



How to write cold emails that earn response

with **Jeff Molander**
Sales Communications Coach

This video is about how to write cold email messages that earn response more often. What you're going to walk away with is a way to **STRUCTURE** your message to provoke a reply. Before I go any further I need to let you know: **YOU** are in a unique situation. You have your own target buyer, territory or region, maybe even language you work in. And there is no such thing as a one-size-fits all when it comes to cold email. If anyone tells you there IS? They're lying to you.

Communications technique

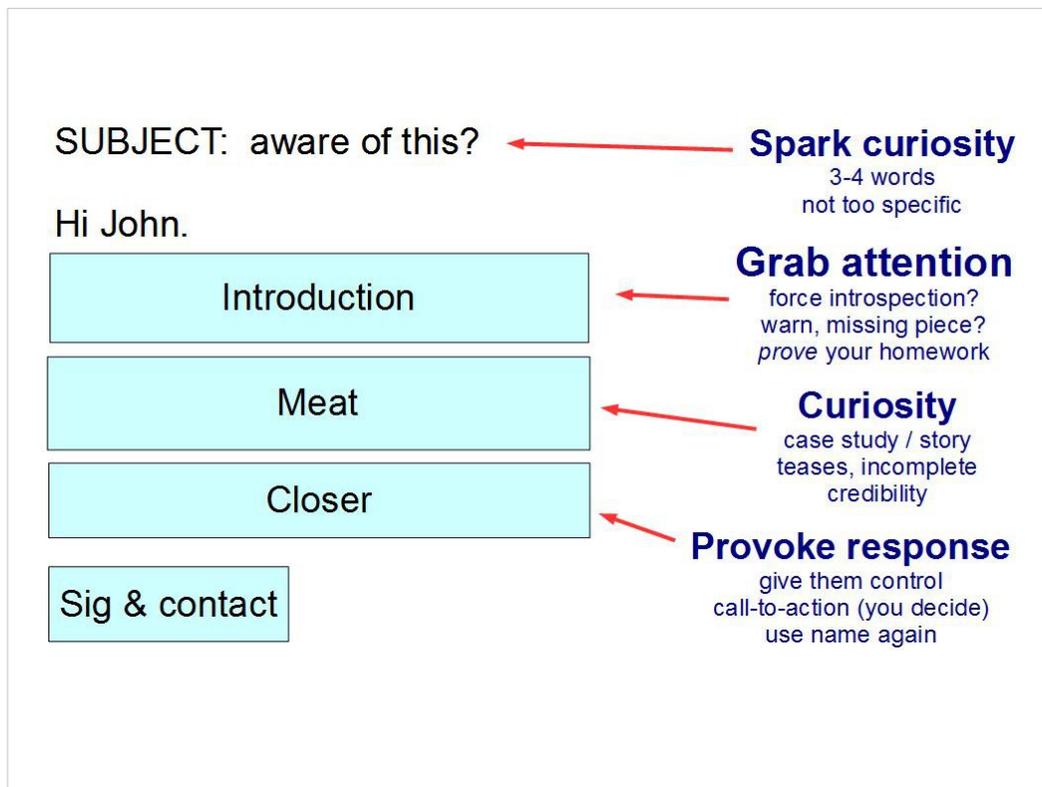


No matter what your specific challenge is, this lesson will give you the foundation to build on. And the foundation is this: Your communications technique. Now you may be thinking, “my what?” Well, I’m here to tell you what will create success for you in sales—not just prospecting: Your communications technique. For now, let’s focus on prospecting: Email demands you understand, study and practice mental triggers. So I’m going to show you a few of the building blocks for mental triggers. So you can start creating and applying them... and knowing WHEN to apply them. Bottom line: Developing THE RIGHT triggers for your target customer is something I can help you with. Now, I cannot do it for you. But I will guide you in discovering and applying them. The piece of the puzzle YOU need to contribute is this: Knowledge of your target buyer. The more you know about your customer the more the Spark Selling technique will help you get more conversations started. The more you will know which triggers I suggest will work. So if you’re strong? I can make you stronger.

Know your buyer



For example, the more you know your customer's goals and ambitions, the more I can help you play to them... make them work for you. The more you know about your buyer's nagging fears? The more I can help. Or how about this: Maybe you know something that your clients do not know about. They don't know about it yet. And not knowing is hurting them. THAT is really good mental trigger material. We can leverage that. Bottom line: the more you know about your customers' current investments or practices... the more the Spark Selling technique can help you. The more provocations we can develop and test. Until we find the one that really provokes response. Now, I don't want you to feel overwhelmed. Because there is a little bit of science involved here. But it's VERY simple.



Spark Selling Methodology is a technique. But it is a FLEXIBLE one. It allows you to choose which triggers... and which provocations are best given your specific challenge. We have options to spark curiosity in the Subject line. Now, the subject line you see here may or may not work for you. Subject lines require a lot of creativity and testing. I can go deep on Subject lines. And you should consider diving in with me because without an effective subject line you won't be able to test your messages. Also, I will show you proven effective options to grab attention in the introduction. But some may not work for you. Then again, others will work CONSISTENTLY. In the meat section... in your closer. There are various ways to spark curiosity and provoke a response. Bottom line: You have a handful of options in each section of your email message. AND there is a method to the madness. A system I'm sharing with you. All so you can stop sending out emails that you know aren't going to work... and start feeling better about using email. Better because you won't feel like a spammer.. and because you'll get more replies.



In this video we will cover the TAILORED approach: One-to-one messages. This strategy uses research... where you do homework on a specific person at your target organization and then craft a series of relevant, and direct messages... one-to-one. For more information on the 3 flavors of prospecting emails watch the video on choosing the best cold email strategy.

Templates should be used to
personalize faster –
not send faster.

Research.

Brief. Blunt. Basic.



And remember, your Tailored templates should be used to personalize faster, not send faster. The truth is the less RESEARCH you put into your prospecting emails the MORE risky it is for you. The less research you do the more chances are your message WILL get deleted. The #1 tactic that works best across ALL sellers lately is, without exception, RESEARCH. Finally: ALWAYS, ALWAYS be brief, blunt and basic. Cut back. Waaay back. Less is more. Remember the 3 B's. You've got less than 15 seconds to avoid deletion.

Avoid asking for a **meeting** in your cold email.

Provoke a **discussion**.
(that *leads to* a meeting)

Don't reveal your intent
in the subject line!



Also, avoid asking for a meeting in your first touch. In most cases, you should avoid this. Here's why: In most cases 95% of the clients you're calling on are not in buy mode. A majority of people you're calling on don't yet realize they need to speak with you. Because they haven't surfaced the pain yet. They haven't yet identified the problem... or have yet to set a goal for themselves. Basically, the need for your solution hasn't materialized yet. And if you ask for the meeting before they realize they need it? They'll say no. Only to set a meeting with a competitor 2 months later. All because you asked for a meeting too soon. Instead, **PROVOKE** (don't ask for a discussion) **PROVOKE** a **DISCUSSION** that leads to a meeting. And finally, don't reveal your intent in the subject line. The more words in your Subject line the less response. The best response students are getting is with 3 words or less. **THREE**. The more words you put in that subject line, and the more descriptive you get about the message contents, the **WORSE** the open rate is. Most subject lines inadvertently reveal "sales pitch in here" simply because they are descriptive. The idea is to provoke, "hey, what's inside here?" so it gets opened. Do **NOT** be descriptive. Do not be direct. The subject line should create tension. A sense of awkwardness. It has to spark curiosity in the reader. Ok. One more set of tips for you. And I want you to print these off using the buttons below this video. Print them off, hang on the wall and look at them every day... to help you get into better habits. I want you to resist the urge to do these... ok? When trying to break the ice with clients...

Resist the urge to

Request a meeting

Talk about *you* or cite analysts

Take > 15 seconds

Include *links* or *attachments*



Resist the urge to request a meeting. Don't talk about you. And if you're in technology? I beg you: Don't talk about how Gartner or an analyst firm loves you. No talking about your company, what you sell, benefits of what you sell. None of that. Don't cite research either. I see this a lot. A big part of getting response is looking DIFFERENT. And avoiding these pitfalls will make you REALLY stand out in the inbox. Next, don't take more than 10--12 seconds to deliver the provocation. You have MAXIMUM of 15 seconds to avoid deletion. Next, NO including links and attachments. None. Doing so distracts prospects from your goal.. and what could be their goal too: Hitting reply and inviting you to discuss their pain, fear or goal with them. Links send people to Web sites and Web sites are distractions. Help them focus on the goal: Replying.

