



EMAIL FOR PERSONAL CONNECTION

Tips and Best Practices for Creating a Low-stress
Newsletter Plan

WORKBOOK

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Hello and welcome to class!

Through this class, and by doing the work within these pages (or in your own notebook or on your laptop or however you best work), you're going to develop a plan to use your email newsletter as a tool for building a personal connection with your customers and/or clients so they keep coming back to you to purchase what you sell.

You are not a faceless "brand," and you're not a massive multinational corporation. You are you, and even if you work with a few other people, you are the brains and creativity behind your business. You develop your products and services and you do that by drawing on your own experiences, preferences, needs and style.

These are your strongest assets, and they're also what draws your customers and clients to you.

Get ready to explore straightforward – and low-stress – ways you can use email to introduce yourself to your ideal audience and show them what makes you special.

Over time, through trial and error and mostly through showing up, your relationship with your audience will become the foundation of your business.

BACKGROUND

In 2014, I started sending my email newsletter every Friday. With the exception of a few holidays and sick days, I've kept at it ever since.

In the beginning, I didn't know what I wanted to accomplish, but I did know that I wanted to write to my audience. I wanted to write them a letter. I didn't want to write them sales copy, and I didn't want to write them about a 30%-off sale. I wanted to write to them about the things we have in common – a desire to live a creative life, a need to battle our creative demons so we can actually do that.

Over the years, my email newsletter has become the central point of communication in my business, replacing even blogging as my primary way of being in touch with the people who most enjoy my work.

Why? Because I figured out a way to pair what I enjoy most about email with what my readers enjoy. It took a while, don't get me wrong. But I got there by committing to my Friday email ritual, and by bumbling around till I figured it out. That's what I'm going to help you do starting right now.

The key is to remember there is no silver bullet here. There is no perfection. Perfection is boring, and your audience deserves better than boring.

There is just showing up. Ready?



Kim Werker



P.S. Sign up to get my weekly newsletter at kimwerker.com/newsletter.



THREE BIG THINGS

There are three main things that will guide your adventure into building a personal connection with your customers through email.

1. *WHAT'S YOUR STORY?*

Who are you? What do you make? When did you start making it? When did you decide to make a business from it? Where do you make it? Where are you from?

What are your *big stories*? Big stories are epic tales, like how you came to make your thing, how you came to work/live where you do, what you want to accomplish through your business.

Short stories are quick ones. That time you screwed up and had to start over. How you came to a particular colour choice. What happens when your kid's at work with you?

FREQUENCY & SCHEDULE

The most important thing about setting a schedule is that it works for *you* and for what you want to accomplish. **The idea is to set yourself up to succeed.** There are no *shoulds* about setting your schedule – the only *should* is to stick to it.

Think hard about **frequency**. Send your newsletter at least once a month, or else your audience may not remember who you are or why they're on your list. Maybe monthly studio updates are the perfect thing for you. But have you considered weekly? Would that stress you out or provide you with a better opportunity to get your story to your right people? Or maybe you'll send a biweekly story-related email alternating with off-weeks of image-based updates from your studio.

Use the calendar below to think through what your ideal sending schedule might be.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

WORKFLOW

Where will you lay out your **newsletter editorial plan**? You'll need to keep track of topics you'll cover, how and when. Think of a tool that will enable you to adjust your plan as your newsletter evolves, and to incorporate things like events, seasonal specials, etc. Could be a notebook, paper calendar, Google Calendar, or an editorial calendar like CoSchedule. The key is that it works for you.

How will you **capture ideas** as they come up or as you flesh out your newsletter plan email by email? If you'll be sharing links, where will you save them so they're ready for you as you prep an email? If you'll include images, where will you queue them up, sized properly and ready to go? I use Trello for much of this, but think about what will work best for you (and your team).

What's a 30-word (max!) **description of your newsletter** you can include at the top of every email to spark your readers' memory of why they subscribed?

What **links** will you include in every email newsletter you send?

Website:

Product highlight?

Upcoming event?

Recent blog post?

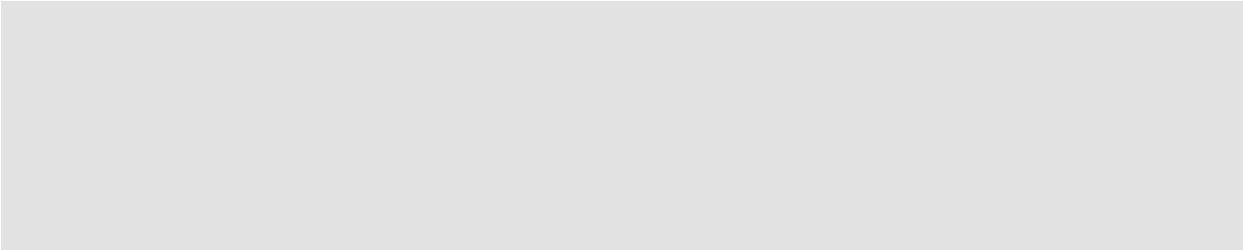
Instagram?

Book you're reading?

