The Cold Email Playbook

By Chris Ritson

INTRODUCTION

The **average c-suite** prospect gets **121 emails a day, 95 internal slacks and sits in 7.5 hours of meetings**.

Why is that important? Because your job with email is to get their attention with what you write.

How are you going to stand out in their busy inbox?

Step 1 - stop automating all your emails to feel good you've sent 700 of them today. That's NOT a strategy.

Instead, you want to send a lot less, maybe 25-30 manual emails per day and make >80% of your total emails steps in your sequence manual.

I've sent and reviewed >150,000 emails. In this document I am going to show you exactly how to use Cold Email to get more responses and book more meetings.

Included are:

- 4x 1st Touch Templates
- 8x Follow-up Templates
- How I respond to objections on Email
- My best ever performing Cold Email framework

Chapter 1 - My best ever email template [a full guide to writing like me]...

Here's the framework I use:

THE ONE Framework:

- **One Observation**
- **One Hypothesis**
- **One Impact**
- **One Story**
- **One CTA**

The biggest mistake I see with manual emails is that the seller tries to do too much and they end up confusing the prospect as to exactly what they can help with and why it's important.

As I said, your prospects are receiving a tonne of emails! Your job isn't to send more, your job with cold email is too stand-out and win their attention.

The quickest way to do that is write well, quickly. The vehicle to achieving that is through frameworks and templates.

In the next few pages I'll show you how to do that with The One Framework.

Step #1: Finding the ONE Observation

You should never be researching just before you're sending an email.

Find 1 great observation you can use for all the steps in your sequence to this individual.

Remember - with observations your challenge is finding something appropriate that you can link to your solution.

Question to consider...

- Can I link this observation to a problem my business solves?

Example:

- Fundraising. What is a challenge your prospect will now be facing because they've fundraised? Can your solution help them solve that problem?

- New Person to Role. What challenges does a new person to that role typically face? Can your solution help them with those problems?

Tip - rinse and repeat these 2 questions for every observation to validate whether it will land well when your prospect reads it.

Once you have ONE observation you can link to a problem you're ready to write your first line.

Step #2: Writing the 1st Word:

Everyone says your first sentence is important and that's true but I like to go further...

FACT: Your first word is the MOST important. This one word gets your prospects to decide whether they are curious enough to read on or not.

I think there are two levels to this...

Level 1 - *Saw, Noticed...*
Level 2 - *[First name], Read, Listened to, Met, Watched...*

Example:

Level 1 - *I saw you were on the cover of Forbes.*
Level 2 - *Read your article in Forbes on XYZ.*

Seeing something is LESS effort than reading. If you made the effort to read, watch, chat to, listen or meet someone you should TELL your prospects about it.

There is no shame in making sure your prospects understand the effort you've gone to in your research but most people miss this.

This concept is something I call ***"GET LOUD"***. If you've done, tell them you have because they won't guess it.

Now you've got a high impact first word that builds maximum curiosity you need to get a banging first line using your ONE Observation.

Step #3: Writing the 1st Sentence:

Now you've got a great first word. We need to create the rest of the sentence.

This should be much easier now you've started with a verb like ''saw'', ''met'' etc.

All you need to do is state what you saw or did...

Here's are a few examples:

- *Read your LinkedIn post about your new role...*
- *Listened to the podcast episode you were in with ACME...*
- *Noticed you've hired 3 new SDRs in the team this quarter...*

Most reps waste their first lines with rubbish like...

- *Hope this reaches you well...*
- *I'm Chris from XYZ...*

Sounds basic [basic is good btw] but 90%+ of the emails I read start this way so to stand out all you need to do is be different in your first line.

Note - the highest impact you can have with your first line is to get straight to your observation.

Step #4: Linking your Observation to a Hypothesis:

This is what most reps struggle with. It's pretty easy to find an observation and write it down and use a good verb.

But linking it to a problem you solve for your prospect? That's much harder. That's why learning your prospects problems not your products.

