COLD EMAIL
HACKS

HOW TO GET MORE CUSTOMERS WITH WINNING SALES EMAILS
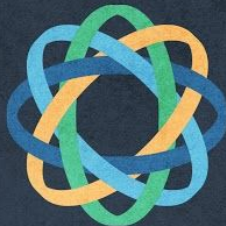
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How to Get More Customers With Winning Sales Emails

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Cold Email Hacks: How to Get More Customers With Winning Sales Emails

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Welcome to Cold Email Hacks

Most cold emails fail. Even most of the really well-crafted, strategically targeted cold emails never accomplish anything other than annoying their recipient.

And yet, you probably should be sending more cold emails than you're sending now. Because if just 1 out of 10 people who get your cold emails respond, and you've got a halfway decent system for sourcing leads, cold emailing could be one of the main revenue growth opportunities for your business.

But where to start?

Most people want to start with: *What email should I be sending out?* And then they go around searching for cold emails. Which isn't wrong per se, but it's not enough.

Taking a template, filling in the blanks and hitting send is easy. It even feels like you accomplished something important. But that's not how you grow your business.

The best cold email template in the world is not enough.

You grow your business by developing a solid process. Or even better, emulating a process that works, and improving on it over time.

In this guide, you'll get all the knowledge you need to get started sending cold emails, how to optimize your campaigns, and eventually turn this into a predictable and consistent process that'll help you scale your business.

And if you have any more questions after reading this book, I'm just an email away: steli@close.io.

Go get 'em!
Steli

Start with the end in mind

What do you want to achieve with cold emails? The goal of your cold emails should be a) to set up a meeting/call or b) to get referred to the right person. It's an opening so that people expect (and want) to talk with you.

Cold emails are the fastest way to reach the decision maker within an organization without a pre-existing relationship.

Who is receiving your email? Your ideal customer

How do you find the ideal customer? The very first step is to have a clearly defined customer profile. The more specific, the better because then you'll be able to speak their language, which can drastically improve response rates.

Too many companies spread themselves out too thin. They send too many emails to too many different companies in too many different industries—and then they fail to generate consistent results, and never have reliable data to improve their processes on.

It's a lot better to focus on a tiny niche first, and then move on to the next vertical afterwards, then to target two (or more) verticals at the same time. I can't drive this point home enough: fewer but higher quality leads will almost always lead to more success!

Focusing on a small niche allows you to:
- Address their wants and needs with much higher precision
- Word your emails in a way that speaks to them in their own language
- Do things the way they do things, so that your selling process matches their buying process.

This isn't a guide about creating ideal customer profiles, but here's a post I wrote on How to create your ideal customer profile for B2B lead generation.

Lead generation: Where to find email addresses?

There are four basic ways to get email addresses.

Highest quantity/lowest quality: Buying lists

If you buy from these providers, expect a certain percentage of that data to be outdated. (It's been a couple of years since I last used any of these companies, but back then about 30%–40% of the data I bought was outdated.)

This will cost you twice: once the money you spend acquiring the bad data, and then the money (time/resources) you invest in reaching out to those unqualified leads.

High quantity/low quality: Web scraping

An alternative to buying lists is to make your own list by scraping websites, which means you extract contact data from a website with a little program/script.

It's a bit of a gray area, and you should check if the website you want to scrape allows that.

If you target a very specific niche and there are highly targeted websites, this can be a successful approach.

Low quantity/high quality: Outsourced lead gen team

Hire a company that manually finds leads for you, based on the criteria you establish with them.

Lowest quantity/highest quality: Create Customer Profiles

Look at your current five most successful customers. Successful in this context means
a) they get the most value out of using your product and b) you profit greatly from them being a customer. (Look for the strongest winwins between you and your customers.)

And then try to identify the core DNA of your most successful customers. Ask a lot of questions about these companies and look for common denominators:
- How big is the company?
- How many employees do they have?
- What other software tools do they use?
- What are the titles of all the employees?
- What kind of social media platforms do they use?
- Where are they located?
- What's their average deal size?
- How long have they already been in business?
- How did they hear about us?
- How did we acquire them?
- Etc.

You'll have to ask a ton of questions and then filter out the answers that they have in common and that are most relevant.

Based on that, you'll create a very specific customer profile.

And then you'll go and find another 5–20 businesses that have the same core DNA (sometimes you can start with their closest competitors ;)).

You don't need thousands of shitty names. You just need a handful of really great ones.

Reach out to them and strive to create high-quality sales conversations. Try to maximize response and conversion rates. Gain deep market insights that you can then leverage to make more sales and close better deals.

Getting your emails opened

The most important part of your email is the subject line. Even though it's just a couple of words, you should dedicate as much attention and care to your subject line as you do to your body copy. If your subject line doesn't propel the recipient to open the email, then the body copy of the email doesn't matter.

When it comes to subject lines, follow these guidelines:
- Use their name in the subject line when it makes sense.
- Make the subject line as specific as possible—the more personal the subject line, the higher the open rate.
- If you wonder if it sounds too much like a "marketing email", then it does sound too much like a marketing email.
- Experiment with questions in subject lines.

4 cold email subject lines that get open rates of +35%

1. "Introduction: {Name}" or "Introduction {your name/company} <> {their name/company}"
2. "quick request"
3. "Trying to connect"
4. "{Name of their company}"

Stay away from gimimcky subject lines.

There are some things you can write in your subject line that might get great open rates. For example, I once saw an email in my inbox that had the following subject line: "i'm disappointed steli".

This subject line was very effective at getting my attention and making me open the email. I wondered if I had let someone down or not delivered on a commitment. Instead, the content of the email said something along the lines of "I'm disappointed that we haven't been able to set

up a call yet". I had never interacted with this person before, nor did I know who he was. I just deleted the email and reminded myself to never do business with that person or company.

