROWLY DEFINED TIMES. THE "AFTER 1PM" SUGGESTIONS HELP BUSY PEOPLE COPE WITH THE PARADOX OF CHOICE

YOU ARE EXPLICITLY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THEY ARE HIGHER-STATUS AND POLITELY OFFERING TO HONOR THEIR SCHEDULE. GOOD.

To: Jack Desmond, CEO  
From: Jennifer Clark  
Subject: Kevin Wu suggested we get in touch -- UC San Diego CS student

Hi Jack,

Kevin Wu recommended I reach out to you. My name is Jennifer Clark and I'm a UC San Diego computer-science student.

I read about your firm's push into clean-tech solutions. At UC-San Diego, we've begun some interesting research here on the topic, and I think there could be a great collaboration.

Do you have time for a 10-minute phone call? If so, would any of these times work?

- \* This Wednesday (8/10) all day
- \* Thursday (8/11) any time after 1pm PST [IF THEIR TIME ZONE IS PST, YOU PUT YOUR TIMES IN PST]
- \* Friday (8/12) any time after 1pm PST

If those don't work, just let me know -- I can work around your schedule.

I can call your office line. Or if you'd prefer, my phone number is (555) 555-5555.

Thanks,

-Jennifer

GIVE THE BUSY PERSON THE OPTION OF WHAT TO DO. SOMETIMES, BUSY PEOPLE WILL JUST CALL YOU RIGHT WHEN THEY RECEIVE THE EMAIL IF THEY HAVE A FEW MINUTES

What a busy person thinks: Ok, this person (1) came from a trusted source, (2) has a credible affiliation, and (3) seems like she's worth talking to. Oh, wow, she already suggested some times -- all I have to do is reply with a choice. Done.

**Possible reply #1**

To: Jennifer Clark  
From: Jack Desmond, CEO  
Subject: Re: Kevin Wu suggested we get in touch -- UC San Diego CS student

Jennifer,

Good to meet you. Yes, let's chat on Wednesday at 2pm. Please call my office line.

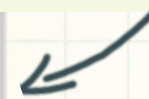
Thanks,

-Jack

BEST CASE. WONDERFUL. IMMEDIATELY REPLY WITH THIS:

“Great, I’ll talk to you this Wednesday (8/10) at 2pm Pacific.”

ALWAYS CLARIFY THE DATE/TIME ZONE.



**Possible reply #2**

Jennifer,

Would be great to chat, but this week is swamped. How about next week?

Jack

BE VERY CAREFUL HERE. IF YOU RESPOND WITH A COMPLICATED SET OF TIMES THAT WORK, THE BUSY PERSON WILL LIKELY JUST IGNORE YOU AND DROP THE MEETING. REPLY WITH THIS:

“That sounds great. I’m open all day Monday (8/15), Tuesday, or Wednesday after 11am Pacific. What works for you? (If it helps, I can coordinate with your assistant if you CC them.”

NOTICE HOW YOU PROVIDE ANOTHER SPECIFIC WAY TO MAKE COORDINATING THIS EASY FOR THEM.





## Important things to remember when setting up a phone call:

If the meeting is more than one week away, always send a confirmation email before the call. If it's in the morning, send it a confirmation email on the prior afternoon. If your call is in the afternoon, send a confirmation email the morning of the call.

-In your confirmation emails, reply to the last email thread between you two and use the UNODIR strategy : “Hi Jack, looking forward to our call tomorrow. I’ll call you at 10am PST at (650) 555-5555. If there are any changes, please let me know. Otherwise, I’ll talk to you at 10am PST this Tuesday!”  
(INCLUDE YOUR PHONE NUMBER IN YOUR SIGNATURE).

-Remember, you want something from THEM. Honor their time and status by working around their schedule. Be explicit about this in your emails: “I know you’re busy, so I can work around your schedule”

-Again, use THEIR time zone.



## How to set up a casual meeting and dramatically minimize back and forth emails

TRY TO MAKE IT AN ACTIVE QUESTION, EVEN IF GRAMMATICALLY INCORRECT

To: Michelle  
From: Ramit  
Subject: UCSD soph will be in NYC next week -- coffee?

Hi Michelle,

My name is Ramit Sethi and I'm a sophomore at UCSD, where I'm studying technology and psychology. I'll be in New York next week and was wondering -- can I take you to coffee?

Sam Jones and Josephina Young actually suggested I get in touch. I've been working on a persuasive-technology project that might be interesting for your work at Acme Corp.

How does next Thursday, 7/8 or Friday, 7/9 work? I'm free all day, especially the afternoon, and I can meet wherever is convenient for you.

Thanks,

-Ramit  
My cell: (555) 555-5555

USING THE WIDE/NARROW TECHNIQUE HERE

USE REFERENCES AND SPECIFICS WHENEVER POSSIBLE]

**Possible reply:**

Hi Ramit,

Sure, I'd love to meet. Let's do Tiramisu Cafe on Park Ave on Thursday at 12:30pm.

Thanks, Michelle

## How to confirm a phone call with a person (and impress him or her before even picking up the phone)

You've gotten a commitment from a busy person for a few precious minutes of his time. Good. Make the most of those minutes by setting an agenda and impressing him before you even pick up the phone.

In this email, you reply to the last confirmation email with additional information that the recipient will find interesting and give him a better idea of what to expect, especially if it was set up following a cold call.

Hi Jack, looking forward to our call tomorrow. I'll call you at 10am PST at (650) 555-5555. If there are any changes, please let me know. Otherwise, I'll talk to you at 10am PST this Tuesday!

Also, if you have a chance to look beforehand, I've prepared two short agenda items:

\* Overall framework for optimizing your on-page SEO. Understand goals, do iterative keyword research, implement quick wins, and re-test.

\* 3 items that will improve your business. Blogging, customer outreach via support, and case studies of successful users.

Talk to you this Tuesday at 10am.

-Ramit

INCLUDES ATTRACTIVE KEYWORDS THAT WILL  
SERVE YOUR PURPOSE EVEN IF NOT CLICKED

With this email, you've confirmed your meeting and added two items that will knock your recipient's socks off. Even if he doesn't read them (chances are, he won't), when you get on the call, you can refer to them and he'll be impressed that you took the initiative to set up some context for the meeting.

Note that in the above example, the underlined items link to a more comprehensive explanation, which should be lengthier but not TOO lengthy -- you don't want to sell something before hearing what the other person really wants.

## How to use a pre-meeting update to impress any senior executive

Use a variation of the above script and send a pre-meeting email if you've scheduled an in-person meeting more than a week beforehand, or you're not sure about the exact agenda of the meeting. The busy person will think highly of you and appreciate that you've made it easy for him to be prepared.

1-LINE DESCRIPTION CONFIRMING YOUR MEETING, SENT 24 HOURS BEFORE. SINCE IT'S GOING TO BE THE NEXT DAY, YOU CAN SAY "TOMORROW" BECAUSE IT'S EASIER THAN GIVING THE DATE, BUT ALWAYS BE SUPER CLEAR BY NAMING THE DAY AFTER THE TEMPORAL REFERENCE (E.G. "TOMORROW" OR "THIS AFTERNOON".)

IF THE AGENDA IS SHORT—LIKE 3 LINES—YOU CAN INCLUDE IT IN THE EMAIL TEXT

From: Ramit  
To: Jack  
Re: Coffee

THIS SUBJECT LINE INDICATES I SIMPLY REPLIED TO OUR ORIGINAL INTRODUCTORY EMAIL

Hi Jack,

I'm looking forward to seeing you tomorrow (Wednesday) at 9am at your offices.

Just a couple things you may want to review beforehand:

\* I'm attaching an agenda for tomorrow's discussion.

\* I've written about attitudinal and behavioral change using technology here:

<http://www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com>

\* Here are some of my bookmarks on psychology: <http://delicious.com/ramitsethi/psychology>

Looking forward to chatting!

Thanks,

-Ramit  
(555) 555-5555

THESE LINKS CAN STRUCTURE THE CONVERSATION AND HELP YOU LOOK ORGANIZED BEFORE YOU EVER STEP IN THE DOOR. 99% OF PEOPLE WILL NEVER DO THIS.

## How to email someone before you send them something unexpected (like an invitation to an online app)

Really busy people don't always want to try out new things. Unlike the swarming mobs on TechCrunch who sign up for every new web app, busy people are mostly focused on their own work. So while your friends may be cool with you sending them an unsolicited invite to a webapp like PBworks (online collaboration) or Gliffy (online flowcharts), busy people may simply ignore the invite. Always send them an email before you invite them via the web app.

BUSY PEOPLE LOVE SEEING "NO ACTION NEEDED" IN THEIR EMAIL.

WHAT A BUSY PERSON THINKS: GREAT, NO ACTION NEEDED. I LIKE THE POLITE HEADS-UP.

To: Melissa  
From: Jack  
Subject: FYI, I'm going to invite you to Gliffy (online flowchart)

Hi Melissa,

FYI (no action needed), I'm going to invite you to an online tool called Gliffy, which will let us collaborate on the Project Oasis flowchart. I'm sending the invite momentarily, and you should get an email with the subject "Gliffy" somewhere in the subject line. Just follow the directions and you'll be logged in within a few seconds.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,  
Jack

-Always test the invitation to a throwaway email account of yours before bothering a busy person with it. If it's too complicated, create a login/password for them and just send them that (along with the login URL).

-If the web app allows you to customize an invitation, add this line: "Melissa, here's the online flowchart app that I mentioned in my last email. Click the link below to begin. -Jack"

## How to set up an informational interview

An informational interview is an opportunity to meet someone who works in a position or industry you'd like to work in, or to know more about. It is a commitment-free chance to ask a person questions about his or her job and get the inside scoop. An informational interview can lead to additional referrals, an ongoing professional contact, and maybe even a job BUT....

**Never, ever directly ask for a job in an informational interview.** That's like going into a restaurant, eating all their food, crapping on the table, and then sashaying out wearing nothing but a top hat and cane. You are violating expectations and abusing the situation if you ask for a job in an informational interview. Just don't do it.

You can turn an informational interview into a career launcher, but only if you approach it wisely. Here's the first step of that process: The email introduction for an informational interview. By the way, the best place to tap for informational interviews is your alumni association. People who went to the same college have a bond with each other, even decades later. They are often willing to help out a fellow alumnus not only because they know the same football fight song but because helping graduates towards success boosts the value of their own degree.

## SET UP CALLS AND MEETINGS WITH BUSY PEOPLE

To: Jane  
From: Samantha  
Subject: Kent State grad -- would love to chat about your work at Deloitte

TELL HER WHERE YOU FOUND HER NAME SO YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE A CREEP.

Hi Jane,

THE FIRST SENTENCE SAYS WHAT SHE WANTS. MOST PEOPLE ARE FLATTERED THAT PEOPLE WANT/VALUE THEIR ADVICE.

My name is Samantha Kerritt. I'm a '04 grad from Kent State and I came across your name on our alumni site.

THE PHRASE "PICK YOUR BRAIN" IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO ASK FOR ADVICE AND FLATTER, AND "KENT" REINFORCES SHARED BOND.

I'd love to get your career advice for 15-20 minutes. I'm currently working at Acme Tech Company, but many of my friends work in consulting and each time they tell me how much they love their job, I get more interested.

Many of them have told me that if I'm interested in consulting, I should talk to someone at Deloitte. Do you think I could pick your brain on your job and how you came to Deloitte? I'd especially love to know how you made your choices after graduating from Kent.

THE BUSY PERSON IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU. TREAT THEM ACCORDINGLY.

I can meet you for coffee or at your office...or wherever it's convenient. I can work around you!

Would it be possible for us to meet?

A BUSY PERSON CAN SIMPLY REPLY TO THIS WITH A "YES" -- PERFECT. NOTE THAT SHE DIDN'T ASK FOR THE TIME/LOCATION AS THAT'S TOO MUCH INFORMATION IN THE FIRST EMAIL.

Thanks,

-Samantha

## How to ask for recommendations for people to talk to

Email provides a great forum for building your professional network and getting inside access without putting your contact on the spot. Ideally, your contact should feel comfortable referring you to a colleague of his or hers.

REMINDE THE BUSY PERSON HOW YOU KNOW EACH OTHER.



NOTE THAT THE FOCUS OF THIS EMAIL IS ASKING FOR A REFERRAL, NOT FOR A JOB. JOHN UNDERSTANDS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR WORK AND DOESN'T WANT TO BE PUT ON THE SPOT. IF HE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE POSITION, HE WILL.



Hello John,

Hope all is well.

If you recall, we spoke a few months ago when I was exploring new career opportunities in information security. (I was your student at the time). Thanks again for agreeing to be my reference!

I was browsing the Acme Career site the other day and the Research Scientist role caught my eye. I think it'd be perfect for me considering my work on insider threat-related projects at Current Company.

From what I remember, it sounds pretty similar to the work you do at Acme. By any chance, do you know of anyone there who I should chat with? I'd love to learn more about the role so I can see if it's the right fit for me.

If not, no problem — just wanted to keep you in the loop. Thanks again for all your help!

Take care,

Roger

## How to cold email a stranger for advice

TRY TO FIND SOME POINT OF MUTUAL INTEREST OR A WAY TO CONNECT, HOWEVER TENUOUS.

BOOST YOUR CHANCES OF GETTING A REPLY BY MINIMIZING THE RISK FOR THE BUSY PERSON. HERE, THE CONVERSATION IS JUST 3-5 QUESTIONS BY PHONE, OVER COFFEE OR EVEN EMAIL.



Hi Steve,

Greetings from a fellow UCLA alumni!

I was doing some research on Project Manager positions on LinkedIn, and I noticed you're a Project Manager at Acme. I'm on a quest for my dream job and would love to ask you 3-5 questions about your experiences at Acme.

Would you be available for a quick chat by phone or over coffee this Thursday at 10am? I'm also free any time Friday.

If email is easier, I'd be happy to send you my questions.

Sincerely,

John Smith



## How to write a pitch for a consulting gig or a job interview

When you are offering your services to someone who didn't know she needed them, you want to keep your email short and sweet. Provide a highlight or two about what you can do for the person and then make it easy for her to take the next step with a specific call to action.

2-3 BIG PROBLEMS.



MOST RELEVANT ACHIEVEMENT.



YOUR OFFER AND A CALL TO ACTION.



Subject: Hi from John - interested in chatting about Acme

Hi Kelly,

INTRO + COMPLIMENT.

My name is John and I'm currently a Marketing Associate at Widget Corp.

I've been following Acme for some time now -- I love AcmeProduct!



My guess is that right now, 3 of Acme's biggest concerns are

1. Converting free members,
2. Increasing email sign-ups and
3. Hiring good people who know both the marketing and product side.

Recently, I blah blah blah.

I'd love to chat with you about the possibility of doing the same at Acme as a Marketing Manager.

Do you have 15 minutes to meet over coffee Thursday at 10am?

Sincerely,

John Smith

## How to reach out to others in your company to get to know them

It's critically important to identify the key people in your organization and to figure out how you can help them. In a New York Times "Corner Office" profile, **Linda Hudson**, president of the land and armaments group for BAE systems illustrated the importance of networking in her career.

"An early boss told me, spend the first couple of months in this job figuring out how things really work around here, and then go and establish allies with the real movers and shakers in the organization because that's the way you will be the most successful. And I advise people to do the same thing.

You can never succeed in a corporate culture on your own. It is all about how you fit, how you know how to make things happen within the infrastructure and in a way that's acceptable to the norms and values of the corporation that you work in.

Once you catch on to who really pulls the strings and where the real power base is, who you have to collaborate with, who you have to inform, who you have to seek for advice and agreement, you can actually make these big, very, very lumbering organizations work very, very well. It's all about the informal structure. It's about the critical relationships, and it's about fitting in, in a constructive way, so that you really make your decisions that not only benefit yourself but benefit the corporation as well."

Here's a script to begin building those relationships.

From: James  
To: Serena  
Subject: New marketing hire -- would love to pick your brain

Hi Serena,

My name is James Splint and I'm the new marketing associate in the competitive product group (CPG). I was speaking with my manager Greg and he mentioned you're doing some interesting work in TPG, and I'd love to pick your brain. In particular, I'm curious to hear your thoughts on the new eRobot gizmo – is it for real or just hype?

Are you free for coffee or a quick meeting this week?

Thanks,

-James

MENTION A SPECIFIC THING.

WHAT A BUSY PERSON THINKS: SURE, I LOVE MEETING NEW, IDEALISTIC HIRES. PLUS, I'LL DO IT AS A FAVOR TO GREG SINCE HE'S PRETTY SENIOR.

## Get What You Need (When You Need It)

How to ask for an introduction to a specific person

Sometimes, the shortest distance between you and a very busy person is another busy person. In this case, your contact. When you want to ask your contact to introduce you to one of his contacts, you want to make it quick and painless for him. (Remember, a referral from a trusted source is the best way to reach a busy person, so this extra step is worth your time if you do it right.)

**1<sup>st</sup>** First, email your contact.

To: Ramit  
From: Chris  
Subject: Introducing me to Jennie Jones

Hey Ramit,

I noticed you're connected to Jennie Jones at Acme on LinkedIn. I would love to chat with her to get some advice about Acme. I promise to be respectful of her time.

Would you mind connecting me? I can send you a pre-formatted introductory email to make things really easy for you.

Is that OK?

Thanks,

Chris

2<sup>nd</sup>

Assuming Ramit says “yes,” here’s what to send next:

Subject: Jennie, meet Chris (considering interviewing at Acme). Chris, meet Jennie.

Ramit, here’s a forwardable email. It should be ready to send, but please feel free to edit as needed!

Thanks, Chris

—

Chris, please meet Jennie, who is an SVP at Acme.

Jennie, Chris is a friend of mine and currently a project manager at Buffalo Corp. He’s excellent at user-centered design and is curious about some of the opportunities at Acme. He wondered if you could spare 10 minutes to chat on the phone.

Chris, can you take it from here?

Thanks,

Ramit

THIS FORWARDABLE EMAIL MAKES YOUR CONTACT LOOK CONSIDERATE.



THE LOW STATUS PERSON HAS THE NEXT STEP.



## Staying in touch with business contacts without being annoying

One of the most challenging -- and important -- aspects of networking is the maintenance phase: staying in touch when you don't specifically want anything or have anything to offer.

The key is sending relevant material that your recipient will appreciate. This should not be done transactionally. There's no magic number of emails that you can send and then expect the person to do something for you. This is about keeping a relationship warm and genuinely wanting to help the other person with no specific expectation of having the favor returned. Most people fail because their mindset is too quid pro quo. Here's a simple example of an email that could be sent every so often (3-5 weeks).

### Email #7 Commandment

It's great to send a birthday card or note, but don't consider it a business check-in:

Birthday greetings and holiday emails/cards have become commoditized in the era of Facebook, and people get swamped with friendly updates during those times. Scrap the Christmas card! Check-in with a person when their email volume is lower and make it a more meaningful exchange.

## Ramit's *feedback*

PERSONAL NOTE SHOWS THAT YOU'VE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO HIM AND HIS COMPANY.

DON'T JUST SEND A LINK. ADD SOME FRESH THINKING THAT SPEAKS TO THE RECIPIENT.

EXCITING NEWS BUT REQUIRES NOTHING FROM GEORGE. GIVES HIM SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO, AND GIVE YOURSELF AN EXCUSE TO REACH OUT AGAIN.

From: Ramit  
To: George  
Subject: Interesting -- do tech entrepreneurs need venture capital?

Hey George,

Hope things are going well. I saw Acme Corp. on the CBS Early Show last week... great coverage!

Just ran across this article and thought you'd find it interesting:  
<http://time.com/blahblahblah>

The author argues that VCs haven't contributed much to entrepreneurs' success, but ignores non-software companies (e.g., hardware, clean tech, etc) and systematically forgets about survivorship bias. You've been on both sides of the table so I thought you'd find it especially relevant.

I Will Teach You To Be Rich is going well...I'm going to be speaking to a group at MIT next month, so I'll send you a clip once it's online!

-Ramit

## How to get multiple questions answered in an email

As we know from Barry Schwartz's Paradox of Choice, in general the more choices we face, the less likely we are to do anything at all.

Keep this in mind when you're writing an email. When a busy person receives an email with multiple questions, a she thinks: "Oh god, I have to answer this and that and that and that...ugh, I'll do this later." Later never comes, of course. You have two options:

1. Decide which one or two questions are most important and leave the door open for follow up.
2. Write a crisp, single email with multiple questions.

I almost always opt for #1 -- writing an email with one question, then asking followups over time.

There's a case to be made for both approaches. If you have no info on your target's preference, consider this: Busy people who don't know you well will probably scan your email quickly and fire off a response. If you bury too many questions in the email, there's a decent chance he'll overlook some of them.

So send people you don't know well your questions in a crisp, single email or scale back your questions to the one or two most important ones. If you do know the person well, feel free to put them in one email.



I prefer individual emails with one question each, but sometimes you have to send one email with multiple questions (usually, this is when the questions are related and follow each other). In this script, I'll show you how to write an email with multiple questions that gets answered by a busy person.

THIS USES A MODIFIED RAMIT 1-2 APPROACH

YOU'RE SIMPLY GIVING HIM A HEADS-UP, SOMETHING MOST BUSY PEOPLE APPRECIATE. ALSO NOTE THAT YOU POSITIONED IT POSITIVELY

("I'll be able to get it to marketing by Friday")

INSTEAD OF NEGATIVELY

("...otherwise, we'll be behind schedule").

Subject: 3 questions about new Oasis product -- heads-up for an email tomorrow

Hi Sal,

FYI, I'm going to be sending you 3 questions about the Oasis launch tomorrow, so if you can clear aside 15-20 minutes tomorrow, I'll have them to you by noon. If you can get them to me by tomorrow at noon, I'll be able to get the entire package to marketing by Friday.

Thanks,

Nick

The next day, send this:

YOU REFER TO YOUR PRIOR EMAIL, SPECIFY THE TIME, AND POLITELY ASK FOR THE CALL TO ACTION.

What a busy person thinks:

“Great, I was expecting this email and I’ve got 3 crisp questions (with Nick’s notes) to answer by this evening.”

Be sure to balance adding more information (the sub-bullet points) with keeping it short and simple. If you haven’t heard back by early evening, you might give Sal a call to check in: “Hi Sal, just wanted to make sure you got my email.”

Re: 3 questions about new Oasis product -- heads-up for an email tomorrow (REPLY TO THE SAME EMAIL)

Hi Sal,

As I mentioned yesterday, here are 3 questions about the Oasis launch. They should take you 15-20 minutes to answer. Would it be possible for you to get these back to me by this evening?

1. Should engineering or marketing be responsible for product specifications?  
- Mike suggested: ‘Engineering might own the specs, while marketing will own the customer’
2. What’s the deadline for press outreach?  
- We are targeting October 1st
3. What are your executive KPIs for this product?

Thanks, and I hope to look for your answers later this evening.

Nick

Email #8  
Commandment

Think twice before sending an email with multiple questions in it.

## Getting a quick answer the same day

Sometimes we need an answer and we need it right away. When you are asking someone to put her own priorities to the side to help you with yours, you want to keep your request crisp and clear. Always lower the risk for the other person by explaining how long it will take and when you would like to have an answer. Be explicit by providing a time.

YOU HAVE DONE ALL THEIR WORK FOR THEM, AND ALL THEY HAVE TO DO IS SAY "YES." IF SOMEONE EVER QUESTIONS THEM, THEY CAN SIMPLY PULL THIS EMAIL UP WITH YOUR WELL-DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE. THIS IS A WINNING EMAIL.

From: Ramit

To: Julie

Subject: FAQ -- will take you 2 minutes -- need answer today

Hi Julie,

This should take you 2 minutes. I have a quick question about the FAQ and it would be SUPER helpful to get an answer by the end of today (5pm).

Should we make the FAQ a summary or extended version?

Benefits of summary:

- Benefit
- Benefit

Benefits of extended:

- Benefit
- Benefit

I recommend we do choose the extended version because it will give us greater flexibility at the same price.

Is this OK?

Thanks,

-Ramit

SIMPLE CALL TO ACTION AT THE END THAT SIMPLY REQUIRES A "YES" RESPONSE...REMEMBER MOST PEOPLE TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT.

## How to ask someone to be your reference or to write a reference for you

Most of the time when you apply for a job you are asked to provide references. This means you give the names and numbers of people who are willing to take a phone call and say a few positive things about you. But for some jobs or if you apply to graduate school, you'll need to provide letters of reference. This is different from asking someone to be a reference, which is more passive. In this case the person has to write and send a letter—often a significant time commitment. In an ideal world, the person you ask to be a reference should be a close contact or even a friend.

If so, you can send an email like this real example:

From: Paul  
To: Ramit  
Subject: Can I put you down as a professional reference for an angel group interested in Acme? <eom>

From: Ramit  
To: Paul

EOM STANDS FOR "END OF MESSAGE" – INCLUDE IT AT THE END OF SUBJECT-LINE-ONLY EMAILS. SINCE BUSY PEOPLE OFTEN VIEW SUBJECT LINES ON THEIR PHONE, THEY CAN READ AND DELETE WITHOUT OPENING THE FULL MESSAGE.

**yep**

That's because we have a long-standing relationship. But if you're not as close to the person, then you have two choices:

then  
you have **two**  
**choices:**

1. Find references with whom you do have a close relationship (recommended)
2. Go with whoever you can find, and write a really compelling email

Let's tackle #2.

Let's say you're applying to grad school and you've decided to ask an old professor for a recommendation. Problem: You haven't spoken to him in years and aren't sure if he remembers you.

**Solution:** Use the **Ramit 1-2 Punch** and offer to make his life drop-dead easy.

PUT SOMETHING INTERESTING AND RELEVANT THAT YOU'VE DONE OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

ACKNOWLEDGE HIS PAIN, OFFER A SOLUTION.

DO THE WORK FOR HIM.

PLENTY OF TIME TO WRITE IT.



From: Rita  
To: Professor Samson  
Subject: '04 student -- hoping you'll write a reference for med school

Hi Prof. Samson,

My name is Rita Johnston and I'm one of your former students (you were my advisor when I graduated in '04 and I took intro to human biology and biodynamics with you).

I still remember your example of how muskrats protect their families from predators and I actually did a research project on it over the last few years: <http://www.blahblahblah.com>.

I'm applying to med school next year and I was wondering if you'd consider writing me a recommendation. I know you get TONS of these requests, so I can make it very easy for you.

- I can send you my transcript, resume (2 As in your classes, 1 A+), and statement of purpose
- I'll send you the major points to highlight, including my statement of purpose
- Most people don't prefer this, but a couple of my other references have asked me to draft something up that they can edit / revise

My deadline is next month, on September 29th.

I would be very grateful for your help on this. Do you think you'd be able to write a recommendation for me?

Thanks,

Rita  
(555) 555-5555

ALWAYS MAKE AN ACTIVE REQUEST. IT'S HARD TO SAY "NO" DIRECTLY.

## What a busy person thinks:

Wow, Rita really stands out because:

- I don't have to guess who she is. She told me clearly in her first email.
- The fact that she's so prepared means the entire writing process will probably be very organized.
- She respects my time and has given me a huge lead time.
- She offered to write the recommendation letter and let me review it. Even though I won't take her up on this, I appreciate the offer.
- She will probably make a great med student because she is organized and proactive.

**Note:** Remember the email strategy for staying in touch with business contacts? It works for professors and former bosses, too. In situations like this it is especially valuable to have a few go-to contacts to email when you need help.

## How to let a professional contact know that you've offered them as a reference

Sometimes, you'll be asked to provide references for journalists or potential business partners. Ideally, you should ask your contacts if you can use them as a reference. But sometimes, you'll need to provide an answer on the spot -- or you have such a close relationship that you don't need to ask them if it's OK to use them as a reference every time. In that case, you should still let them know that they may be contacted.

**Remember:** Busy people don't like being surprised.



**How this email could have been better:** I intentionally wrote this email in a casual way because we worked together for years and he can improvise extremely well on the phone. However, I sent a similar email to someone else I'd worked with. For them, I included 3 bullet points of topics they might cover to help guide them in the phone call. A busy person appreciates that because he doesn't have to think -- it's all there in front of him. By the same token, some busy people, especially proudly independent thinkers, would be annoyed if you "put words in their mouth." So, vary your approach, depending on the email recipient.

From: Ramit  
To: BJ  
Subject: A New York Times reporter might email you about me

Hi BJ,

The NYT personal-finance reporter, XXX XXXX, might be doing a profile of me. If he does, he'll probably contact you in the next few days wanting to chat about our relationship, my use of psychology/persuasion in personal finance, etc.

Just wanted to give you a heads-up. If there's anything I can do to help, let me know!

Thanks,

-Ramit

## How to ask for a testimonial

CASUAL TONE BECAUSE THE RECIPIENT IS ON A FRIENDLY BASIS, BUT EMAIL IS STILL FOCUSED SINCE RECIPIENT IS BUSY.

SUBJECT: Can I quote you for my site?

Hey dude,

Thrilled to hear you're doing so well with the company and the new direction.

I was wondering if you could give me a quote that I can use on my website – something like:

“Ramit completely changed the direction of our business. He re-focused our attention on our users, helped us figure out several lucrative marketing channels, and ripped apart an idea that would have wasted 6 months of our time. His advice will be worth well over \$100,000 – and that was just over one dinner.”

Mike Jones, Acme Corp

Is that cool?

Thanks,

-Ramit

WHAT A BUSY PERSON THINKS: I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO THINK UP A TESTIMONIAL FROM SCRATCH...OH, HE ALREADY WROTE ONE. EXCELLENT. I'LL JUST TWEAK IT A LITTLE AND BE DONE. GOOD.



## The effortless and effective way to introduce two people via email

If you are focused on building relationships, you better get good at introducing two people over email. I introduce 10-15 pairs of people per week, and so I know what works. I've built a simple introduction script that helps two people get to know each other as quickly as possible. When you introduce two people, you're in a unique situation:

- 1 You're at an informational advantage. You know both parties, and usually you know why the two should get to know each other. Meanwhile, they know nothing about each other.
- 2 Both people are presumably busy, so you want to make it easy for them to take action and quickly decide if it makes sense to get to know each other.
- 3 You've instantly bestowed social pressure on both the recipients. Because you know each of the recipients, they will feel social pressure to at least respond (whether you intend this or not). The worst introductory emails make busy people resent having to respond to someone who they (1) don't know and (2) aren't sure why they're being introduced to them.

There are three types of email introductions you can do. I'll cover each.

## LEVEL ONE INTRODUCTION:

### The “Use My Name” Introduction

Say I want to introduce Jason to Christina. I know both of them. Rather than email both of them, I could tell the lower status person (Jason) to email Christina, CC me, and “use my name.” This approach saves you (the introducer) time but doesn’t guarantee a positive response from Christina; after all, she may very well skip over an email that comes from a name (Jason) she doesn’t recognize. You can also send Christina a quick email to let her know that Jason will be in touch.

GET WHAT YOU NEED (WHEN YOU NEED IT)

From: Ramit  
To: Jason  
Subject: Getting to know Christina

Hey Jason,

We talked about my friend Christina Macendale at lunch. I think you'd enjoy chatting with her. Feel free to contact her at: name@email.com and say I recommended you contact her.

Let me know if you end up meeting with her

- Ramit

From: Jason  
To: Christina  
CC: Ramit  
Subject: Greetings from fellow author / Ramit Sethi recommended I contact you

Hi Christina,

Ramit Sethi recommended I contact you. He thought very highly of you and encouraged me to reach out to talk about our respective experiences in the publishing industry.

I wrote a book last year called "Leadership Lessons from Ten Years in a Maximum Security Prison" and it got named one of the top business books of the year by The Wall Street Journal. It was a huge success, but the publishing industry does leave a lot to be desired, don't you think?!

Would love to compare notes and hear what your next book is going to be!

Are you available for coffee next Tuesday? I'd be delighted to come by your office to chat.

ALWAYS FLATTER THE PERSON YOU'RE SENDING AN EMAIL TO, AND MAKE THE INTRODUCER (RAMIT) LOOK GOOD IN THE EYES OF CHRISTINA.

ACTIVE QUESTION

LOWER STATUS INDIVIDUAL OFFERING TO COME TO HIGHER STATUS OFFICE.

## LEVEL TWO:

Introducer emails both parties directly

BE INSTANTLY SPECIFIC ABOUT WHO SHE IS AND WHAT SHE WANTS.

TRUMPET THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS. PEOPLE LIKE TO WORK WITH WINNERS.

PERSONAL CONNECTION MAKES IT MORE LIKELY THEY WILL TRUST THE OTHER PERSON AND RESPOND TO MAINTAIN THE FRIENDSHIP WITH YOU.

DON'T FORGET TO HIGHLIGHT WHY THE OTHER PERSON IS SPECIAL, TOO.

DEMONSTRATE COMMONALITY AND ALSO NOTE THAT BOTH ARE IN THE SAME TIME ZONE, TO MAKE NEXT STEP LOGISTICS EASIER.

YOU CAN PUT BOTH ON THE "TO" LINE, OR IF YOU WANT TO BE VERY CLEAR ABOUT WHO SHOULD DO THE FOLLOW UP, PUT HIGHER STATUS PERSON ON THE "CC" LINE.

From: Ramit  
To: Ryan  
CC: Michelle  
Subject: Ryan, meet Michelle. Michelle, meet Ryan

Ryan, I want to introduce you to Michelle. She's a partner at Venture Capital Inc. for the last 2 years, and I know you're looking for a quote from a venture capitalist about nurturing young entrepreneurs for an upcoming article you're writing. She's probably too modest to mention it, but she was in Time Magazine last week and her fund produced 10x returns last year. She's been my good friend since college.

Michelle, Ryan is a journalist at The San Francisco Business Journal, and is looking for a quote for his article. As I mentioned to you, he's the rare breed of journalist who doesn't twist quotes to fit a pre-written story.

You both grew up in California and are now based in Los Angeles.

Ryan – will you follow up with Michelle over email to set up a phone call?

Thanks,

-Ramit

SPECIFY WHAT'S SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN NEXT. SUGGEST THE APPROPRIATE MEDIUM. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU DON'T THINK MICHELLE SHOULD NECESSARILY MEET, PROACTIVELY SUGGEST THEY HAVE A PHONE CALL.

**Know your role:** Despite what people think about everyone being equal, people are NOT equal in email introductions. Usually one person is lower status -- meaning he wants something from the other person -- and he should be the person to take the next step after the introductory email.

If you are the busy person, you get tons of emails like this every week. Fortunately for you, you get the luxury of waiting for the non-busy person to send a follow up. (Since so many people don't, this is an effective filter to screen out losers who won't even respond to an introductory email.)

NOTICE HOW RYAN HAS MOVED RAMIT TO THE BCC LINE - THIS ALLOWS RAMIT TO SEE THE FOLLOW UP WITHOUT HAVING TO BE COPIED ON ALL THE FUTURE BACK-AND-FORTH.

THE RECIPIENT SHOULD ALWAYS THANK THE SENDER. THEN THEY SHOULD FOCUS ON THE PERSON THEY WERE INTRODUCED TO.

**What a busy person thinks:** Bonus points to Ryan for mentioning exactly how much time he'd need on the phone, and for suggesting two concrete times that work for him. This makes the very busy person happy, because he she can just reply and say "Sure, Tuesday at 10am works. Give me a call at (XXX) XXX-XXXX."

From: Ryan  
To: Michelle  
BCC: Ramit Sethi

Thanks for the introduction, Ramit. (Moving you to the BCC line.)

Michelle, it's great to meet you. Ramit has told me a lot about you. My article will be published in the Journal of Young Entrepreneurs, and I'd love to get about 10 minutes of your time over the phone to ask you a few questions about your experience with working with young entrepreneurs. Do you have any time this week (e.g., this Tuesday at 10am or Wednesday at 2pm Pacific Time)? I can work around your schedule.

Thanks,  
  
Ryan

RYAN KNOWS THAT MICHELLE IS BUSY, SO HE DOES THE WIDE-NARROW APPROACH BY SUGGESTING A SPECIFIC TIME BUT NOTING THAT HE UNDERSTANDS SHE IS BUSY AND HE IS ASKING FOR HER VALUABLE TIME.

## LEVEL THREE:

### The sure-fire power introduction

If one of the people involved in the introduction is especially busy or the recipient of lots of introductions (like a VC with lots of deal flow), ASK each person first whether they would be open to receiving an introduction. This a) guarantees both parties will respond affirmatively once the introduction is finally made, since each party has pre-committed, b) avoids creating awkwardness when one party is on the receiving end of an introduction that they don't want (and this makes you look bad).

From: Mike

To: Jake

Subject: Do you want an intro to Brad Venturecapitalist?

Hey Jake,

Good seeing you again last night. Good luck with your upcoming fundraising process. Are you interested in an intro to Brad, the VC I mentioned? He might be a good resource for you – at the least, for feedback, and who knows, maybe he'd fund your company!

Let me know.

Best,  
Mike

Assuming **Jake** responds positively.... #1

From: Mike  
To: Brad Venture capitalist  
Subject: Open to being introduced to Jake Bronstein?

Hi Brad,

I hope you are well. I wanted to check to see if you'd be open to being introduced to my friend Jake. Jake is a serial entrepreneur based in Palo Alto. Sharp dude. His new company seems pretty interesting – it's in the email space – and they're going to start fundraising soon.

I know he reads your blog and is a fan.

Would you be OK if I made the email intro? No worries either way.

Thanks and all best,

Mike

BE UPFRONT ABOUT WHAT JAKE IS PROBABLY  
LOOKING FOR – VC MONEY!

GIVE HIM AN EASY OUT – HE GETS TONS OF  
DEALS SENT HIS WAY AND STATISTICALLY MUST  
SAY NO TO MOST.

Assuming **Brad** responds positively...

#2

From: Mike  
To: Jake, Brad Venturecapitalist  
Subject: Introducing you two

Hi Jake and Brad,

I've told each of you about each other already.

Brad – Jake is the entrepreneur in the Bay Area starting a new company in the email space.

Jake – Brad is the VC who's funded over a dozen email-related companies.

I recommend you two find a time to talk on the phone and have Jake explain what he's doing to Brad. Brad's on mountain time; Jake's on pacific time.

Thanks!

Best,  
Mike

Read more about this technique at  
<http://blog.summation.net/2008/07/art-of-the-introduction.html>

AGAIN, BE CLEAR ON THE NEXT STEP.





## How to do customer research

Top performers are constantly reaching out to others, building their network and learning new ways to tackle problems. You can use these customer research scripts to help you connect with people who may be able to shed fresh insight challenges you or your company is facing. This is a variation on the **Ramit 1-2 Punch**.

### Customer Research Email

#1

Hi Jill,

I'm a big fan of your work, and I'm thrilled to see the business growing like it has. I'm emailing to see if you'd be up for sharing your quick insights for a health-oriented freelance writing business I've been developing, since you're so immersed in this field.

Would you be free for a quick 5-minute chat tomorrow afternoon (I can send some brief notes beforehand)? I can talk anytime after 3.

Thanks, and looking forward to it!

Susan

LIMIT THE PERSON'S RISK BY OUTLINING HOW LONG THE RESEARCH WILL TAKE.

## Customer Research Email #2

(after they've said yes to Email #1):

Hey Jill,

Great! These are the areas where I thought you could offer the most insight:

1. For your business' printed and web materials, who currently handles the copywriting and editing?
2. Are your writers and editors in-house or freelance?
3. If you were to hire a freelance writer/editor, what are two things that person could do to make your life easier?  
(Examples: readily available/responsive, create original content, write copy backed by research, create a style sheet to keep YY materials consistent, etc.)
4. Do you know of three other businesses that produce a lot of print/web materials that might be willing to talk to me about their processes?

Thanks again, and talk to you at 3.

Susan

## How to get an internship at a top company

One of my interns wanted to get another summer internship, so he asked for my help reviewing his outreach emails.

I'll show you his initial email, then the re-written email after I helped him.

Hello,

**I really enjoyed watching your talk on [or some sort of interesting thing I found out about them].** To introduce myself, I am going to be a senior in high school and am currently working at a startup out in XXX. User experience and interaction design is something that I am deeply interested in. The problem is that especially in NYC, the UX community is relatively small and there are very few people I can contact who could be considered experts at what they do. The reason I am contacting you is because I am part of special program at my high school, where instead of attending classes on Wednesdays, we attend an internship. I was wondering if you would be interested in mentoring me over the course of this school year.

This is an opportunity for you or your team at Google to get a free intern for every Wednesday between September and June, as long as you're willing to share a little bit about the kind of work you do. If this is something that interests you, I can send more information your way. Otherwise, if you can help point me in the right direction, that would greatly be appreciated. Regardless, I would love to meet up with you at some point. Definitely let me know if you are around XXX.

Thanks,  
K

**My response:**

Here is what I suggest:

Hi blah,

My name is KC. I'm a high school student at XYZ high school. This summer, I'm working with New York Times best-selling author Ramit Sethi, as well as XYZ company. I'm helping both with technical front end blah blah blah.

I've been a big fan of yours because of blah blah blah. And I've been [something else you admire]

My high school has a special opportunity where, starting in the fall, I can work with blah blah... internship...to be blunt, I would love to work with you. I've already proven I can work on [something impressive, 7-figure projects, blah blah, venture-backed;...]

I know this isn't a conventional request, but I am very serious and would be thrilled to see if there's a way we can work together. Would it be possible to chat with you for 10-15 minutes over the phone?

I am also in NYC and could meet you in person, but if phone is more convenient, I would love to chat to get your advice.

Thanks,

K

**Rewrite and send to me. His final version:**

My name is KC. I'm a high school student at XXX in YYY. This summer, I'm working with New York Times best-selling author Ramit Sethi, as well as ACME, an education startup backed by Beta Ventures and Triste Ventures. I'm helping both with technical front-end development, optimization and user experience.

My high school has a special opportunity where, starting in the fall, I can work with a mentor every Wednesday at an internship that I set up. In the past, student have worked at companies like Mercedes-Benz and Merrill-Lynch but to be blunt, I would love to work with you. I've already proven I can both manage and work on projects that scale, having worked on mobile applications that host over 130,000 users at a venture-backed startup.

I know this isn't a conventional request, but I am very serious and would be thrilled to see if there's a way we can work together. Would it be possible to chat with you for 10-15 minutes over the phone?

I am also in NYC and could meet you in person, but if phone is more convenient, I would love to chat to get your advice.

Thanks,

K

**By the way, he secured the first-ever high-school internship at Gawker using these techniques.**

## Follow Up With (And Impress) People You Meet

How to send a thank-you email after a meeting or interview

Depending on the type of meeting and your relationship with the person, sometimes these matter, sometimes not. But it never hurts to stack the deck in your favor by sending a crisp thank-you note and standing out from the 99% of people who don't.

If it was a meeting with a busy person who you are hoping to have an ongoing relationship with, you'll definitely want to send a thank you and a follow up. See the next email script.

### Ramit's *feedback*

SIMPLE EMAIL REQUIRES NO RESPONSE, OR A SIMPLE "THANKS!" REPLY FROM THE BUSY PERSON.

To: Samantha  
From: Ramit  
Subject: Thanks for meeting -- enjoyed it

Hi Samantha,

Thanks for meeting with me yesterday. ["Thanks" for a casual meetup, or "thank you" for a more formal event.]

I appreciated hearing about the ARP Foundation's vision, and it seems like your team really has a great idea of where it wants to go. If there's any way I can help, please let me know.

Also – you mentioned you were interested in Ayn Rand. Thought you might like Alan Greenspan's reference to Rand in a recent Forbes piece: [www.abc.com](http://www.abc.com)

Thanks again!

-Ramit  
(555) 555-5555 [INCLUDE CONTACT INFO]

## How to keep relationships warm after the initial meeting

So many people go to the trouble of contacting and meeting with busy people, only to let the relationship go cold. This happens quickly with busy people because they have so much on their plate. The good news is that with the right strategy and followup emails, you can keep the relationship warm – and even improve it.

**This is called the Closing The Loop Technique.**

This requires 3 separate emails:

**1<sup>st</sup>** The first email, sent the **same day** as your meeting, is a thank you message:

Hi Steve,

Just wanted to thank you again for meeting with me earlier. I'm definitely going to get in touch with Susan like you recommended. I'll keep you in the loop, and of course, please let me know if there's anything I can do to repay the favor!

John

Email #9  
Commandment

When following up with someone after a meeting, let them know how you've applied their advice.

2<sup>nd</sup>

**2-3 weeks** later, you send another email that adds value for the busy person:

NOTE USE OF “NO RESPONSE NEEDED,” WHICH BUSY PEOPLE LOVE.

Hey Steve,

Saw this article in the Wall Street Journal and it reminded me of what you said about productivity tests! No response needed, just thought you might find it interesting.

John

3<sup>rd</sup>

**3-4 weeks** later, you “close the loop”:

SHOW THAT YOU FOLLOWED UP ON THEIR ADVICE AND TELL THEM THE RESULTS. THIS IS SO RARE IT MAKES A HUGE IMPRESSION AND MAKES THE BUSY PERSON FEEL GOOD FOR HELPING YOU.

Hi Steve,

Wanted to give you an update: I did end up talking to Susan, and you were right -- Acme Corp is definitely a fit for me.

I'm reaching out to a friend there to learn all I can about Acme before I apply. If there's anyone else you think I should speak to, please let me know.

Thanks again! I'll let you know how it goes.

THIS LEAVES THE DOOR OPEN FOR FUTURE COMMUNICATION.

John



## How to email someone after you meet them at a conference if you want to pursue a relationship

The vast majority of people you meet at a conference will never follow up with you. This goes for you, too: When was the last time you emailed all the people whose business cards you took? Because 99% of other people won't follow up, you can easily stand out by sending an email in a timely manner. It doesn't matter whether you have a reason to or not -- exposing yourself to serendipity is almost always a good thing. Here's a script and schedule to follow up with people you meet at a conference.

Timing is important, too. Follow up on the second business day back from the conference. Most people will be swamped the day they get back and struggling to catch up on email. Email them on the second business day so it hits a clearer inbox.

## FOLLOW UP (AND IMPRESS)

REFERENCE YOURSELF IN WHATEVER WAY THE PERSON PROBABLY REMEMBERS YOU. DON'T CALL YOURSELF A WRITER IF THEY'RE REALLY GOING TO REMEMBER YOU WERE THE "TALL LATINO GUY."

QUICKLY REMIND HIM OF WHERE YOU MET AND WHY HE SHOULD CARE. THEN GENTLY TRANSITION TO THE POINT OF YOUR EMAIL.

ATTACHMENT SHOULD CLEARLY HIGHLIGHT WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR.

CLEAR CTA

Subject: Met you at NAFTA conference – tall personal-finance guy

Hi Tom,

We met at the NAFTA conference last week -- I'm the guy who writes a personal-finance blog for 300,000 readers/month (mostly 20-35 year-olds). It was a pleasure meeting you, and I wanted to follow up on our chat.

You mentioned that NAFTA may be looking to do blog outreach to younger people to spread the word about policy issues. I'm attaching a media kit here, and you'll see that I reach a large audience of highly educated readers. Doing outreach through blogs is also more measurable and economical than traditional magazine outreach. Check out the attachment -- I think you'll find it very interesting.

Can we set up a call this week to chat more? I can call you at your office # on Thursday or Friday at your convenience.

Will that work?

Thanks,

-Ramit

What a busy person thinks: "Hmm...this is pretty interesting. Yeah, I'd love to hear more. And I just have to reply and type 'Yes' to have him call me...sure, it's worth a call."

## How to email someone after you meet them at a conference if you don't want to pursue a relationship

Subject: Met you at NAFTA conference -- personal-finance guy

Hi Tom,

We met at the NAFTA conference last week -- I'm the guy who writes a personal-finance blog for 300,000 readers/month (mostly 20-35 year-olds). It was a pleasure meeting you.

Just FYI, here are a few links you might find interesting:

\* My popular blog posts: <http://www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com/blog/category/popular-posts/>

\* My press links (includes New York Times, etc): <http://www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com/about/press/>

If there's any way I can help you with outreach or online marketing strategy, just let me know.

Thanks!

-Ramit

THIS SCRIPT IS SUFFICIENTLY GENERIC THAT YOU CAN PASTE IT TO MOST PEOPLE YOU MEET AT THE CONFERENCE.

**What a busy person thinks:** "Great, all I have to do is reply and say, 'Good to meet you!'" or: "Who is this guy again? Hey, his blog post is pretty good. Wow, he has good press. Maybe I should dig in a little more and get him on the phone."

## **Break Down Barriers to Communication and Success**

### How to email a busy person's assistant

To talk with a busy person, you may have to go through his assistant. The most important thing to remember when emailing (or communicating in general) with a busy person's assistant is: treat the assistant with exactly the same professionalism, deference, and respect as you would the busy person. The assistant is the gatekeeper. She has enormous sway over her boss. If you treat her like she's inferior, she will never get you on the calendar.

Venture capitalist **Rick Segal** has said, “I interpret any behavior directed toward my assistant to be behavior directed toward me.” You will probably interact with an assistant whenever you need to schedule a phone call or meeting. Refer to prior examples to review how to eliminate back-and-forth and set up appointments. Here’s a real example from a friend emailing first with a prominent CEO and then with his assistant:

## Ramit’s *feedback*

ALWAYS EXPRESS YOUR PREFERENCE IF YOU OFFER MANY DIFFERENT DATES.

From: Richard  
 To: Amit  
 Cc: Paola  
 Subject: RE: Update

Amit:

I am thinking about it still. Hope you’re having fun with Beijing.

Let’s meet and chat about it. I’ve cc:ed my assistant to find a time.

Weekends might work best, if possible, or a dinner.

All the best,  
 Richard

-----Original Message-----

From: Amit  
 To: Paola  
 Subject: FW: Setting up a meeting with Richard

Hi Paola,

Hope you’re well. Thanks for your help again on this...

Here are some days I’m available for dinner: Aug 31, Sept 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17.

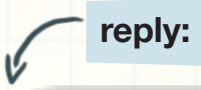
Weekends: Sept 12-13 anytime; September 14th and 15th anytime.

Preference would be one of the dinner days above or the Sept 12-13 weekend.

Thanks and talk to you soon,

Amit

THIS MEANS HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE COPIED ON THE FORTHCOMING DELUGE OF LOGISTICAL BACK-AND-FORTH.

reply:

From: Paola  
To: Amit

Hi Amit,

Richard is available for dinner on Tuesday 9/8 at 6:30pm. Do you enjoy sushi? If so, then Acme Sushi Restaurant in Palo Alto is a good place and one of Richard's favorites. But, be honest if you do or do not like sushi. <http://www.sushrestaurantwebsite.com>.

Let me know if this will work.

Thank you,  
Paola

-----Original Message-----

From: Amit  
To: Paola  
Subject: Re: Setting up a meeting with Richard

Paola,

Sushi's great. Let's plan 6:30 PM on Tuesday, September 8th at Acme Sushi Restaurant.

Thanks,

Amit

## How to email someone who reads most email on a mobile device

Virtually all busy people carry around a mobile device that downloads email. Try to figure out whether the person you're emailing does most of her reading on a mobile device. The keys to emailing somebody who will likely read it on their mobile are:

- **Brevity.** Being brief is always important, but especially so in this case.
- **In-line attachments.** Include any text attachments into the body of the email so they can just scroll down to read it. Also include it as an attachment just in case.
- **No links.** It's hard to click on a link from a phone and read it thoroughly. So don't make the reader visit a web page to get the crucial points of the email.
- **Minimal line breaks.** Have fewer separate paragraphs and not huge spaces between paragraphs.
- **Plain text.** Don't send an email with HTML formatting such as bold or italics; plain text always renders better on a phone.

Compare the following two emails. The first is the “normal” one – written for a recipient who’s going to view it on a computer screen: **Email for Viewing on Normal Computer**

From: Ricardo  
To: Jessica  
Re: Executive summary of business plan

Hi Jessica,

Hope you’re doing great!

I wanted to follow up on our phone call from last week. You asked for an executive summary of my business plan. I’ve attached it to this email. Also, there’s some good info on my idea at: <http://www.myidea.com>.

Will you be around next week to talk about it?

Look forward to catching up.

All my best,

Ricardo

**Email Likely Viewed on Mobile Device**

From: Ricardo  
To: Jessica  
Re: Executive summary of business plan

Hi Jessica, hope you’re doing great! I wanted to follow up on our phone call from last week. You asked for an executive summary of my business plan. I’ve included it at the bottom of this email, and also as an attachment. Will you be around next week to talk about it? Look forward to catching up.

All best, Ricardo

Executive Summary:  
Blahblahblah



## How to get someone to respond to your email if they didn't respond the first time

---Original message---

From: Ramit

To: Tia

Subject: Ricardo suggested I get in touch

Hi Tia,

Ricardo suggested I get in touch, and he actually sent me this email: "You and Tia NEED to meet. She is great and would LOVE to hear your story – she would probably be able to work her contacts at Barnes & Noble for you . Email her at tia@ac88472.com and offer to take her out to coffee!"

My book is on the New York Times bestseller list, and, I'd love to meet. How does Tuesday, 7/8, or Wednesday, 7/9 work for you any time in the afternoon?

Thanks,

-Ramit

**If Tia doesn't reply, try this**

Hi Tia,

I'm just checking to see if you got my last email (copied below). It should take just a sec to review, and I'd love to meet for coffee as Ricardo suggested.

Thanks,

-Ramit

THE PHRASE "JUST CHECKING IN" IS APPROPRIATELY GENTLE. INCLUDE YOUR ORIGINAL EMAIL BELOW, MAKING IT EASY FOR OTHER PERSON.

## How to get a response from someone who never responds (and get a response, guaranteed)

If anyone makes our jobs more difficult it is those co-workers who don't respond to emails. When you see them in the hall, you'll say, "Hey...did you get my email?" Their response: "Oh, I haven't checked my email yet" (even though you sent it 2 days ago) or, "Yeah...I'll get back to you" (said in a tone that clearly communicates that they won't). And it happens over and over again. Here's how to handle it. The key is to ignore the boiling rage in your heart and treat them with respect -- the first time. After that -- when they invariably don't respond -- you'll be justified being extremely direct about their need to respond. But if you're trying to get them to respond to a new email, you'll look like a complete ass if you start off with an angry, "You never respond" email.

Let's say it's Monday and you need to get budget numbers from Mike by Friday. You know he won't respond when you ask, since he never does. How do you get him to respond? Let's watch.

From: Ramit  
To: Unresponsive Mike  
Subject: Budget -- by Friday

Hey Mike,

I just got out of a meeting with Nicole about the upcoming annual budget. Can you fill in your budget numbers (see attachment) and send it back by Friday?

Thanks,

-Ramit

NOTE THAT THIS EMAIL DIDN'T SPECIFY A SPECIFIC TIME ON FRIDAY. THAT'S MY FAULT, NOT MIKE'S. HE MIGHT AS WELL JUST SEND IT FRIDAY AT 7PM, WHEN I REALLY NEED IT AT NOON. YOU CAN'T GET MAD AT OTHERS FOR YOUR NEGLIGENCE . ALSO NOTE: SINCE YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT MIKE DOESN'T RESPOND TO HIS EMAIL, PICK A DEADLINE THAT WILL STILL GIVE YOU TIME TO IMPLEMENT A BACKUP PLAN IF HE DOESN'T GET IT TO YOU. IN THIS CASE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE BUDGET IS REALLY DUE BY THE FOLLOWING TUESDAY, BUT I TELL MIKE IT'S DUE FRIDAY.

## 2 days later:

From: Ramit  
To: Unresponsive Mike

Mike,

I haven't heard from you about your budget numbers, so this is a gentle reminder that I need them by this Friday at 12pm.

Thanks,

-Ramit

ALWAYS INCLUDE THE ORIGINAL EMAIL AND ATTACHMENT

1 day later (Thursday) Don't email -- call. One of the most important techniques in email is knowing when not to use email. There might be a million reasons Mike isn't responding -- his email might be down, he might be swamped with other emails, he may be in the middle of a personal crisis. Get him on the phone or, if you can't, leave a voicemail and send him a separate email letting him know that you left a voicemail and hope to hear from him by tomorrow. -- 1 day later (Friday at 12:01pm)

BY WRITING "GENTLE REMINDER," YOU SOFTEN THE MESSAGE -- EVEN IF IT ISN'T VERY GENTLE AT ALL.

From: Ramit  
To: Mike  
CC: Nicole

Hi Mike,

Unfortunately, I didn't hear from you in time, so I'll be skipping your budget in the presentation. I'm CCing Nicole who you can get in touch with if you have any questions.

Thanks,

-Ramit

CC YOUR BOSS AND BE SURE TO INCLUDE THE ENTIRE EMAIL THREAD.