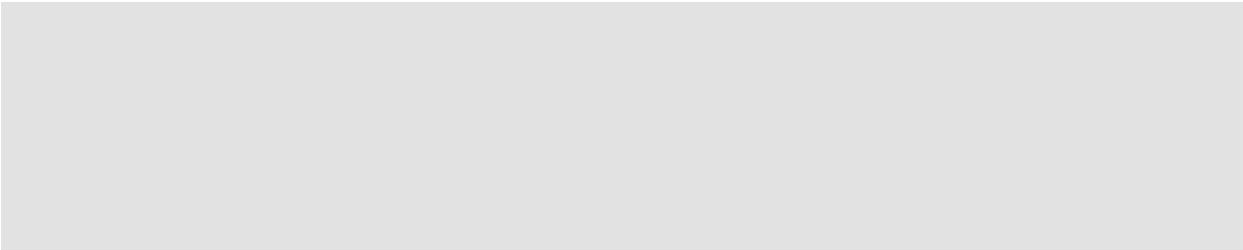
FIRST (NEXT) FOUR EMAILS

While you're in the email mindset and you're immersed in your story and how it fits into your customer's, jot down notes for our first (or next) four emails. Go beyond the main topic – include some details so you'll make your writing task straightforward and easy to do.

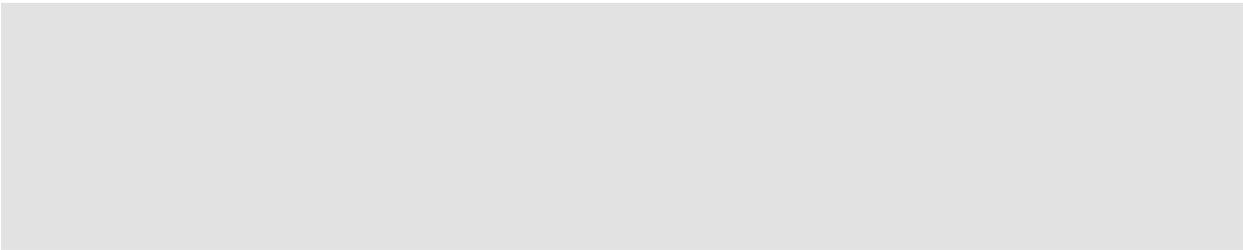
EMAIL #1:



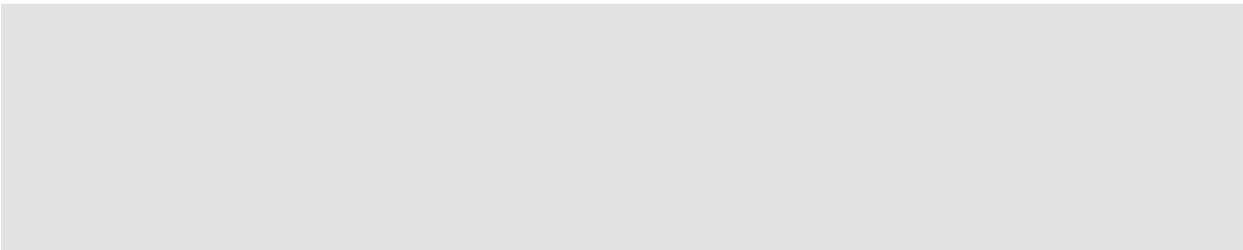
EMAIL #2:



EMAIL #3:



EMAIL #4:



TIPS FOR A KICK-ASS EMAIL

Writing is a skill you hone with practice, over time. You are a maker, so you know from practicing a skill and getting better at it. It's normal to feel intimidated, and to doubt that you're doing it "right". But **there is no right, there's just showing up**. Go through the following steps every time you prepare an email, and as the weeks pass your plan will evolve and you'll learn from your mistakes and successes.

USE A SPELL-CHECKER.

If the program, service or app you write your email in doesn't check your spelling as you go, copy the whole thing and paste it into a word processor and run the spell check. Even if it's a tedious process, it's worth it.

CHECK YOUR GRAMMAR.

When it comes to making sure you're using the right *their, there or they're*, a spell checker is useless. Use a service like [Grammarly](#) to check that your grammar is as polished as your spelling.

KEEP IT SHORT.

Email is a long game – you'll share your story bit by bit, email by email, over a long period of time. Especially if you're feeling insecure about your writing skills, short and sweet is a great way to build up your confidence. Just make sure you say *enough*. (And for real, hold yourself to a limit of about 500 words, unless your product is your writing.)

READ IT OUT LOUD.

Maybe you hear a teacher's voice in your brain every time you write anything, admonishing you to follow *THE RULES*? Thing is, you're not writing a term paper. You're writing *your story*. Read your email out loud and make sure it sounds like **you**.

RINSE, REPEAT.

As I said, email is a long game, and its power is only realized over time. The most important thing to do is to send, and keep sending. Set a schedule and stick to it. Over time you'll develop a feel for what works and what doesn't, for what your readers respond to and what they can't wait to hear more about. Show up. You got this.

RESOURCES + NEXT STEPS

These are tools and apps I've found helpful for managing my email writing.
(In some cases, I've included an affiliate link that helps to support my continuing use of that program.)

- CoSchedule** is an editorial calendar that can help keep your newsletter, social media and blog plans all in one place.
- Grammarly** checks your grammar and provides suggestions to make your writing ace.
- Trello** is great for planning content, collecting links to share, and collaborating.
- Evernote** is helpful for drafting emails, capturing notes and saving resources.
- ConvertKit** is the email service I use. Other options include [MailChimp](#) & [TinyLetter](#).
- If you want to go deep and **read about writing**, I recommend [Stephen King's On Writing](#) and [this post by artist Austin Kleon](#).

And finally. Jot down three steps you're going to take in the next week toward using email to foster a personal connection with your customers or clients: