



INTERNATIONAL FREELANCERS ACADEMY

Training that transforms your solo business

Dig Your Well Before You're Thirsty

Okay, I have to show you guys an email I received recently. Now, as you read it, keep in mind that this came from someone I've only met once. Not only that, but it was about three years ago when I met her. So this is not someone I know well. In fact, other than getting a couple of emails like this one you're seeing here over the last year or so, I haven't talked to her since that one time I met her.

So it starts out by saying hi. It doesn't even mention my name.

I was laid off from, and I took out the company name, when the new management team took over. Please keep me in mind if you know of anyone who is looking for a topnotch marketer for contract or perm. One note, I am looking for jobs with a minimal amount of commute from Norcross. I've attached my updated resume. Thanks, and their name.

Wow! This is really bad, and I don't say that to be mean. I say it because this is a really poor attempt at getting help. There are very few things out there worse than to be in a desperate need of either work, or clients, or references, or ideas, advice, feedback on something important, and not have people you can turn to because you haven't done something as simple as staying in touch with them in a meaningful way.

Now, compare this with my real estate agent. So she sold us our home about twelve years ago, and I still hear from her about three times a year. She actually calls me, plus she emails me valuable information about once a month. We know that staying in touch and nurturing relationships is important. That's nothing new, but the problem is that most of us aren't sure how to go about this, how to make it practical, and before we know it, months have passed and we barely reach out to people we should be staying in touch with.

So in this episode I wanted to share a simple system for how to make this process practical. So here's what I suggest you do. Just once a day make it a point to reach out to either a past or dormant client, or someone in your network like a colleague, a partner, a friend, an associate, etcetera or an interesting person you admire or follow and would



love to start some dialogue with. And you can either do this daily, or you can do what I do. I schedule about an hour or so, every Friday or every other Friday afternoon, to reach out to five people. Now, how you go about doing this does matter. You don't want to do what so many people do and send out an email or call the person to ask something like, "Hey Jerry, checking to see if you have anything for me." Instead, try the following.

So for past clients or longer term prospects, mail a quick handwritten note with a copy of an interesting and relevant article or you can send a quick email with a link to an article or a news announcement that made you think of them and just let them know, "hey I've thought about you, I thought you'd find this article or news announcement interesting." For friends, colleagues, or even acquaintances, mail them a quick handwritten note with a copy of an interesting article, just like you would with a prospect. But of course, adjust the article topic to something that would be meaningful or relevant to this individual, or send them an email with a link to an article or news announcement, something you found funny or interesting. You could also place a quick phone call every once in a while just to check in, and this is again good for friends and acquaintances, even some dormant clients you know fairly well. Or, you know, shoot a 'how is it going' email.

So here's your assignment. I don't know when you're listening to this episode, but whenever you're doing that, make a note on the next Friday. Make a note in your calendar. Set aside an hour and during that hour, run down your address book and contact the first five people you haven't corresponded with in a while.

Use the medium that feels best to you, based on who that individual is. You could place a phone call, or shoot an email out, or contact them via Facebook or LinkedIn. I like to change it up a bit, so if I called someone last time, I'll send an email next time around, that sort of thing.

In terms of frequency, you'll have to play that by ear depending on the nature of your relationship with each individual but, at a minimum, make sure that everyone in your network hears from you at least twice a year.

Then, every other week or so or, at a minimum, once a month, reach out to someone you don't know who you would love to start some dialogue with. It could be an author you admire, a well-known figure, a colleague you respect, anyone. Don't be shy. The best way to approach someone is to tell them how much you admire their work. Point out something specific you really like, but be totally sincere here. Don't do this just to try to get a reply or a favor, and only reach out to those you really respect and admire. Above all, make this a weekly habit. I'm telling you, it's going to pay off like you can't imagine.