Resist the urge to

Asking 'leading' questions

Ask for a **referral**

Persuade or convince

PUSH



Next, Avoid asking leading questions. Questions, in general, are dangerous. Because most questions you're asking in cold emails are biased to a response that YOU want to get back from them. For example: I'm constantly getting emails from lead generation and web development firms asking me, "Jeff are you getting enough leads to your Web site?" This question is insulting to my intelligence as a business owner... because the answer is obviously no. I can NEVER have enough sales leads. I instantly delete these kinds of emails... asking questions that signal "sales pitch ahead." Questions often reveal the intention of the message: To make a sales pitch. And it reveals it in a tacky way. So don't ask questions that make your prospect vulnerable to a sales pitch. Instead, make yourself vulnerable to them rejecting you. Ok. I'm getting ahead of myself with the mental triggers. There's so much I can teach you. Ask me about that later because making yourself vulnerable is a great way to trigger response. Bottom line: Your prospects get questions that open them up for a sales pitch ALL DAY LONG. Don't send them another one that makes your email scream "delete me." Finishing up, no asking for referrals. I don't like this either because it can signal you're too lazy to do homework and find out who you should be talking to yourself. And finally, don't try to persuade or convince. The more you use words that try to position yourself as credible... or persuade the other side to reply... the more you try to convince someone to do what you want them to do? The more they will see your message as a sleazy come-on. The more they will feel you are PUSHING a marketing message at them.

Questions?
Comments?
Complaints?
Ideas?



By the way if you have questions or need clarifications... or just want to join in on the discussion about this topic scroll down a bit you'll see a way to do so. Ok. It's time for the #1 take-away for you today. The #1 most important thing I'm learning from my work with clients lately. And the mental shift I'll ask you to make... so you start writing in ways that get more response. I want you to get comfortable with getting NOT asking clients to have a meeting with you... in your cold email. Instead, pivot.

Attracting customers to the idea of talking to you...

Instead, start ATTRACTING customers to the IDEA of talking to you about their nagging fear, exciting goal or ambition. Instead of asking for the conversation, strip it back. Way back. Provoke them in a way that ATTRACTS them to the thought of POSSIBLY talking more with you.

NO pushing

Instead, **PULL**

This means, NO pushing. The more you push with email the worse the results you'll get. Take that to the bank. Instead, help customers WANT to listen to you. PULL. Now, you may be thinking, ok Molander... I understand. It's obvious. But how. Bear with me. I'm about to move out of the theory. And don't forget you have the 7 Templates to get you started. Ok. Here is the reason why you must get into a PULL writing style. Because customers value more what they ASK for. They value LESS what you offer them.



Because customers value more what they ASK for. They value LESS what you offer them. [pause] Do you know Tom Snyder? Tom is my hero. And this is core to what he teaches. Think about it in your life: YOU value more what you ASK for. You value less what people push at you... offer you freely.

**People value more what they
ask for than what is freely
offered.**

Remember this golden rule: People value more what they ask for than what's freely offered. And that means when you sit down to write you've got to be thinking one thing...

How do I get people to ask for help?

How do I get people to hit reply and ask for help? Well, here's the answer: An effective communications technique. Ok. Let's get into the weeds. You may remember Danielle from the "picking the best cold email strategy" video. Danielle sells a software platform to executives in charge of contact centers... for customer service, outbound sales... you name it. She sells a wide array of ways to interact with customers digitally. So let me show you now how Danielle was trying to start conversations. Ok. Brace yourself... here we go.

Subject: How long does loyalty last?

Short but 'mass email' tone
Might signal 'sales rep who wants
to pitch me a loyalty solution'

Hi John,

A customer service benchmark report released revealed 80% of businesses believe they provide excellent customer service, however only 8% of customers agree.

Expectations of customers are at an all-time high. Customers are busy, multi-tasking, on-the-go and are more sophisticated than ever before. Loyalty is built with positive interactions over time, therefore it is a continuous process to earn a customer's loyalty.

It is expected by 2020 that the customer experience leader will be the key brand differentiator over product and price.

Quicken was in a situation where they needed a customer experience communications platform that was not only reliable, but that could allow them to keep pace with customer demand. They needed omnichannel features like voice, email, chat and screen-sharing to help agents provide faster, more effective and simple service. Keeping pace requires a platform that offers the continuous delivery of new functionality to allow them to incorporate the latest and greatest so however customer expectations change, they can adapt.

Is there a liability to staying with status quo? Let me know if there is enough interest for an email or phone conversation, John.