Deliver in your email what you promise in your subject line. If the disconnect is too big, you're going to get good open rates but bad responses.

There are ways to improve your open rates by using certain subject line hacks. Some subject lines are a bit misleading, but highly effective in getting your emails opened. One that is already a bit old and overused by spammers by now (but worked great before) was to just use "Re: " as a subject line, making it appear as if this was a response to a previous email exchange.

Subject lines like "Bad news" or "Strange question" also often get great open rates. However, these kinds of tactics can backfire. If the first impression you make on a prospect is that you "tricked" them into opening an email … ask yourself if that's the right way to build trust in a relationship. This is a choice you have to make for yourself, and what you think is adequate for your own business.

Getting a response

Once your email is opened, there's only one thing that your email needs to accomplish: get a response.

Using the right words in your cold emails is an art form in itself. The templates included here are tried and tested. They consistently deliver great results in many different industries and different sized companies. Yet, how exactly you fill in the blanks—your "one sentence pitch" or "unique benefit"—can make a huge difference in the responses you get.

Again, this ties back into creating a clear perfect customer profile, and understanding how to speak to them, and it's beyond the scope of this guide to break this down.

Here's what it all boils down to: maximum relevancy in minimum words.

You need to show the prospect that what you have to offer is relevant for them, that it is something they care about, a solution to an important problem they're struggling with, or a way to accomplish a goal they're pursuing.

It requires you to put yourself in the shoes of your prospect and really understand what they care about at the time when they read your email.

One singular CTA (Call to action)

Every email should have ONE goal. Don't overwhelm people with choices.

You want to make it super easy for them to respond, and you want to make it very clear to them what they should do as a next step.

Examples:
- *Click this link…*
- *If you're the appropriate person to speak with, what does your calendar look like? If not, who do you recommend I talk to?* (This particular sentence is from Brian Kreuzberger, who has tested tens of thousands of cold emails. He found that the word "calendar" gets a 35% higher response than the word "schedule", and the word "talk" gets a 60% increase in response over the word "meet" or "call".)
- *Please refer me to the person responsible for media buying.*

- (See our templates for more examples.)

Your goal should be to either a) get referred to the right person or b) set up a call/meeting. It should not be both!

Write smartphone friendly emails

Make your emails so short that they can easily be read on a smartphone. This means first and foremost: keep it short and succinct.

Make it (look) personal

Even though you're using templates, your emails should look personal. Avoid fancy HTML designs. Your email should appear to be a real email, written and sent by a real person.

It should not look like a beautifully designed, professional, corporate marketing email. Anything that has the look and feel of a "one to many" communication will significantly lower open and response rates.

In some cases adding a "Sent from my iPhone" line underneath your email can be beneficial in creating that perception. However, it's a much overused technique with many prospects now, and some people think it's disingenuine.

Read your emails out loud

I do this with every cold email that I send out or that I review for someone else. Reading out loud will help you improve the wording of your cold emails dramatically.

When you're reading out loud, ask yourself these questions:

- Is this clear and concise?
- Does everything make sense?
- What needs further explanation?
- What should be cut, shortened, or replaced?
- What value am I communicating?
- What's the next step for the prospect?

If you don't have a good answer for these questions, you're not ready to click send.

There are a few other things you can do, if you want more practice

- **Read your email to somebody else.** Let a coworker or friend be your target audience. Ask them to listen while you read your email aloud—either in-person or over the phone. When you're done, run through the questions above to see if they have any feedback. Nine times out of ten, they'll catch something you missed.
- **Have somebody else read the email to you.** Focus on what they're saying and how they say it. Do they run out of breath? Do they trip over a specific word? Are they confused by a certain phrase? Is their tone right? You can learn a lot about your email simply by listening to a coworker or friend read it back to you.
- **Record yourself.** Listen for all the clues outlined above, and ask yourself whether you're ultimately sold on the email. If you record a video, pay attention to your body language and facial expressions. Are you confused, bored, excited, curious, interested? These non-verbal reactions will signal how you truly feel about what you've written.

The power of email signatures

The signature is some of the most valuable but under-utilized real estate in an email. To most people, it's an afterthought. Look at this example of an average email signature:
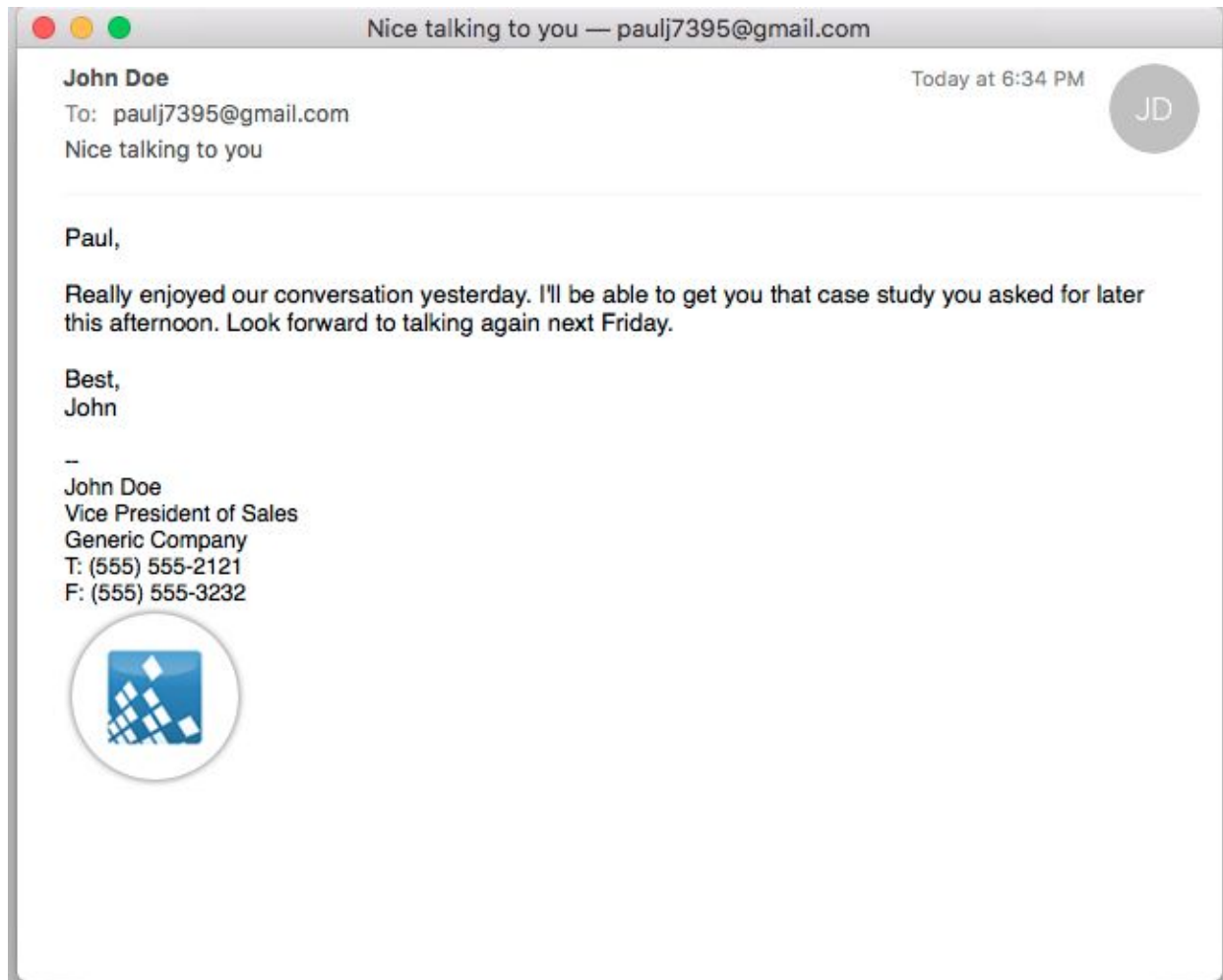
It has the sender's name, title, contact info, and company logo. That's boring. This signature isn't doing anything for John Doe or the people he's emailing. It's not building credibility. It's not offering something interesting. It certainly isn't selling anything.

I sell in my signature. I pitch my book, my podcast, my online sales course—whatever it is, I want the reader to look at my signature and think, "Hey, that looks interesting!" You can accomplish that by including a link to a relevant press article, a webinar your company recently gave, a case study—anything that adds credibility.

Here's what my signature looks like:
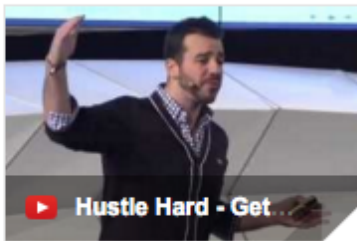
One of my favorite things to put in my signature is a YouTube link. In Gmail, when you add a video link, it displays a thumbnail of the video—in my case, usually a thumbnail of me in a dramatic mid-speech pose.

According to MIT researchers, the most memorable photos are those that contain people. Psychologists have also found that color images are more memorable than black and white.

As a result, the video really catches the reader's eye—I can't tell you how many times someone has replied to one of my emails and said, "You know, I ended up watching that entire speech from your email signature," before addressing my original message. If your company has any kind of video marketing, your email signature is a great way to get customers' eyes on it.

As someone who takes pride in this, I was very flattered when Jeff Deutsch, a potential customer I corresponded with, wrote a whole LinkedIn Pulse article on my signature. He was

even inspired to optimize his own signature. You can see the result below, along with Jeff's own notes on why it worked.

That's a signature that sells both the sender and his company. It vastly increases the amount of engagement he's likely to get from his email recipients.

Having a great signature takes very little effort—all you need to do is periodically update it with content you already have available, and in return, you differentiate your emails and get to engage with customers in a unique way.

Use the P.S.

The P.S. is another email hack that most people either don't take advantage of or at the very least underestimate. Not many realize this, but the P.S. message is often the first (and sometimes only) part of the email your audience will read.

That makes it a great place to add something you want the recipient to read, but is only tangentially related to the rest of the email. And, once you've got their attention, you'd better give them something compelling. A couple of ideas would be:

- Some good news about the company. "P.S. We just got our 10,000th customer, here's an article about it ..."
- A personal connection. "P.S. You and I actually have a common connection, we've both worked with so-and-so ..."
- Something you remember about them. "P.S. I remember you saying you watch a lot of golf, did you hear the news that so-and-so fired his swing coach?"

The great thing about the P.S. is its versatility. It can be personal, it can be helpful, it can plug your company—whatever you need it to do. With all those options, it's not that hard to think of a small piece of information that will get the reader's attention.

Make your emails short. And when you can't, at least make them easy to read.

Oscar Wilde once wrote to a friend, "Excuse the long letter, I didn't have time to write a short one." What he was getting at is that it actually takes more time and effort to write concisely than to just write everything you can think of on a given subject.

And being concise is exactly what you have to do as a salesperson if you want anyone to read your emails. Your prospects are busy—they don't have time to read a novel-length email about your product, so keep it short and sweet.

Of course, there are going to be times when you have to send a longer email. When that happens, you need to format it heavily. I'm talking about:

- Distinct, headlined sections
- Important information in bold
- Bulleted lists (much like this one!)

Good formatting makes it easier for the reader to scan through the message and get to the stuff they need to know. It also tells the reader that you put in the effort to help them digest the information quickly and easily.

For example, try reading these two versions of the same promotional email from a pizzeria:
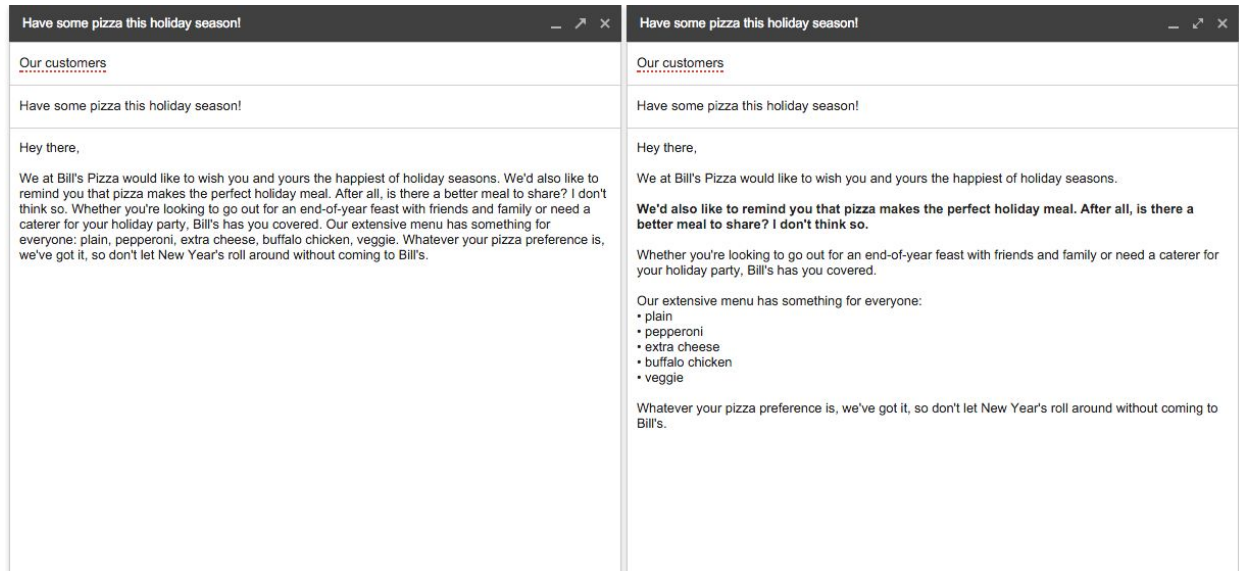
Did you even finish the paragraph on the left? The formatted version on the right is much easier to read.

As a salesperson, you depend on prospects to actually read the emails you send out. Formatting and concise writing make that easy for them to do—your readers will appreciate it and you'll see a better response rate.

Following up with prospects

How many times should you follow up with a cold prospect? When should you follow up? What specifically should you write in these emails? When should you stop following up?

As a general guideline, start off by following up with high frequency, then decrease the frequency over time. Here's a general schedule for timing your follow-ups:

- Day 1: 1st follow-up
- Day 3: 2nd follow-up
- Day 7: 3rd follow-up
- Day 14: 4th follow-up
- Day 28: 5th Follow-up
- Day 58: 6th Follow-up

- After Day 58: Once a month

I use Close.io to create workflows that basically automate this for me, because once you're dealing with a high volume of prospects, you should use some kind of tool to help you manage your follow-ups.

For example, I can create a list of prospects whom I haven't emailed in 14 days, and with whom I've had a phone conversation that lasted longer than 4 minutes in the past 3 months.
You can stack all kinds of filters on top of each other to match it to your requirements.

These are not hard rules, they are guidelines. It all depends on the context, the situation, the relationship and interactions you had with the other person.

For example, if you follow up with an incredibly busy and important CEO of a large enterprise, don't send another email tomorrow and two days later and four days later. Give them more time, maybe 4–7 days until your first follow-up. Maybe follow up once a week. If you know this person gets 5,000 emails a day, be respectful of that fact.

I can't overstate the importance of following up with prospects. A strong follow-up is so important that I've written an entire book dedicated only to the follow-up. You can [download a free copy of my book The Follow-Up Formula here](#).

The 1, 2, 3 email response hack

Any great salesperson knows that you want to make it as simple as possible for your prospect to take the next step. Yet, so many reps send out sales emails that make their prospects do all the heavy lifting. (Most of the time, prospects won't. They just delete the email. Opportunity lost.)

In today's post, I'm going to share a very simple method you can use to improve your response rates dramatically. I've seen cases where response rates went from 7% to 39%. That's a 457% increase)!

Less friction. More sales.

Like so many times, it comes back to empathy: Put yourself in the shoes of your prospect. They—like everyone else—are overwhelmed. Their inbox is overflowing, they've got too many things competing for their attention and only so many hours in their day.

And then there's your sales email. Let's assume your subject line works well enough and the prospect opens the email. What are they looking at now?

Is it a long, 10 paragraph email that talks about your company, your product, the innovative solution you're offering and the 15 ways it could help them become more successful?

Or is it a very short and succinct email that addresses a need they actually care about?

And what's the thing you're asking your prospects to do as a next step?

Are you asking them to write a lengthy response?

Or do you make it easy for them to reply?

The 1, 2, 3 email

The concept is simple: Present your prospect with three scenarios that are likely to apply to them based on the information you have about them. Ask them to choose which scenario applies to their situation. All they have to do is hit reply, enter a number and click send. Friction removed.

Instead of your usual introduction spiel, ask your prospect to select what their biggest challenge is right now. Once they've done that, you're going to respond with advice that's catered to their specific needs. Here's an example:

Hey Elon,

My name is Steli and I'm the CEO at Close.io.

We've realized that most sales managers like yourself often experience one of three problems:

1. You don't have enough leads.
2. You don't have good quality leads
3. You lack predictability for your funnel

Choose which applies to you and reply with the number. I'll send you something to help fix the problem.

Thanks,
Steli

B *I* ≣ ≣ & 🖼   < >

☐ Remind me to follow up if no reply | in 1 week ▲ |

[Send] [⊕ Send Later]   🗑 📎 [Save Draft]

You're giving the person clear options and a low-friction CTA. All they have to do is hit reply, type in a number, click send.

Get replies to follow-ups
I'm all about the follow-up. Whenever your lead turns cold, the 1, 2, 3 tactic is an excellent way to re-engage your prospects. Imagine you've sent out your standard follow-up emails with no success. Here's what to send them instead:

Hey Phil,

I haven't received a reply yet. There can only be three possible scenarios.

1. You've chosen a different scenario. :(
2. This is not a priority for you right now. (That's cool.)
3. You are on a sandy Hawaiian beach. :)

All you need to do is choose one of the above numbers and hit reply so I know what's going on and I'll take the appropriate action (if needed).

Thanks,
Steli

B *I* ☰ ☰ 🔗 🖼️   < >

☐ Remind me to follow up if no reply [in 1 week ▲]

[Send]   [⊙ Send Later]   🗑️ 📎 [Save Draft]

This version is a bit more tongue-in-cheek and light-hearted, but effective nonetheless. You'll probably be surprised how well it works. That said, especially in 2017 this email has been used *a lot* in some industries, and if a prospect has already received 15 versions of this email, the most likely response it'll elicit is *"Ugh, another one of these…. Click delete".* Again, this drives home the importance of experimentation: you have to take an iterative approach and try things out, because what might work for another company, or for another segment of your customers, might not work as well for the prospects you're targeting now.

Start using the 1, 2, 3 email today

The beauty of the 1, 2, 3 email is that the prospect can provide you with a lot of information simply by choosing a number.

Pick your most important email or worst performing email
Start by picking your most important email or one that gets a really low response rate. Split test your current version against the 1, 2, 3 email and let the results speak for themselves.

Start from the beginning
Starting from scratch? Follow these simple steps to use the 1, 2, 3 hack:
1. Choose a small list (100 leads is enough) in your sales CRM.
2. Define three relevant options.
3. Create a list of resources to use once your prospects reply to your email.
4. Set up a new email template with same structure as example one.
5. Fire away.

That's it. You'll now get more replies that'll convert to more opportunities and ultimately more deals.

A (final) attempt to get a response: The break-up email

The breakup email is one of the most effective follow up email templates you can use when a prospect isn't responding to your emails.

You're essentially "breaking up via email" with them. Not that your unilateral relationship was that great to begin with, but by being the one who's walking away, rather than the one who's pursuing, you turn the dynamic of the interaction around. It's high school all over again, but it's also highly effective.

Write an effective breakup email starts with writing an effective subject line. For the breakup email, here are some examples of good subject lines:

- Goodbye from Steli
- Goodbye from Close.io
- Thank you from Close.io
- Should I stay or should I go now
- It's not you. It's me.

Here's an example of a break-up email from a B2C startup, Trunk Club.

> Hi Steli,
>
> I was really looking forward to putting together a trunk of great clothes for you, but I haven't heard a response to my calls and emails. That means this will be my last email to you.
>
> If you change your mind and would like to give Trunk Club a try, please let me know and I'll have you looking great in no time.
>
> Best,
> Signature

Notice that they managed to still worked in the value that they're offering: they would have helped me put together a trunk of great clothes for me, with very little time and hassle.

Here's a B2B sales example, this one is taken from Bryan Kreuzberger's Breakthrough Email:

Subject line: Permission to close your file?

Hi firstname,

We are in the process of closing files for the month. Typically when I haven't heard back from someone it means they're either really busy or aren't interested.

If you aren't interested, do I have your permission to close your file? If you're still interested, what do you recommend as a next step?

Thanks for your help.
Signature

You can write your own break-up email—here are the elements you want to include:

- I've repeatedly tried to do something good for you.
- You've never even replied (maybe because you're too busy, you're not interested or you've moved on to something else).
- Thus, this is the last email you'll ever get from me.
- If at any time you ever want to [insert desired outcome, e.g. see how I can help optimize your sales process], I'd be more than happy to speak with you.
- Here my contact details [phone number, etc.].

Mistakes to avoid

Sometimes I get break-up emails that have an almost accusatory or disappointed tone—that's not what you should do.

It's important that you keep the email on the emotionally positive or neutral side. After all, this isn't a high school breakup; you're a professional, this is business. No blame, criticism or disappointment.

Break-up emails utilize the principle of loss aversion, that behavioral economists Kahneman & Tversky succinctly expressed in five words: losses loom larger than gains. When you take something away from someone, they tend to desire it more.

How to respond to responses

Once you get a response, how do you respond? The most important thing here is to KEEP USING A SYSTEM! Don't randomly craft responses for every email.

There's a limited number of responses you'll get anyway:
- Positive (set up call/meeting)
- Not interested
- Not interested right now
- Send me more information
- We're already working with someone
- I told the right person about you, and they'll get back to you if they're interested
- Out of office notifications (which often contain the contact data of who to best reach out to!)

You want to have templates in place for how you respond. You also want to measure the results you get from these templates, and continually tweak and optimize for what works best.

Sometimes the best way to respond to positive replies is by picking up the phone and calling within five minutes after they've sent their response.

Test, measure, optimize your emails

When was the last time you took a deep dive into the performance of your cold email templates? A month ago? Three months ago? Six?

Running experiments isn't something that comes naturally in sales. But experimenting and testing your way to better results is an essential part of improving any process. And even if you'd have the perfect process down right now—a couple of months from now, it's not going to be as effective anymore, because the market is constantly changing. That's why it's important to keep experimenting and discovering what your audience responds to.

Getting lazy while you're successful is easy. But continued success is never guaranteed. If you don't challenge your existing templates and wait too long to try new ones, it might have a negative impact on your sales team.

The time between realizing you're in a tough spot and finding a template that's going to work again could be weeks or months. During that time, you'll see a decreased performance in your sales team and your numbers will suffer.

Among your email templates, there should be 3–4 templates that you know perform very well. These are your winners. But while they're generating great results, don't get too comfortable. Keep making changes to them, draft up entirely new templates, and run an A/B test against your best performing emails.

I can't stress this enough: Always measure the open rates and response rates of your emails. That's the only way to figure out what truly works for your target audience.

The best practices and optimized templates I share with you here are just a starting point for you (and the same is true for any kind of sales advice you'll find anywhere). It's your job to

implement these and then run experiments to see if you can create something that generates better results in your market.

(Our sales communication platform Close.io keeps track of all your email communication and has powerful reporting and analytics features that allow you to show open and response rates for all of your templates. What's more, you can even see who opened your emails within the last hour/day/week/etc.—so you can reach out to people when you're on top of their mind.)

Things to keep track of:

- What's your open rate? (You should expect a +35% open rate.)
- What's your response rate? (You should expect a 10% response rate. This includes positive, negative and neutral responses, but not undeliverable notifications.)
- What kind of position/title responds to your emails? Sometimes a response from a top-level exec is worth more than three responses from a low-level employee.
- How do responses convert into qualified leads?
- Do not include undeliverable emails in your stats! (If you send out 300 emails and get 100 undeliverable messages, use 200 for your calculations. If 20 people respond, you'll calculate that as a 10% response rate.)

Test in small batches

Test your templates in small batches (around 300 recipients) first to see how they perform and then tweak them as the results come in. Once you know what's working and what's not working, increase the list size to target more leads.

When to send cold emails?

Whenever you read about the best time to send emails, keep in mind that the data set they used to generate those insights might differ from what's accurate for your prospects.

In general, Tuesday to Thursday are the best days to send emails. Mondays aren't optimal because most people are already greeted with an overflowing inbox after the weekend, and are more likely to skip anything that's not a high-priority item. Fridays, most people are already mentally preparing for the weekend.

Again, these are general truths that prove correct for most companies, but the only way to really figure out when you should send your cold emails is to experiment. We've seen campaigns where the best time to send cold emails was on a Sunday morning. It all depends on who your prospects are.

How many cold emails should you send per day?

I can't tell you how many times inexperienced founders tell me how they've built a list of 5 million prospects whom they'll send cold emails. I've yet to encounter one for whom this approach worked. When it comes to cold emails, less is more.

Assuming you're sourcing quality leads, and have a solid sales process in place, you really don't need to send that many emails. Start by sending between 10 to 100 cold emails per day per sales rep. If you get a 10% response rate, then you'll have 1 to 10 responses per day, which is a good start for a sales rep.

You'll get better results by focusing on quality rather than quantity. Then, increase the volume of emails your reps send out until you get to a point where your reps are struggling to stay on top of responding to prospects.

But how can you experiment and optimize your email campaigns when you're sending out such a low volume of emails? We'll tackle that next.

A/B testing cold emails (without a statistically-significant sample size)

With such a small sample size, it's nearly impossible to conduct statistical analysis on your cold emails and improve their overall quality. And even if you send out 10,000 emails a day, it takes a huge amount of time before you can pull meaningful, statistically significant insights from A/B testing.

Get around this and learn faster with this simple hack. You won't be able to just stare at numbers on a screen — you'll need to pick up the phone and talk to people!

Quantitative data is integral to good business, but you'll never have enough just starting out. You can bypass this lack through an intuitive but rigorous approach that plays to your strengths as a salesperson.

Take a sample of the emails you send, and follow up with a phone call. Your objective in the call isn't to make a sale, though it could lead to that.

Instead, you want to find out what worked in your emails and what didn't. You're gathering intel.

When you start with a sample of 50 emails a day, it's an opportunity to drill into the qualitative side and find out what connects to people on an emotional level. By making the call, you can gain valuable insights to your sales strategy and business that are unavailable to even the largest of data sets.
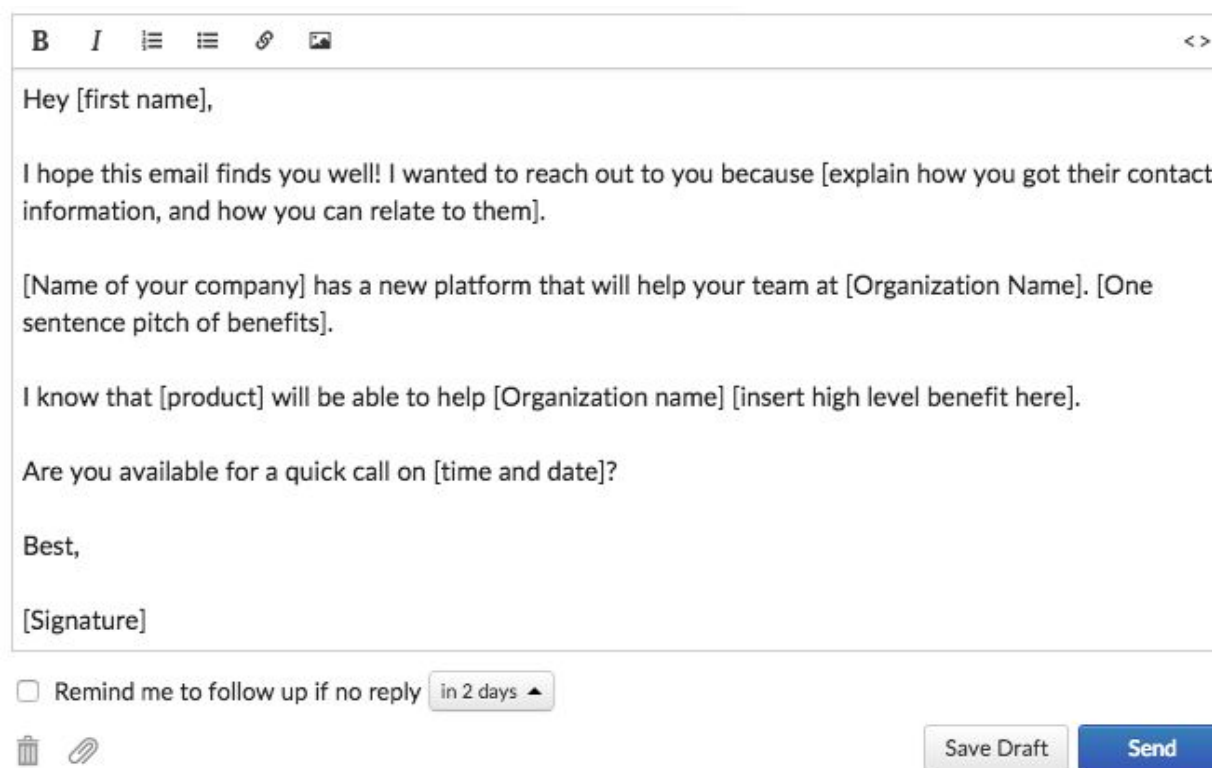
Here's three steps to getting this right:

1. Write high-quality emails to targeted audiences

Don't put yourself in the spam folder. Prioritize quality in both who you email, and how you email.

Start by building a targeted list of leads that includes the key decision-makers and players that occupy your market.

There are many cold email templates you can use — but it's important to customize each email and tailor it to the specific person you're reaching out to. Write like a human. The person you're reaching out to gets hundreds of these emails, and it's vital to rise above the noise.

Here's one example:

Hey [first name],

I hope this email finds you well! I wanted to reach out to you because [explain how you got their contact information, and how you can relate to them].

[Name of your company] has a new platform that will help your team at [Organization Name]. [One sentence pitch of benefits].

I know that [product] will be able to help [Organization name] [insert high level benefit here].

Are you available for a quick call on [time and date]?

Best,

[Signature]

☐ Remind me to follow up if no reply in 2 days ▲

🗑 ⌀   Save Draft   Send

Perfect your message and only include necessary information. You only have around 40 words to get their attention — don't waste them.

Experiment with different subject lines and email copy. Iterate. Email consistently, every single day. Once you've streamlined your cold email process, you can start discovering what works for your business.

2. Segment your email outreach into three groups

Send emails using a a tool like Close.io that allows you to track open and response rates. You're on the right track if you have around a 35% open rate and a 10% response rate. Any response rate below 5% means you're doing something wrong.

You can segment your cold outreach into three groups:
- People who opened the email and responded
- People who opened the email and didn't respond
- People who didn't open your email

Each of these actions tells us something different about how each segment reacted to your emails — whether they were thrown off your subject line and didn't bother to open the email, or weren't sold by your pitch. These signals allow you to experiment and test for better results.

It's never going to be an exact science—but luckily, it's not about making perfectly correct assumptions. It's about how you make it work.

3. Follow up with a cold call

By segmenting your email outreach, you create testing groups that you can call and probe further for insights.

For the first group, call them and ask: "I'm sure you get hundreds of cold emails each day. I'm curious, why did my cold email reach you? What peaked your interest? Why did you decide to respond to it — what did you like about it?"

For the second group we need to learn why they found the subject line compelling enough to open the email, and for the third group we need to discover why they didn't even bother to open the email.

Ask them: "I'd like to be respectful of your time. I sent you a cold email this morning and you never replied. You probably don't open or reply to most cold emails — I don't either. This call's purpose is not to sell you. From one professional to another, can I just ask why didn't you like it? I know we have a really valuable product — why wasn't I successful in conveying that? I'd highly appreciate even the smallest bit of feedback."

If you come to the call with vulnerability and authenticity, you're guaranteed to provoke some magical moments — human insight that's unmatched in statistical analysis. Of course, some people will still hang up the phone or shoo you away.

But others will give you valuable responses, for example:
- "I didn't like your email because it was obviously automated."
- "I don't even remember your email — nothing stuck out to me."
- "I honestly thought your email was a scam."

Resist the urge to defend your product or email. Don't try to sell. Seize the opportunity to learn more about what you're doing right, and what you're doing wrong.

Once you start identifying patterns within these responses, you can use them to revise your pitch, subject line, or email body and improve the quality of your overall cold email strategy. Plug them back in to the first step, and you'll start seeing results immediately.

Ready-to-use cold email templates

Now that you know all about how to effectively make use of cold email templates, here some templates that you can use as a starting point for your own sales emails.

Referral email V1

Subject line: [RELEVANT TOPIC, e.g. Sales ops; Demand generation; Product management] at {{lead.name}}

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

My name is [my name] and I head up business development efforts with {{organization.name}}. We recently launched a new platform that [ONE SENTENCE PITCH].

I am taking an educated stab in the dark here, however based on your online profile, you appear to be an appropriate person to connect with ... or might at least point me in the right direction.

I'd like to speak with someone from {{lead.name}} who is responsible for [HANDLING SOMETHING THAT'S RELEVANT TO MY PRODUCT].

If that's you, are you open to a fifteen minute call on [TIME WITH TIMEZONE AND DATE] to discuss ways the {{organization.name}} platform can specifically help your business? If not you, can you please put me in touch with the right person?

I appreciate the help!

Best,
{{user.first_name}}

Referral email V2

Subject line: Who is in charge of [RELEVANT TOPIC, e.g. Sales ops; Demand generation; Product management] at {{lead.name}}?

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

I hope I'm not bothering you. Could you please refer me to the person in charge of [something that's relevant to my product]?

Thanks for your time,
{{user.first_name}}

Referral email V3

Subject line: Question about [RELEVANT TOPIC, e.g. Sales ops; Demand generation; Product management]

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

My name is [my name] and I'm with {{organization.name}}. We work with organizations like {{lead.name}} to [INSERT ONE SENTENCE PITCH].

[One sentence unique benefit].

Could you direct me to the right person to talk to about this at {{lead.name}} so we can explore if this would be something valuable to incorporate into your events?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Referral email V4

Subject line: Appropriate Person?

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

I'm sorry to trouble you. Would you be so kind as to tell me who is responsible for [INSERT YOUR BIGGEST PAIN POINT HERE THAT RESONATES WITH YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER; OR INSERT FUNCTION LIKE *SALES* OR *RECRUITING*] and how I might get in touch with them?

Thank you,
{{user.first_name}}

Schedule a call email V1

Subject line: 15 mins on [DATE]

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

I hope this email finds you well! I wanted to reach out because [EXPLAIN HOW YOU GOT THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION AND HOW YOU RELATE TO THEM: TALKED TO A COLLEAGUE, SAW YOUR COMPANY ONLINE, ETC.].

{{organization.name}} has a new platform that will help (your team at) {{lead.name}}. [ONE SENTENCE PITCH]. We do this by:

Benefit/feature 1
Benefit/feature 2
Benefit/feature 3 (optional)

Let's explore how {{organization.name}} can specifically help your business. Are you available for a quick call [TIME WITH TIMEZONE AND DATE]?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Schedule a call email V2

Subject line: Your [GOAL/TARGET, e.g. sales goal for Q4]

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

I hope this email finds you well! I wanted to reach out because [explain how we got their contact information and how we relate to them: talked to a colleague, saw your company online, etc.].

{{organization.name}} has a new platform that will help (your team at) {{lead.name}}. [ONE SENTENCE PITCH].

I know that {{organization.name}} will be able to help {{lead.name}} [INSERT HIGH LEVEL BENEFIT HERE].

Are you available for a quick call [TIME WITH TIMEZONE AND DATE]?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Intro sales email template

Subject: {{lead.display_name}} + {{organization.name}}

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

My name is {{user.first_name}} with {{organization.name}}.

We help law firms store & manage all of their client data securely in the cloud. I wanted to learn how you handle data storage at {{lead.display_name}} and show you what we're working on.

Are you available for a quick call tomorrow afternoon?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

The follow-up email

Subject: {{organization.name}} Follow Up

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

Friendly follow up.

I wanted to show you how {{organization.name}} can help you [THAT THING YOUR PRODUCT/SERVICE HELPS YOU WITH]. Do you have a few minutes for a quick call later this week?:

Wed @ 11AM PST
Thur @ 2PM PST
Fri @ 3PM PST

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

The quick feedback email

Subject: Quick feedback?

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

Hope all is well.

We just launched [X NEW FEATURE]. Here's more information about it: [LINK TO NEW FEATURE]

Do you think it will help you [THE BENEFIT: SAVE TIME/SAVE MONEY/MAKE MORE MONEY/REDUCE PAIN] with [SPECIFIC THING THAT THEY DO]?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Following up with a lost opportunity

Subject: Quick {{organization.name}} update

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

Hope all is well.

Last time we spoke, you didn't think {{organization.name}} was a good fit because [REASON WHY THEY DIDN'T CLOSE].

The good news is that we now [NEW FEATURE OR SERVICE THAT ADDRESSES THEIR CONCERN]. Based on our past conversations, I think we're in a better position to [HELP WITH WHATEVER YOUR PRODUCT DOES].

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Follow up with an opportunity that disappeared on you

Subject: Are we still moving forward?

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

Friendly check in.

Last time we spoke, we said that we were [NEXT STEP IN THE SALES PROCESS].

How can I help move things forward?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

The "I just called" email

Subject: Today's Call

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

I just tried giving you a call.

Do you have a few minutes to catch up later this week?:

Wed @ 11AM PST
Thur @ 2PM PST
Fri @ 3PM PST

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

The "what else do we need?" email

Subject: What else do we need?

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

Hope all is well.

When we first spoke, you said that we need to:

[OBJECTION A]
[OBJECTION B]
[OBJECTION C]

Do you think we've done those things? What else do we need to move forward this week?

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Asking for the close

Subject: Let's get started

Hi {{contact.first_name}},

We're all set. Here's what I'll need from you to get you set up:

Onboarding Item 1
Onboarding Item 2
Onboarding Item 3

Do any of these times work for a set up call? Feel free to include your team:

Wed @ 11AM PST
Thur @ 2PM PST
Fri @ 3PM PST

Cheers,
{{user.first_name}}

Final thoughts

Thanks for reading this guide on cold emails

I know that there's a lot of information in this guide, and hopefully you've taken notes and jotted down plenty of ideas while reading it. The most important thing right now is to take action as quickly as possible. Implement this new-learned knowledge, translate insights into action. That's the only way to create results.

Right from the start, you should approach cold emailing with an experimental mindset. Very few people get it right the first time they try. Approach this with a "figure it out" mindset. It all comes down to better understanding your prospective customers, and how to reach them.

I do encourage you to use a tool that helps you simplify all of this—and obviously, my recommendation is that you [try out Close.io for free](#). Sales professionals, founders and business owners love the powerful 2-way-email integration we've built: all your sales emails can automatically be tracked and synced in your CRM. You can even make and receive calls that get logged for you—which means much less manual data entry than with other systems.

You can [learn more about Close.io's email features](#) or [get started with your free trial today](#). You can get started sending cold emails in minutes from now using the templates we provided in this guide. (We've already included Close.io's template tags, which allow you to send personalized emails at scale, so you just copy and paste the templates once, and afterwards all it takes is a mouseclick.)

But whatever tools you use, here's a final word of advice:

When it feels like your cold email campaigns are going nowhere—or you need some inspiration—revisit the lessons in this book. If what you have to offer your clints has real market potential, and you apply the tactics and strategies outlined in this guide, you will eventually succeed. And remember to check out the Close.io blog ([blog.close.io](#)) for more highly actionable sales advice every week.

Go get 'em!

Steli