PASTE BOTH ORIGINAL EMAILS WITH ATTACHMENT

At this point, you've tried everything -- even a phone call -- and he hasn't responded. It's out of your hands, but be sure to CC your boss (or other appropriate person) so they know you went out of your way to get a response. More importantly, since you CC'd Nicole and exposed Mike for not responding to emails, he will know to respond to your future emails. Best of all, you were respectful but firm in your requests.

## How to revive an old contact who has gone cold

It's impossible to keep up with all of your contacts, which means that sooner or later you will need to reconnect with old contacts that have gone cold. Here's how to do it.

REMINDE THEM OF THE CONNECTION YOU USED TO HAVE. APOLOGIZE FOR NOT KEEPING IN TOUCH AND THEN MOVE ON

USE THE WIDE-NARROW TECHNIQUE. BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE ASKING OF THEM AND BE WILLING TO WORK AROUND THEIR SCHEDULES.

Hi David,

You and I met at the Acme Conference last summer, where we talked about widget design. I'm currently at Bluth Corp working as a security researcher. I have to admit, I did a terrible job of keeping in touch after the conference.

My apologies! But I hope it's OK to reach out today.

I've been doing some research on potential career paths and consulting is one that keeps coming up as a possible fit. I noticed you worked at Acme and — if it's OK with you — I would love to ask you a few questions about your experiences at Acme.

Do you have time for a 15-minute phone call next week? I'm free Wednesday, Nov 16 1:00pm – 4:00pm Eastern or Thursday, Nov 17 2:30pm-4:00pm Eastern. I can also be flexible around your schedule.

I would really appreciate it.

Sincerely,  
-Ramit

P.S. I understand you're busy, so if it's easier for you, I'd be happy to send my questions via email. Thanks again.

## How to email someone you lost touch with (who you need a business favor from)

In this example, you're trying to re-tap your business network for job leads after being laid off.

BE SINCERE ABOUT SOMETHING YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THEM RECENTLY AND MEANT TO WRITE THEM ABOUT. IT COULD BE AN EVENT OR A CONVERSATION YOU HAD WITH SOMEONE ABOUT THEM.

ALWAYS CONSTRAIN THE TIME AND TELL THEM SPECIFICALLY WHY YOU'RE THANKFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THEM. EVERYBODY LOVES TO GIVE ADVICE.

YOU BETTER SINCE IT'S YOUR FAULT YOU FELL OUT OF TOUCH. NOTE USE OF WIDE/NARROW TECHNIQUE.

From: Ramit  
To: Nicole  
Subject: Coffee?

Hey Nicole,

Hope things are going well! We haven't chatted in a while but I saw your latest column in the Daily News and thought it was really great. Especially the part about bloggers -- how ridiculous!

I also wanted to get some advice on something. I've been thinking about moving jobs and I remember your terrific advice last time I was trying to make a move. You seemed to know everybody! Would you be willing to chat for 10-15 minutes so I can get your advice?

I can work around your schedule any time, especially this week

Thanks, and I'm really looking forward to chatting.

-Ramit

## How to respond when you're rejected by a busy person

The most common response when emailing an extremely busy person will be no response at all. But often, you'll receive a short response with a brisk rejection, which can feel terrible. However, even if a busy person is turning you down, there's an effective way to respond.

First, let's look at a bad response:

From: Busy Bob  
To: Pleading Pete  
Subject: Re: Free internship for you, Bob?

Hi Pete,

Thanks for your offer, but I'm swamped and don't have any openings this summer.

-Bob

Bob rejects Pete. Pete takes it personally and responds like an amateur.

From: Pleading Pete  
To: Busy Bob

I would have at least appreciated a few minutes on the phone. I could really help you. Never mind.

You may not believe this happens, but it does. One kooky person on my email list sent me a nonsensical email (which I ignored) and then sent the following messages every week:

“This is the SECOND time I have asked you my question. I would appreciate a response.”

“This is the THIRD time I have asked you my question. I would appreciate a response.”

I continue to ignore him.

**Here’s a good response:** Same as above, Bob rejects Pete. Rather than the poor example above, let’s watch how he responds.

From: Pleading Pete  
To: Busy Bob

Thanks, Bob. I understand.

If you don’t mind, I’ll keep you updated in my final year at Ohio State and if I see any interesting articles on email marketing, I’ll send them your way.

Let me know if I can help at all!

-Pete

Here, Pete adds value to the interaction by offering to help in the future, as well as paving the way for future communication. It’s easy to imagine Bob one day realizing that he needs to hire a marketing manager...and searching through his email for “that one enthusiastic guy who emailed a while ago” for the new hire. It happens all the time.

## Finesse Tricky Email Situations

How to check in after you've emailed something and haven't heard back

How to check in after you've emailed something and haven't heard back

Whenever emailing busy people, you'll find that they often don't get back to you -- even if you write an excellent email. Sometimes, it's not personal -- they really are just that busy. Don't give up right away. If the hottie at the bar doesn't respond when you hit on them, they're probably not interested. But in emails, never make that assumption. If you're truly sending a worthwhile email, try and try again -- just be more effective each time.

Here's a script to use.



From: Ramit  
To: Mike  
Subject: Would like to interview you -- 300,000 readers

Hi Mike,

Michelle suggested I get in touch. I'd love to interview you for an upcoming show I'm doing this Wednesday on my blog, <http://www.iwillteachyouoberich.com>, which hosts over 300,000 readers/month. I saw your article in The Atlantic and my readers would love to hear how you went about researching the topic.

Can we talk by phone this Thursday, 7/8 or Friday, 7/9 at 1pm PST? I can call you at your (212) number.

Thanks,

-Ramit



Let's say Mike doesn't respond. You can be pretty sure he'd like to do an interview with a major blog, so follow up again.

## Ramit's *feedback*

REPEAT A SHORTENED VERSION OF THE REQUEST HERE WITH THE TIME AND DATE. THIS WAY, THE RECIPIENT DOESN'T HAVE TO READ BELOW TO REMEMBER WHAT YOU'RE ASKING FOR.

INCLUDE SHORTENED 1-LINE BIO TO REMIND THE RECIPIENT WHO YOU ARE.

**What a busy person thinks:** Oops, I let that one get away. I sure am glad he emailed me again. The key phrases to use with busy people are the following: "Didn't want this to slip through the cracks," "I know you're swamped, so..." and "I didn't want you to miss this."

This makes it guilt-free for the recipient.

From: Ramit  
To: Mike  
Subject: Re: Would like to interview you -- 300,000 readers

Hi Mike,

Just wanted to check in -- can I interview you this Thursday or Friday at 1pm PST? I know you get tons of email, so I didn't want this to get buried in your inbox.

What do you think?

Thanks,

-Ramit

Founder, <http://www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com>

[INCLUDE ORIGINAL EMAIL HERE]

## How to refresh someone's memory as to how they know you

Most busy people get hundreds of emails every day and, despite how good-looking and interesting you are, they won't remember you after a few days.

Here's where you can use the 5-Minute Straitjacket Method. Put yourself in their shoes: You're one of many people who's emailed them asking for something. What makes you stand out? Chances are, nothing -- which is why it's critically important to remind them how they know you and why they should pay attention to you again. Here's a typical and effective reminder email. Use this script and insert your call-to-action beneath it.

RECOGNIZE HOW BUSY HE IS, THEN MOVE ON QUICKLY WITH AN UPDATE.

CALL TO ACTION THAT ONLY REQUIRES A BUSY PERSON TO REPLY WITH A TIME.

REPLY TO THE SAME THREAD YOU ORIGINALLY USED, SO THEY CAN SCROLL DOWN IF DESIRED

From: Ramit  
To: John  
Subject: Re: Free videos for your readers

CRISP REMINDER OF (1) WHEN YOU LAST TALKED, (2) WHO YOU ARE, AND (3) WHAT YOU WANT.

Hi John,

It's Ramit Sethi here. We chatted a couple weeks ago -- I'm the author of [iwillteachyoutoberich.com](http://iwillteachyoutoberich.com) (personal finance for 20- and 30-somethings), and we were chatting about having me record some videos for your readers.

I know you're swamped, but I didn't want this to get buried in your inbox. I've gotten 4 video ideas ready (saving, banking, budgeting, investing), which I can record immediately for your readers.

Can we talk on the phone this Wednesday or Thursday any time from 12pm PST to 4pm PST? I can call your office number.

What works for you?

ENDS WITH A QUESTION

Thanks,

-Ramit

## How to turn away an inquiry from someone you don't want to meet

So you get an email from someone who wants to meet you, but you're not really interested in meeting him. Maybe you don't have time, or you're just not interested in him. How do you turn him away politely?

THIS IS KEY. IF YOU CONCOCT SOME FAKE REASON, THE PERSON WILL ARGUE AROUND IT. SIMPLY SAY THAT YOU'RE NOT TAKING ON NEW PROJECTS SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON YOUR EXISTING ONES. IT IS TRUE AND NOBODY RATIONAL CAN ARGUE AGAINST THAT.

From: Patrick  
To: Ramit  
Subject: Career extension for iwillteachyoutoberich?

Hi Ramit, I see you're building out iwillteachyoutoberich really well (congrats on the Early Show coverage, that's huge!) and I want to talk to you about adding a "career" extension to your site. I'm a career expert (featured in the New York Times, etc) and would love to build an entire content section for your site.

Let me know!

Patrick

----

From: Ramit  
To: Patrick  
Subject: Career extension for iwillteachyoutoberich?

Hey Patrick,

Thanks for the email, and for the kind words. I really appreciate it.

Unfortunately, I'm not the best for this...I've got too much on my plate w/ iwillteachyoutoberich.com as it stands, and I'm turning down all new projects so I can focus on the ones I've got.

I hope your business expansion goes well!

Thanks for understanding,

-Ramit

NICE PITCH BUT I'M JUST NOT INTERESTED IN DOING THIS.

Don't ask the other person for anything, because you'll regret it later (as they will run with it and, for reciprocity reasons, expect something from you later). Simply decline, but always be polite.

And note that the "I'm not taking on new projects so I can focus on my existing ones" response works when you're not interested in meeting or doing a deal over any time period.

### Let's say he persists.

AS I ADVISED EARLIER, THIS IS A GREAT TECHNIQUE WHEN YOU GET REJECTED. BUT IN THIS CASE, I JUST DON'T WANT TO DO THIS AT ALL, NO MATTER THE TIME FRAME.

From: Patrick  
To: Ramit  
Subject: Career extension for iwillteachyoutoberich?

Would this be something that can be revisited in, say, six months time? By then, I'll have a lot of ready-to-go content that could be instantly published.

Patrick

From: Ramit  
To: Patrick  
Subject: Career extension for iwillteachyoutoberich?


I don't think I'll do this in 6 months (or any time in the near future), but if I do, I'll let you know.

Thanks,

-Ramit

**Sometimes, people want to meet you. Here's an email from someone who wants to meet on a specific date.**

BY NOT EXPLAINING WHY I SHOULD CARE ABOUT HIM, HE MAKES IT EASY TO DISMISS THIS REQUEST.



**Remember:** Always try to respond to emails like this. If someone's taking the initiative to email you, they're already revealing themselves to be in the top quarter of people in terms of taking initiative. You can politely decline and reward them with a response at the same time.

From: Francis  
To: Ramit  
Subject: Meetup in SF

Hi Ramit,

I'm a student at Penn and I'll be in town this weekend and through next week. I'd love to chat with you about your book, publishing, and possibly get some advice about my career.

From: Ramit  
To: Francis

Hey Francis, thanks for your email -- I'm flattered.

Unfortunately, I'm swamped and don't have any time to meet, but I do appreciate the email. Feel free to email any questions you may have in the meantime.

Thanks,

-Ramit



INCLUDE THIS LAST LINE IF YOU ARE REALLY INTERESTED IN HEARING FROM THEM. OTHERWISE, DROP IT.

## How to send an email reprimanding someone

Simple: Don't do it. ALWAYS ask to meet in person (or, at the very least, set up a call) and discuss the problems that way. Nasty or finger-pointing emails always get saved, and often get forwarded. It is unprofessional, and potentially damaging to you, so don't reprimand by email.

To: Mike  
From: Nita

Mike,

I'd like to talk to you tomorrow about the Oasis product launch.

Can you please call me at 1pm?

Thanks,

-Nita

LEAVE OUT THE PART ABOUT HOW MIKE  
BOTCHED THE LAUNCH.

## How to apologize for a mistake

It's very simple -- apologize without qualification, and include your own personal ruminations ("I was thinking...") to soften the blow. Apologies cost you nothing, so why not send it first class?

Don't worry if you think it's been too long. Whether or not the person still remembers (they probably do), it's always refreshing to know that someone has been thinking about you and wants to reconnect with you by apologizing. In many ways, an apology is a door-opener that allows people to rebuild relationships.

Hi Jackie,

I was just thinking about that offhand comment I made yesterday about your career, and I really want to apologize -- it came out wrong, I shouldn't have said it, and it was inappropriate.

I'm sorry.

-Tim

NO QUALIFICATION -- JUST APOLOGIZE.

## How to ask for vacation time from your boss

The 5-Minute Straitjacket Technique – a period of reflection and thinking before action -- will reveal that your manager is concerned with:

- Getting notice with enough advance time that he allocate resources to fill the gap
- Having projects fall through or stall, which will make him look bad

Accordingly, you can use this script to ask for vacation time from your boss.

“I WOULD LIKE TO...” ALWAYS SOFTENS THE TONE. COMPARE THAT TO “I REQUEST VACATION TIME...”

WHAT A BUSY PERSON THINKS: OK, I'VE BEEN GIVEN ENOUGH NOTICE AND RAMIT IS GOING TO HAND OFF HIS WORK WHILE HE'S GONE. SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.

INCLUDING THE WORD “BECAUSE” AFTER A REQUEST, REGARDLESS OF WHAT COMES AFTER THE “BECAUSE,” INCREASES COMPLIANCE.

To: Jack  
From: Ramit  
Subject: Vacation request (October 2nd through October 6th)

Hi Jack,

I'd like to request vacation time from Monday, October 2nd, through Friday, October 6th because I'll be taking a family vacation over those days.

While I'm gone, I'll be reachable by email but not phone. I'll be making sure that we have coverage in the support queue while I'm gone, and I'll also be distributing a playbook to my team so it's clear who owns which issues.

Is this OK?

Thanks,

-Ramit



## How to ask a vendor to pay you (debt collection)

If you're working as an entrepreneur, you'll eventually work with a client who is slow to pay -- or doesn't pay at all. Here's a script to use to collect payment respectfully and quickly.

DON'T INCLUDE THE AMOUNT IN THE SUBJECT LINE, AS PEOPLE DON'T LIKE TO OPEN EMAILS THAT ARE CERTAINLY GOING TO COST THEM MONEY.

INTENTIONALLY WEAK CALL TO ACTION SO YOU DON'T SEEM OVERBEARING.

From: Jane

To: Michael

Subject: Payment for ebook design

Hi Michael,

I hope your users are enjoying the ebook we worked on. I think your feedback was terrific and really improved the final design. It's been a pleasure working with you!

I'm attaching an invoice for the project. As discussed, the total bill is \$1,250, payable via Paypal (name@email.com) or via check.

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks, and I look forward to working together in the future.

-Jane

2 weeks go by with no acknowledgment.

JANE IS MAKING CLEAR THAT SHE'S DOING MICHAEL A FAVOR.

From: Jane  
To: Michael  
Subject: Re: Payment for ebook design

I know you're swamped but I didn't want this to fall between the cracks, so this is a quick reminder that payment for the ebook design work is due by 10/25. There's a late fee that kicks in after 10/25, so I wanted to send you this with plenty of advance notice.

I've attached the invoice and the original email here.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

-Jane

[INCLUDE ATTACHMENT/REGULAR EMAIL]

NOTICE THE LACK OF AN EXCLAMATION POINT OR ANY OTHER EFFUSIVE TONE. THIS EMAIL IS FAR MORE SERIOUS AND BUSINESS-LIKE.

Another week goes by. Your next email should take the personal approach. Designer and author Andy Clarke once posted on his blog the “most effective debt collection email” he’s ever written. It abandons business tone and makes a personal appeal:

Hi [..],

A quick note to say that I am really disappointed that you have still not paid me the [..] that I’m owed for the work I did for you. In the grand scheme of things, it’s not a lot of money, but actually I think that this is more a matter of respect.

I have always been there at the drop of a hat to sort out any problems you might have. I love working with you and have always taken our relationship as more than just client/supplier. But if I can’t rely on you paying promptly or it takes several attempts and reminders to get my money, that’s not good business.

I’m not saying that I don’t want to work with you, I do. But if I don’t receive what I am owed within the next couple of days, I will have to think twice about helping you in the future.

Kind regards  
Andy Clarke

Every client settled their account within two days. You can lay it on thick or modify it depending on how much you value your working relationship with the person. Sometimes a simple personal entreaty will do the trick: *“I did this work for you in good faith and am confused by your delay in paying me according to our agreement.”*

If the personal approach doesn't feel right to you, or it is still not effective, stop emailing. Call. When you call, be sure to be gracious and assume that they simply haven't seen your emails. Otherwise, if you go in with a negative attitude (*"You haven't paid me and you're trying to screw me"*), things will not go well. I always like to say something like this:

*"Hi Michael, I just wanted to check in with you. I've sent a couple emails about payment for the email ebook, and I think you might have missed them. Have you sent the check yet?"*

Once you conclude the conversation, reply to your above two emails and document the conversation in writing. *"Hi Michael, great to talk to you today. We spoke about the check and you mentioned that you'd be mailing it tomorrow. I should expect it by 10/27 and I'll waive any late fees. I'll call you on 10/28 if there are any issues."*

## **Connect With Bloggers & Authors**

How to get a popular blogger to review your product

Popular bloggers get dozens of pitches and emails every day. Most of them are unfocused and rambling. Below, is an example of how to write a specific email to get a popular blogger's attention.



First, let's look at an example that could be improved:

## Ramit's feedback

WHAT A BUSY PERSON THINKS: I AM BUSY... WHAT DO YOU WANT? HE FLATTERS...BUT AT THE END OF THE PARAGRAPH (WHICH IS SO LONG I'LL NEVER READ IT). WHY DID HE ADD (UNKNOWINGLY)? THAT MAKES MY MIND WANDER: 'HUH? WHY UNKNOWINGLY? WHAT DOES HE MEAN? DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG?' DO NOT DISTRACT FROM YOUR MAIN POINT.

FINALLY

THIS IS NOT A REASON I CARE ABOUT.

TOO MUCH INFO

WHAT IS THE CALL TO ACTION? NEXT STEP? WHY DID HE EMAIL HER?

From: Charlie  
To: Pam  
Subject: For Pam: Free e-book for your readers

Hey Pam,

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT 2-LINE INTRO

My name is Charlie -- I'm friends with Ramit Sethi, and have been working with him for just shy of a year now. I actually edited the audio for the conversation that you guys recorded awhile back.

For the last year, I've been (unknowingly) practicing all the things you preach: I chased opportunities that excited me, took the self-employed route, didn't ask permission, was overly generous, and stood on the shoulders of giants. Because I did all this, it lead to opportunities like helping Ramit with the marketing strategy for his book, working on the marketing for an independent film, helping Tim Ferriss with his next book, and many other fun experiences. Your advice is spot on, and I can personally attest to its validity.

Anyways, I'm emailing you for a few reasons. First, I've actually been meaning to introduce myself for awhile now. I've heard very good things about you from Ramit, and he's encouraged me to reach out.

WOULD YOU SAY "CONGRUENT" IN REAL LIFE?

Second, I know that my outlook on approaching a career is very congruent with yours. For instance, your open letter to recent college grads was fairly similar to the post I wrote back in March. And finally, I recently wrote a 30 page e-book called "Recession-Proof Graduate" that I released for free on Ramit's site, and I thought you in particular would enjoy it. There are specific principles I lay out in the book to help people in their early 20's (and even older) so they can find a job that will be spiritually sustainable. The e-book is attached to this email, and I hope you enjoy it.

Good to meet you Pam, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Charlie

BURIED IN THIS PARAGRAPH IS THE NUGGET THAT YOU WROTE AN EBOOK AND ATTACHED IT HERE. BUSY PEOPLE WILL LIKELY MISS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS.

Here's an improved version of the same email:

IN 2 SENTENCES, CHARLIE ESTABLISHES WHAT MOTIVATES HIM, WHAT HE DID, AND WHAT HE WANTS.

EACH OF THE QUESTIONS IS INTENTIONAL: THEY SPEAK DIRECTLY TO PAM, WHO TALKS ABOUT THIS STUFF ALL THE TIME. CHARLIE ALSO INCLUDES A CALLOUT TO HER BOOK, SHOWING PERSONALIZATION. FINALLY, HE INCLUDES NAMES OF PEOPLE HE'S WORKED WITH, WHICH ADDS CREDIBILITY.

A NICE, SUBTLE CALL TO ACTION, GIVING PAM AN EASY OUT IF SHE'S NOT INTERESTED.

Notably, Charlie is now a true master at writing emails that connect with the world's busiest people.

Hey Pam,

My name is Charlie -- I'm friends with Ramit Sethi, and have been working with him for about a year. I actually edited the audio for the conversation that you and Ramit recorded awhile back.

I was so sick and tired of hearing about people getting the same old jobs -- and hating them -- that I wrote a 30-page ebook called "Recession-Proof Your Career" (attached here). It's already been downloaded 4,000 times and I thought your readers might like it.

It's written for people in their early 20s, but a lot of the principles are the same ones you apply in your book (especially on page 59). How can you be remarkable? How can you avoid a dead-end job (or find a more meaningful job than your current one)? I also include specific scripts and tactics I used to work with Ramit, Tucker Max, Tim Ferriss, etc.

I spent a lot of time on the ebook, so just wanted to send you a copy (attached) and offer it up to your readers if you like.

Thanks!

-Charlie

P.S. Here's what some people are saying about the ebook: <http://charliehoehn.com/2009/07/14/announcing-my-first-e-book/> [FURTHER CREDIBILITY]

## How to pitch a popular blogger with your affiliate deal

It's important to know when to build a relationship and when to simply pitch transactionally (i.e., "I can help you make a lot of money promoting my product"). This is typically the affiliate model, which has a bad reputation because many people doing affiliate marketing are simply looking for a quick buck. However, if you use the 5-Minute Straitjacket Strategy and spend time focusing on the person you're pitching, you can create a personalized email that gets results.

Now, I'll tell you up-front that this email is a bit aggressive. The product isn't the right fit for my audience (which is why I ultimately declined to work with this person). But the level of personalization and thought that went into this email makes it an excellent example of understanding your customer. In this case, Jacob assumed I wanted to make money -- and accordingly crafted an email that highlights potential conversion rates and revenue.



Subject: Hi Ramit!

THIS IS A BAD SUBJECT LINE BUT THE EMAIL CONTENT MAKES UP FOR IT.

Hi Ramit,

I've changed the personal details below.

HE PERSONALIZES THE MESSAGE

My name is Jacob Reiss and I run a popular self improvement blog at XX.com. I've known about your site for some time and it's great to see that you've finished writing your book! I look forward to its release in April.

HE HASN'T GOTTEN TO THE POINT YET, BUT HE'S CAUGHT MY ATTENTION WITH THAT BIG NUMBER.

The reason I'm emailing you is that I'm reaching out to bloggers such as yourself and extending them a free gift and a great opportunity.

You might've read the best selling classic [BOOK NAME] which sold over 60 million copies worldwide and is widely considered a must read for all entrepreneurs. If not, I strongly suggest you do. It's a great book based on 20 years of research [DETAILS OF BOOK].

HE USES SOCIAL PROOF. INSTEAD OF TELLING ME HOW GOOD IT IS, HE POINTS TO A TESTIMONIALS PAGE.

I wrote an ebook based on that called [EBOOK NAME] that clearly states what the secret is that [AUTHOR] mentioned in his book (he left several clues and never directly stated what it was – he wanted the reader to find it himself), in other words the secret everyone he interviewed used to achieve their respective goals. I've used the clues he provided and point out exactly where it is in every chapter of the book and support it with plenty of logic and examples and reasoning.

You can read more about what the secret is and see the kind of raving testimonials people have made at <http://www.XX.com/testimonials>.

HE FOCUSES ON MY READERS GETTING VALUE OUT OF IT.

I think it's something you'll enjoy and find very interesting in the sense that after you read it, you'll see how you've used it to achieve your goals and something that your readers might find interesting as well in terms of coming to that same realization too and after knowing it, using it to achieve their respective goals.

## CONNECT WITH BLOGGERS & AUTHORS

NOW HE MOVES TO THE TRANSACTIONAL FOCUS. BASED ON HIS ASSUMPTION THAT I WANT TO KNOW HOW TO MONETIZE MY SITE, HE POINTS OUT HOW MUCH ANOTHER SITE MADE BY PROMOTING HIS PRODUCT.

IN OTHER WORDS, DON'T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT... SEE FOR YOURSELF.

HE UNDERSTANDS THAT EVERYONE LOVES THE IDEA OF RESIDUAL INCOME, AND HIGHLIGHTS IT HERE.

RECIPROCITY

THIS IS THE OFFER

{email continued}

BigSelfImprovementSite.com, a popular self improvement blog with over 13,000 subscribers just recently reviewed it and they converted at 19% (\$8.72/sale) over the 3 day special offer I created as a customized campaign for them. It offered their readers great value for a great price for 72 hours. They are still generating residual sales.

You can read the review at: [URL]. Also, Jack at AnotherSelfImprovementSite.com who attributed the success of this blog to this ebook, with over 12,000 subscribers just reviewed it and he converted at 18.5%.

You can read the review at: [URL]

He is still powering through residuals consistently.

If you'd like to accept my gift of a free copy of this book to review, please let me know and I'll send it right over.

Should you like it after finishing reading it and think your readers will benefit from it, I want to extend an opportunity to you similar to the opportunity I gave to sites such as BigSelfImprovementSite.com and AnotherSelfImprovementSite.com

You can become an affiliate of the book and make 50% of each book that sells (\$8.72/sale). We will work together to create a special offer so that they will buy directly from you and not from me so you can reap the maximum profits.

{email continued}

THIS IS WHERE HE SHINES. HE'S DONE HIS RESEARCH TO FIGURE OUT HOW MANY SUBSCRIBERS I HAVE, THEN HE'S RUN THE MATH FOR ME. HE'S NOT LEAVING ANYTHING UP TO CHANCE -- AND \$45,000 IS VERY ENTICING.

SIMPLE CALL TO ACTION THAT TRIGGERS RECIPROcity.

{email continued}

If 20% of your 25,844 subscribers convert, it comes out to about \$45,071.94. Not a bad amount to make in 72 hours. Plus you'll be making residual sales as well long after the special 72 hour offer.

I think your readers will benefit immensely from the information like thousands of others around the world have and I think especially with the economic conditions right now all around the world, it's something people desperately need so they can find out how to unlock their natural success mechanism to naturally achieve the goals they truly desire (this will make more sense when you read the book). I also believe after reading it, you'll realize you've used the secret to naturally achieve your own goals as well!

Please let me know if you'd like a copy of the book and I'll be glad to send it to you.

Thank you and have a great day!  
Brian

**What a busy person thinks:** "Wow, that's a lot of money. And other sites that are SMALLER than mine have done well? I bet I could CRUSH this. Well...I should take a look at his ebook first." That's exactly what I thought when I read his email. And so I replied, asked him to send over a copy, and reviewed it carefully. Unfortunately, the ebook wasn't a good fit for my audience, but his email is an excellent example of how to send a transactional/affiliate email. Remember, though, if you're trying to build an ongoing, professional relationship, you'll want to take a lighter approach. But for its purpose of a transaction, this is a terrific, well-researched email -- even though it's long!

## How to intern for a popular blogger or author

SHOWS CREDIBILITY (50 MILLION HITS!) AND TELLS ME ABOUT HIMSELF QUICKLY.

WILL WORK FOR FREE -- GREAT OFFER THAT I VALUE.

EASY CONTACT INFO AND HIS PORTFOLIO -- WHICH OF COURSE I CLICKED TO.

Less than 3 minutes after receiving this email, I had Joey on the phone. I called him from the tarmac of a flight I was taking -- this was a Friday afternoon, and I explained an idea I had. By Monday, he had sent me a fully working prototype of a project, which was superb. I was absolutely blown away. I've now hired him as a member of my staff.

YES THAT WAS REALLY THE SUBJECT, AND IT'S AWESOME.

From: Joey

To: Ramit

Subject: I want to work for you for free

Hey Ramit,

PERSONAL, GENUINE FLATTERY WITH SPECIFIC RESULTS.

Love your site, especially the articles about automation and personal entrepreneurship. It's because of you that I have multiple ING Direct accounts for my savings goals, a Roth IRA, automatic contributions, and asset allocation all set up.

I'm a web developer for WEBSITE, a site that gets around 50 million hits per month. I used to do freelance work exclusively, and I'm preparing to make the switch back to doing freelance work ~30 hours/week while I travel and study in China. I work in Ruby on Rails, doing everything from the database to the front-end, and I'm especially good at rapidly prototyping new ideas and projects.

In order to start getting myself back out there, I'd love to have the chance to do some development work for you, completely gratis. If you like my work and have some paid projects for me down the road, that'd be great of course, but I'd be happy just for the opportunity to network and receive a little advice. I'm sure you have a project or two in the back of your head that you haven't had time to prototype yourself yet; let me do it for you!

You can give me a call at XXX-XXX-XXXX, or find me on Google Talk under this address. You can also check out some samples of my work here: [www.personalwebsitehere.com](http://www.personalwebsitehere.com)

### Email #10 Commandment

A good email is just the start.  
You still have to follow through.

## How to interview an author/blogger

SHE EXPLICITLY RESPECTS MY TIME

THIS IS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE 5-MINUTE STRAITJACKET STRATEGY. SHE KNOWS THOSE WORDS WILL INTEREST ME.

NICE PERSONALIZATION

FLATTERY + MAKING LIFE EASY + RECIPROCITY = EXCELLENT

To: Ramit Sethi  
From: Julie

QUICK, GET TO THE POINT

Hi Ramit,

My name is Julie and I'd like to interview you for a profile I'm writing at my blog, <http://www.healthblog2035yrols.com>.

I know you're insanely busy, so here's why I think you should give me 20 minutes of your time:

\* I host over 8,000 readers/month

\* While that may not sound like much, I recently did a post on author John Tabala (see my past interviews with authors) and sold over 500 books in 24 hours

\* I also have an audience of 20-35 year-olds, but they're mostly focused on fitness/health -- a nice complement to personal finance.

Plus, I'm a huge fan and would be happy to send you a recording of our interview so you can post it on your blog.

If this works for you, I'm flexible all this week (especially early morning and any time after 5pm PST).

What would work for you?

Thanks,

-Julie  
(XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Another example email (this time, a real one I received):**

ANDREW WENT THROUGH MY PUBLISHER TO REACH ME.



SPECIFIC TIME WITH A CLEAR CTA



From: Andrew Warner  
To: Ramit, Andrea, Laura  
Subject: I Will Teach You To Be Rich

Andrea & Laura, thanks for the intro.

Ramit, can I interview you by \*video Skype\* on Thursday, April 2nd @ 11 AM Pacific time?

I think your book will be there early next week. That should give me enough time to read it and be prepared.

You can see a sample of my work in this interview I did with Seth Godin: <http://blog.mixergy.com/tribes-seth>

Andrew Warner  
Founder, Mixergy.com



THE FACT THAT HE'S INTERVIEWED SOMEONE AS INFLUENTIAL AS SETH GODIN MADE ME BELIEVE IN HIS CREDIBILITY ENOUGH TO CLICK THROUGH AND INVESTIGATE MORE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE INTERVIEWED SETH GODIN -- BUT YOU DO NEED TO SHOW YOUR CREDIBILITY USING PAST EXPERIENCE, NUMBER OF READERS, ETC.

Note: I agreed to the interview and had a great time chatting with Andrew. My interview is here: <http://mixergy.com/blog-marketing/>

## Boost Your Productivity

### How to schedule appointments (via a virtual assistant)

Virtual Assistants can help your overall efficiency but only if you manage them well. Specificity is crucial when dealing with a virtual assistant. If you're not crystal clear in your email request, you'll burn through any time saved with back-and-forth emails. You can use this proven email script to tailor your own correspondence with virtual assistants.

### Ramit's *feedback*

GIVE STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS WHICH THE VA CAN REFER TO IF THEY GET LOST IN THE DETAILS. THESE INSTRUCTIONS TAKE 5 MINUTES TO WRITE BUT WILL INVARIABLY SAVE YOU 5-10X THAT FROM EMAIL RESPONSES AND SWITCHING COSTS.

PROVIDE ALL RELEVANT INFO SO YOUR VA DOESN'T NEED TO ASK YOU ANY FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS TO COMPLETE THE TASK.

Hello,

Please set up these appointments on Monday morning (12/17), when the doctors' offices open.

Please set up the following medical appointments for me:

1. A dental appointment (annual checkup)
2. An eye checkup (annual checkup)

START WITH A SPECIFIC RESULTS SO THERE IS NO CONFUSION ABOUT THE DELIVERABLES.

#### WHERE TO LOOK

- \* Please look up doctors on <http://www.bluecrossca.com> — my doctor must accept my medical insurance (Blue Cross PPO — Lumenos)
- \* Then cross-reference the doctors' names on [yelp.com](http://yelp.com) to find doctors with positive reviews
- \* Call the doctors to see which doctors are available for checkups on the below dates
- \* Please confirm with the doctors that, as a member of Blue Cross Lumenos PPO, I will have 100% exam coverage (dental exam) and a \$15 co-pay (vision exam)

#### WHEN I'M AVAILABLE

- \* December 17, 18, 19, 21, 27, 28
- \* 8am – 11am PST and 4pm-7pm PST

#### LOCATION

- \* Located near the ZIP code of XXXXX

Thank you,  
Ramit

## How to reduce back-and-forth emails

Busy people don't want to email you 5 times to schedule a meeting. I've been on the receiving end of this, and if the email thread went on too long to schedule a simple meetup, I often just let it drop. It wasn't intentional -- I did want to meet with the person -- but life took over, I got busy, and most important, if someone can't make their email efficient, are they going to be able to get other logistics right? In this situation, I'm going to show you a BAD and GOOD example of coordinating logistics. The true-story scenario is this:

- I met a close friend for coffee and told him I was looking for an office for one day to host a client meeting.
- This close friend runs a company and offered me his office space for the day
- I followed up with him by email the day after



**Here's my first email:**

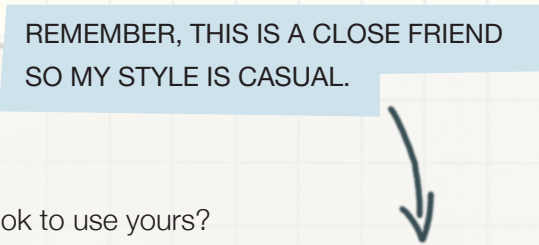
From: Ramit  
To: Rahim  
Subject: Office conference room on 10/5 -- is it ok to use yours?

I'm bringing someone in from 9-5pm on Monday, 10/5. Just need a closed room where we can work undisturbed...are you sure it's cool with you/your officemates? I can buy lunch for everybody.

-Ramit

P.S. I will even use my credit card, not yours

REMEMBER, THIS IS A CLOSE FRIEND  
SO MY STYLE IS CASUAL.



From: Rahim  
To: Ramit  
CC: Ashley (office assistant)

Ashley: Heads up, my good friend Ramit and his colleague will be working out of our office on 10/5.

Ramit: I won't be in town, but Ashley can help you with anything you need.

Ok, let's take a break here and quickly understand what's going on. Rahim is a busy startup founder, so he delegated this to his assistant, Ashley. You should treat Ashley the same you'd treat Rahim -- respecting her time and forming a carefully worded email to minimize email back-and-forth.

Let's take an example of a BAD email, then we'll go to the GOOD email. **BAD EXAMPLE:**

From: Ramit  
To: Rahim, Ashley

Thanks Rahim.

Ashley, what do I need to know about arranging a conference room on 10/5?

-Ramit

Continuing on the bad example...

From: Ashley  
To: Rahim, Ramit

Hi Ramit,

What time do you need the room?

What kind of materials will you need, and how many people do you expect?

Can I make any special accommodations for you?

From: Ramit  
To: Ashley, Rahim

Thanks for the questions.

I'll be there at 9am-4pm. I'd love to have some whiteboard space if possible...do you think you could arrange that?

Also, what about lunch? Should I plan on getting lunch at 11:30 or closer to noon?

-Ramit

**What a busy person thinks:**

- Ashley: What? I don't know what you need to know. Why don't YOU do the work and figure it out, then ask me?
- Rahim: Oh god, I already get 500 emails/day, and now I'm going to be stuck on this email thread that's going to be at least 10 messages long. Ugh.

As you can see, this email thread is worthless. It's going to go on for 7-10 more indirect messages, leaving everyone, including the clueless sender, aggravated. And all because he didn't take a few minutes to formulate his key questions. Let's take a look at a GOOD example.

**Good example**

THIS REMOVES HIM FROM THE REST OF THE RE-PLIES, WHICH HE CLEARLY WANTS AS INDICATED BY DELEGATING THIS TO HIS ASSISTANT.

KNOW YOUR ROLE AND OFFER TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE.

NOTICE THAT SHE DIDN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION ABOUT HOW MANY PEOPLE I SHOULD ORDER FOR. THAT'S MY FAULT -- I BUNDLED IN TOO MANY QUESTIONS TO THAT BULLET POINT. I'LL JUST OVER-ORDER RATHER THAN BUG HER AGAIN.

The difference is night and day. When you spend 5 minutes preparing, you can send 2 emails vs. 10+ back-and-forth emails. And this is with an assistant! It's even more important when dealing with an extremely busy person.

From: Ramit  
To: Ashley  
BCC: Rahim

Thanks Rahim (moving you to BCC now).

Ashley, thanks for your help on this! I was wondering...

- Keys: I'll be getting to the office at 8:45am to set up. Is there a way to get a key before (I can come pick it up any time) so I can be sure I get in there early in the morning?
- Wifi: Is there a password?
- Lunch: Is there a favorite place people prefer for me to order lunch? And how many should I order for?
- What's your cell phone #?

-Ramit  
XXX-XXX-XXXX

From: Ashley  
To: Ramit

Hi Ramit,  
I'll be here by 8:45 on 10/5, so I can go ahead and let you in.

For the wifi, the password is 1234.

I think lunch is up to you, though I can recommend a few places and get it for you.

Thanks,  
Ashley

## How to write an autoresponder email

Sometimes the best way to deal with email is to tell everyone when (or if) they can expect a response from you. An autoresponder message can free you from being chained to your inbox. Here's a simple one you can use to give yourself more time to focus on higher-value work. Tim Ferriss is the master of these, as he describes in his book, **The 4-Hour Workweek**.

Thank you for your email!

In order to increase the time I can devote to high-priority and high-value projects, I am only checking email at 11:00 am and 5:00 pm.

If you have an immediate need, please call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX. I'm happy to help you.

Thank you,  
Kelly

REASSURE PEOPLE THAT YOU'RE IGNORING THEIR EMAIL FOR A LIMITED TIME AND A GOOD REASON.

MOST PEOPLE WON'T BOTHER TO CALL UNLESS IT REALLY IS AN EMERGENCY. AND YOU STILL LOOK HELPFUL.

## How to prevent wasting your time at a meeting by asking for an agenda first – politely

Busy people get lots of meeting requests, and many of them are pointless. As a result, they often ask for an agenda before meeting...but this can be touchy, as it's weird and can be impolite. Below is a real email exchange from someone who wanted to meet me to get some advice -- but I wasn't sure why, which is always a red flag.

Notice how her response entices me to meet her. Even though she wants my time, she eagerly offers to help me, which completely disarms my defenses. [First email is an introduction by a mutual friend. Now, for the second email.]

From: Lily  
To: Ramit

Hey Ramit,

Good to reconnect! Are you in SF these days? I'd love to pick your brain over lunch or drinks sometime. **Let me know if you've got some free time next week!**

Thanks,  
Lily

FAIRLY VAGUE REQUEST MAKES ME NERVOUS ABOUT WASTING TIME.

I MAKE A MENTION OF A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO SOFTEN THE BLOW OF THE NEXT PARAGRAPH.

THIS IS A POLITE WAY OF SAYING: EXACTLY WHAT DO YOU WANT? IF SHE OFFERS A VAGUE "I JUST WANT TO BOUNCE SOME IDEAS OFF YOU," I WILL BE TOO BUSY TO MEET UP. BUT IF SHE HAS SOMETHING SPECIFIC AND INTERESTING, I WILL MAKE TIME.

To: Lily  
From: Ramit

Hey Lily,

Good to chat again. I met up with Jon the other day and had a great time.

What are you interested in chatting about -- Acme marketing stuff? Something else? Let me know a little more...I'm going to be traveling and will try to figure out when we can grab some time together.

Thanks,

-Ramit

To: Ramit  
From: Lily

Hey Ramit,

Yeah, Jon came back from your meeting with him really excited about email marketing :) I was hoping to get more details from you on how you implemented it and what your experience with AWeber has been like so far. I saw the videos with them, really good stuff!

I'd also love to talk about potentially interviewing you on Acme for a class that's focused on the marketing tactics you've executed on. Instead of a general interview, it'd be great to drill down on something very specific. If you're interested in testing stuff, I'd be happy to work with you on some tests that we could then talk about as well. Building on that, definitely let me know if there's anything I can help you out with! :)

Thanks,  
Lily

COMPLIMENTS ME BUT I DON'T REALLY CARE...  
I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHAT SHE WANTS.

FASCINATING -- I AM DEFINITELY INTERESTED.  
SHE HAS OFFERED TO HELP PROMOTE ME AND  
OFFER ME FREE EMAIL-MARKETING ADVICE...  
ALL IN EXCHANGE FOR ME TALKING FOR A FEW  
MINUTES. THIS IS A WIN-WIN.

To: Lily  
From: Ramit  
Cc: Melissa

Sounds great. Happy to chat.

Melissa, can you schedule some time when I get back from NY ?

Thanks,

-Ramit

Lily did a great job of offering something interesting in exchange for a meeting. Although the email could have been stronger at the beginning (it was extremely vague, setting off “time-waster” red flags), she quickly clarified what she wanted to meet about and made it relevant for me.

If you’re in the position of getting requests for meetings that are of questionable value, always push (politely) for an agenda of talking points. In fact, you can even push harder than I did by replying to Lily’s last email with something like this:

“That sounds interesting, but I’m pretty swamped. Would you be able to send me a really specific agenda? That way, I can see if I can re-prioritize things to make it. No promises, but if you can send an agenda, I would really appreciate it.”

## How to decline pointless meetings at work without burning bridges

Pointless meetings at work are a ridiculous time and energy suck. That's why it's best to get out of them if you can. Unless a superior called the meeting, here's a script you can use to politely decline without burning any bridges.

To: Noah  
From: Gavin  
Subject: Re: Meeting to brainstorm holiday party

Noah,

Thanks for the invite, but I'm rushing to meet a few pressing deadlines and need to bow out of this one. You can send me the minutes to keep me in the loop.

Thanks,

Gavin



## Manage Social Logistics

How to help a friend get a job using your business contacts

If you are skilled with email you can open doors not only for yourself but for your friends, too. My friend hated her job and was ready to switch, and since she's terrific, I offered to help her out. Here's a real email I sent to a few close business contacts that helped her land a job she loves.

This email takes advantage of the **"Ramit 1-2 Punch"** by making a small request ("Can I send you some info?"). Response rate was 100% to 8 people -- the 8 most important people I reached out to, individually.

From: Ramit  
To: Jack  
Subject: Smart Stanford friend looking for marketing associate job -- can I send her resume?

Hi Jack,

One of my good friends, Tessa Tandy (Stanford '04) is looking to transition out of Morgan Stanley and is looking for a "marketing associate" (or similar) position at an interesting company.

I was thinking you might be able to help point her to some interesting opportunities. Can I send you some more information about exactly what she's looking for?

Thanks,

-Ramit

From: Jack  
To: Ramit

Sure, you can send the info.

I know some people have contacted me lately, but I don't remember specifics. I can keep this in mind for future queries.

Jack

From: Ramit  
To: Jack  
Great, thanks!

Tessa is a good friend of mine, Stanford '04, and she's looking for jobs with titles like "marketing analyst/associate." (I've included an email from her below where she lists some of her targets, but you may also know about unpublished opportunities.)

I recommend her very highly.

If you know of any opportunities/companies that are looking for great people, can you forward to your contacts?

Thanks,

-Ramit

**What a busy person thinks:** Excellent, I can just forward this to someone and add "Comes from a highly trusted source" and I'll be DONE -- plus, if they hire her, it makes me look good.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Tessa Lam  
Subject: Resume and Letter Enclosed -- Draft

Hi Ramit,

As we discussed, I've been with Morgan Stanley for almost 3 years, and I'm looking to move into a more creative and analytical role that's related to tech. While I've spent the past few years developing my sales and marketing skills at a Wall Street firm, I'm interested in building on these skills in the tech world that moves a little quicker.

Sample positions I'm seeking have titles like these:

- Marketing Analyst / Associate
- Product Marketing Analyst / Associate

Sample companies I'm interested in:

- Apple
- Facebook
- Glam Media
- Google
- Hi5
- LinkedIn
- Salesforce
- Sugar Inc.

For your reference, I've also attached my resume. Thanks in advance for your help!

Thanks,  
Tessa

**The key here is writing an email that can be forwarded.** Busy people are doing you a favor by tapping their networks, so they should not have to do additional work (like writing a paragraph for someone they hardly know).

Since I was going to be putting myself on the line, I coordinated with Tessa to make things easy for my contacts. I asked her to send me a highly detailed, forwardable email. In fact, we went back and forth 2-3 times to get that email just right.

A forwardable email should have no inside information (e.g. “Thanks for looking at this Ramit, can’t wait to chat about that new project on Tuesday”) or potentially embarrassing information that you wouldn’t want potential employers to see (e.g. “Thanks Ramit...Gosh this job search has taken forever. Hope SOMEONE will find my resume interesting, lol.”) We also identified the target job titles she’s looking for (“Marketing analyst”) and target companies. This email was very successful in getting Tessa several interviews and, eventually, a new job that she loves.

## How to invite a bunch of friends out and have them actually RSVP

Organizing group events takes a special touch. Too often people will send vague questions or make unclear suggestions and blame their friends when nobody responds... when in reality, it's their own poor email-writing skills that cause people not to respond.

**For example:**



**What a busy friend thinks:** Is she kidding me? What is my call to action? And since I know nobody else is going to respond...I won't respond either, even though she's a friend. Remember: your friends are busy. They have jobs. This isn't college.

**Here's a better version of this email:**

Hey party people,

So my best friend from Philly Nina is coming to town this wknd and I wanted to take her clubbing in the city.

I loved Club Brava this past Friday so I wanna go there again.

If you guys are interested, let me know, or just show up, whatever.

Michelle

Hey guys,

So my best friend from Philly Nina is coming to town this wknd and I wanted to take her clubbing in the city. I'd love it if you could join us.

I loved Club Brava this past Friday so I wanna go there again. We're going to meet at Brava at 10:30pm (on 4th and Mission). If you want me to put you on the guest list, reply and let me know by Wed at 5pm.

Michelle

For an even better approach, use the **Ramit 1-2 Punch** here to get compliance, then send the logistical information. Using the template below, you can systematize your process so it hardly takes any additional time -- but your RSVPs will go way up.

1<sup>st</sup> EMAIL:

Hey Noah,  
  
A bunch of us are going to Brava this Friday. You wanna join?  
  
Let me know and I'll send you the details.  
  
Michelle

2<sup>nd</sup> EMAIL:

Hey, cool, I'll add you to the guest list. Below are the details. See you Friday at 10:30pm!  
  
Michelle  
  
---Original message---  
Hey guys,  
  
So my best friend from Philly Nina is coming to town this wknd and I wanted to take her clubbing in the city.  
I loved Club Brava this past Friday so I wanna go there again.  
We're going to meet at Brava at 10:30pm (on 4th and Mission). If you want me to put you on the guest list, reply and let me know by Wed at 5pm.  
  
Michelle

## How to invite people to an event you're throwing

Busy people always have other things they could be doing with their time. The last thing they want is to get stuck at a dead social event with a bunch of strangers. Including a list of invitees in your invitation email is both reassuring and encourages more people to RSVP.

Here's a proven template you can use yourself:



Hi XX,

I'm organizing a champagne party for a bunch of cool friends and would love if you could make it! The idea is that I will buy dinner and champagne at a nice restaurant for really interesting people to share their ideas about life and business. I think you're a superstar and it would make my day if you could be there!

So far the people I've invited are: 1) XX - YY Company 2) XX - YY Company 3) XX - YY Company 4) XX - YY Company

I know that it's a little bit hectic with Christmas so I was hoping to do it in the second week of January. Please let me know if this works for you!

Cheers, Ramit

## How to write a party invitation that excites people

So many party invitations are dry, boring, and a chore to respond to. Witness anyone who's ever received an Evite: They'll cautiously eye it in their inbox, but avoid opening it until they can come up with the most "clever" response... which is generally never, resulting in skewed RSVPs. Worse yet, as the number of invitations sent over email has increased, it's more difficult for your event to stand out.

Below, I'm going to show you the invitations that I did for my birthday party the past two years. You'll notice that we went over-the-top with a genuinely ridiculous proposition. When it comes to writing invitation emails, I like to find someone who is almost cartoonishly enthusiastic and have them draft up the emails.

### First birthday invitation:

The Ram It Olympics  
Because every man can be a hero.  
Hello, Ramit's Friends!

This is Julie writing -- Ramit's friend. Yes, I snuck into Ramit's Facebook account. Ramit is too busy finishing his book (that none of you will ever read) to plan his birthday, so I decided to do it for him. We've got a big backyard and on Saturday, June 28th, we're holding...  
**THE RAM IT OLYMPICS!!!**

NOTICE OVER-THE-TOP (AND TRUE) CHARACTER THAT MAKES PEOPLE PAY ATTENTION AND GET EXCITED.

{email continued}

Come test the limits of your bodies, wills, and minds. I ask you now: do you have what it takes to make your dreams come true?

Since the Olympics have always brought people together in peace to respect universal and moral principles, you will be divided into the following teams:

- China
- Somalia
- Iraq
- Philippines
- Burma
- Russia
- Palestine
- Korea

Here's a sampling of some of the events in store:

- Flip cup
- Beer pong
- Beer shotgun race
- Beer bong
- Beer relay race
- Eating contests

In addition to your pride and dignity, there are prizes at stake. Winners will receive something spectacular that will be treasured forever.



{email continued}

FAQ:

Q: “What should I bring?”

A: Beer and all of your friends! Oh. And rewards for the winners.

Q: “But I don’t drink beer / I’m not a frat boy.”

A: If you know Ramit, you know he hates beer AND frats, and since I hate him, I decided that this would be the BEST PARTY EVER.

Q: “What should I wear?”

A: Wear whatever you wouldn’t mind having on while you’re completely soaked in beer.

Q: “Will there be food?”

A: Ha! You must be asking this because you’re Ramit’s friend and you don’t actually know me. I eat like a Sumo wrestler, and I hate it when parties run out of food, so don’t worry – this is still a real BBQ, and we’ll provide so much food that Ramit and I will probably be stuck eating leftover chips and wings for the next 4 months.

Q: “What time should I come? I see that the invitation says noon, but I’m too cool to actually show up at the beginning of any party.”

A: Show up whenever you want, but there will be a bracket for the games, so if you’re as competitive as I am, then you should show up on time in order to compete in ALL of the games. Remember – “victory however long and hard the road may be” (Winston Churchill).

Hope to see many of you there! This is your chance to prove what I never believed was possible -- that Ramit actually has more than 7 friends.

We then sent out a reminder email 24 hours before the event (thus avoiding The Failure of the Last Mile):

Many people responded that this invitation was so ridiculous that they couldn't ignore it. A ton of people came.

Subject: Reminder: Ram It Olympics this Saturday at 12 PM

Hey,

This is Julie writing again. I just wanted to drop you all a quick reminder that Ramit's birthday party, otherwise known as the Ram It Olympics, is taking place this Saturday at 12 PM.

Please dress appropriately. In other words, wear clothes that don't matter to you as it will likely be drenched in beer, ketchup, or someone else's saliva. Also, the theme IS Olympics, so feel free to be creative with that, if you're feeling frisky.

You should enter through the garage. If you have any questions when you arrive, come find me. I'll be the loud Asian girl unnecessarily using a bullhorn at inappropriate moments. Or, more likely, I'll be shamefully eating several hot dogs alone in the corner somewhere.

Feel free to bring beer or food. I'm sure it will all get devoured at some point during the day.

See you tomorrow!

Julie

Now here's a second email -- sent a year later -- that yielded even better results.

The Lowbrow Luau:

Subject: Party Like a New York Times Bestseller!

Hey,

This is Julie - Ramit's friend, more commonly known as the female, louder, smarter, funnier, and better-looking version of Ramit. Can you believe that 1 year has passed since I last hacked into Ramit's Facebook account to invite you to his 26th birthday party - The Ram It Olympics?!?! Yes, it's surprising. Mostly because Ramit hasn't aged well and looks like he's actually turning 34 this year, but no, it is in fact Ramit's 27th Birthday, which means...

It's time to party like a New York Times bestseller!!

This year's theme is Lowbrow Luau because (1) this party is funded by a frugal Indian and will therefore be super ghetto and (2) nothing says warm beach in Hawaii like his sandless cement backyard located in cloudy, 60-degree San Francisco!

There will be plenty of:

- Leis
- 40s
- BBQ
- Watermelon

Ramit is concerned we won't have enough:

- Hot women

Last year, Vinnie puked on the sidewalk after eating 20 habaneros in 60 seconds (see video). Which of you will be the unfortunate victim of the yak attack this year?!?!

Notice the jokes about (1) me having no friends, (2) the need for hot women, (3) the absurd games that will be played at the party. By writing an email that's congruent with your audience (my friends know I joke about this stuff all the time) AND engaging, you'll get people excited before they ever step foot in your party. It's better than yet another boring party invite!

{email continued}

Here are some extremely important party details:

- Come to win or don't come at all. There will be a beer pong tournament. And flip cup. And limbo. And whatever else I can invent between now and Saturday. Is anyone else on this list into mud wrestling besides me?
- Guys, wear your tackiest tropical gear. If you workout 4 or more times a week, I'll be confiscating your shirt at the door. Girls, I think Ramit would really appreciate it if you all wore bikinis.
- Please for the love of God bring ALL your friends. I don't care how old, ugly, fat, unfunny, or unhealthy they are. I don't even care if they've never heard of Ramit. His backyard is big, Ramit's entire friendship base couldn't fill a picnic table, and I want him to feel loved - if only by wasted strangers - on his special day.
- Feel free to bring your drink of choice. Your drink of choice is probably good. If it's good, then it's probably expensive. And if it's expensive, then we probably won't have it. You get where I'm going with this.

Hope y'all can make it! Sorry for the last-minute notice.

See you soon!

Julie

## email commandments

1. Most emails to busy people should have one simple purpose: To allow the busy person to reply and say, “Yes.” Nothing more.
2. When emailing, if you want something from someone, you are lower-status.
3. Before you ask a busy person a question, make sure they haven’t answered it elsewhere.
4. Proofread your email. Sloppy writing can destroy an otherwise perfect email.
5. Always convert times to the busy person’s time zone.
6. Most people stay in touch too little, not too much. Busy people get a lot of email. The marginal cost of each additional email is minimal. When in doubt, send it.
7. Don’t check-in on or around holidays or on the person’s birthday. (Birthday greetings have become commoditized in the era of Facebook.) People get swamped with friendly updates on those times. Scrap the Christmas card! Check-in with a person when their email volume is lower.
8. Think twice before sending an email with multiple questions in it.
9. When following up with someone after a meeting, let them know how you’ve applied their advice.
10. A good email is just the start. You still have to follow through.

## Next steps!

You've made it to the end of the **"50 Scripts"** program -- congratulations.

You now have the exact, word-for-word scripts to tackle all kinds of challenges, including how to excel in your career, how to manage a virtual assistant, and even how to get more people to attend your parties.

The most important part of this program, however, is the theory behind sending email to VIPs. Over time, as you practice and test your results, you'll find that the scripts will simply become "training wheels" and reference material for you to check occasionally.

Once you truly, deeply understand the mentality of busy people, you'll be able to create your own emails for any conceivable situation.

Now, if you're curious about other ways to connect with people -- whether for networking, to earn more from clients, or even how to improve your social skills, be sure you're on my email list. I give away new psychology tactics and word-for-word scripts there...and I never share these publicly.

Here's the link to sign up free:

<http://www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com/insiders-kit>

-Ramit

Founder, I Will Teach You To Be Rich