Best regards,
Danielle

Boom. It's pretty big. In fact it's way too long, too self-centered. It was a big problem for Danielle, who has a great solution to sell her clients. Starting with the Subject line: It's actually a provocative question but be careful with questions. Because questions come in two flavors. And 90% of the time with my students I see the WRONG flavor: Biased. In other words, the question is biased toward an answer you are looking for... so the customer senses, "yeah, I know why you're asking me that... delete key!" because the question is a tee-up for a sales pitch. So be careful with ALL questions in this context and especially in subject lines.

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Now let's just step through these sections and see what we've got going on here... LOTS of problems. But ALSO some parts that are very useful to crafting a much better approach. And that's what I'm about to show you here... the before and after messages. This is before I started coaching Danielle... and I must say it's rather typical of what I see in my work.

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Beware of "leading questions" (questions that are biased to the answer you're looking for... one that allows you to sell)

Best regards,
Danielle



I like to think about it like dating. When we meet customers for the first time (just like when I met my wife for the first time) they have NO EXPERIENCE to base decisions on with us. When I first met my wife she had no EXPERIENCE that told her, “yes, here's a guy worth talking to.” So I did my very best to attract her to the IDEA of talking to me being a good one. Likewise, why should ANY of your prospects start or continue to talk with you when they have no EXPERIENCE that tells them it's worth it? Well, here's the rub: Less is more. The less we talk the better. ALSO, the less we talk about ourselves the better. Asking questions that keep the other side talking about themselves, in effect, PROVES we have interest in the other person. I'll tell you what does NOT work with email prospecting: Selling your strong points. Talking about your client list. These are what marketing messages tend to sound like. And no offense to the team.. your marketing messages are good. But early stage customers? They are often not very interested in hearing these kinds of messages... not YET. So when starting we need to be a little bit provocative. We need to AVOID saying too much about ourselves, too fast. Just like on a first date... we want to ATTRACT the other person. Spark their curiosity about you. We don't want to give away all of our secrets quite yet.

IMPROVEMENT

SUBJECT: open to this?

Research is your
STRONGEST lead!



John,
Noticing _____ [research tidbit]. This triggers me to ask how you are ensuring _____ ? [a goal they are charged with achieving but are likely not acting on.. or well enough on]

I have an idea for you. Not sure it's a fit. But Quicken is using an unusual (but effective) tactic to _____ [quantifiable goal/achievement or something dangerous they're AVOIDING/reducing].

Are you open to hearing how Quicken is achieving this a short email?

Thanks,
Danielle

So this is what is working better for Danielle. And I'm presenting it in a format that is template-able for you ok? Now remember, this particular provocation may or may not be appropriate for what YOU sell. This is just one option.

EXAMPLE

SUBJECT: open to this?

This is a non-biased question... focusing customer on a question that does not lead them toward an answer YOU are hoping for.



John,
Noticing you added chat to your contact center mix 3 months ago. This triggers me to ask: **How would you know when it's time to consider adding screen sharing?**

I have an idea for you. Not sure it's a fit. But Quicken is using an unusual tactic to understand when it's fiscally and operationally best to add-in the next layer of support.

Are you open to hearing how Quicken is making better decisions?

Thanks,
Danielle

...

**Acknowledge their right to
choose**

Go SLOW

So just like on a date, go slow. One element here (which is a mental trigger) is acknowledging the reader's right to choose. Did you see that part? We're not pushing for a meeting. We're not trying to persuade. Instead, we're showing we've researched the prospect, asking a really smart question about the prospect's world, suggesting "I have an idea" that may or may not be a fit... and asking the reader to choose: Are you open minded? And did I pique your interest with this case example? We're going nice and slow.

Avoid asking for a **meeting** in
your cold email.

Provoke a **discussion**.
(about a meeting)

Did you notice how Danielle is AVOIDING asking for a meeting in her cold message? You should too. Avoid asking for a meeting. Instead, PROVOKE a DISCUSSION that leads to a POTENTIAL meeting.



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Sales Communications Coach

Ok. I have so much more to share with you... but only if and when you're ready ok? Get in touch in comments below with other students in the community and with me... and my team of helpers. In this video you learned the BASICS on how to write cold email messages that earn response and avoid deletion. You now understand a little more about STRUCTURING your message to provoke a reply. And I know you are in a unique situation. So depending on your situation I will share more guidance and templates with you ok? All the best and see you in comments!