The best way to do this is to simply make a bet or a guess about their situation.

Break it down into this simple framework...

An easy framework: The "I did...I bet" framework...

Let's take the examples above and build on them...

Read your LinkedIn post about your new role [this is what you did aka your observation]...

- *I bet you're thinking about how to [insert problem people new to role face]*

Listened to the podcast episode you were in with ACME...

- *I'm guessing you're looking at [insert desired outcome of going on the podcast]*

Noticed you've hired 3 new SDRs in the team this quarter...

- *You're probably wondering how you [insert problem new reps face]*

Step #4: Continued…

Let’s fill in the gaps…

Read your LinkedIn post about your new role…

- *I bet you’re thinking about how to bring in the best talent for your team going forward in 2024…*

Listened to the podcast episode you were in with ACME…

- *I’m guessing you’re looking at growing your personal brand and following…*

Noticed you’ve hired 3 new SDRs in the team this quarter…

- *You’re probably wondering how you get reps ramped as fast as possible on cold calls…*

If you’re stuck go back to the ‘’I saw.I bet’’ framework. This will help you stick to a structure that wins at the top of your email.

<u>Step #5: Stating ONE Impact:</u>

A lot of reps miss this part of their email and in some cases that’s okay but if you’d like to go the extra mile and ensure you get more responses you NEED an impact statement.

The aim of an impact statement is three fold:

1. *Make sure your prospects feel bad about their current situation*

2. *Make them feel like the the status quo isn’t the best choice*

3. *Make them question the ‘**cost of inaction**’ - what happens if I don’t do anything about this*

If you’re thinking, what is the status quo? I mean what are your competitors doing and promising? To stand out you need to be a little different and part of that is distancing yourself from everyone else [the status quo].

The best way to do that is through an impact statement...

<u>Here’s</u>

Subject: Cold Calls

Observation + Problem: Seems like the team is growing, Chris. Figured cold calls would be top of mind for new reps.

Impact Statement: Most reps set 5 meetings a month if they’re lucky.

Step #5: Continued...

The impact statement in this case is a negative result.

It's the opposite of what your prospect wants to achieve. It makes them think...''we can' continue doing it this way''.

And this is why it's so impactful because you can then tell them a very simple way of avoiding that in **'Step 6' below.**

Step #6: Tell ONE Story

Most reps get very excited in this part of the email. Why? Because it's selling time. They jump in and mention all the biggest logos the business has sold to and the prospect is left wondering if this is even for them?

My rules for telling stories are simple:

1. *1 Story, 1 Logo, 1 Result*
2. *Make THEM the center of the story*

Here's a comparison:

Bad: ACME helped ABC achieve through...

Great: VPs use ACME to achieve....

Here's a fleshed out example:

VP Sales use my Cold Call course to ramp their new SDRs 3.1x faster on the phone.

Remember - It's better to tell ONE great story than mention 10 irrelevant ones.

The objective with your story is make the prospect think 'wow, they actually get results I wish I could get'.

Step #7: Use ONE CTA:

As a rule of thumb, always wait to ask questions as your final sentence. That will stop you from being tempted to ask more than one.

The objective of the CTA is to essentially say to your prospect; 'Is what I've written in the rest of my email useful enough to get a reply or not?'

There are 2 types of CTA I teach in my programmes:

1. **High Friction CTA:**

- *Worth a chat?*
- *Shall we talk?*
- *Ready to meet?*

If you're asking for more than a one word reply it's HIGH FRICTION. It's a lot of effort for your prospects which means they are less likely to respond.

2. **Low Friction CTA:**

- *Shall I send a 30 second video?*
- *Open to a Whatsapp chat?*
- *Can I send a case study?*

All you're asking for here is a ONE word response. It's easy for your prospect and you can build MORE trust now you've opened the conversation.

Quick Tip - you'll be tempted to always ask for the meeting but remember the Cold Prospect Funnel - sometimes you need to build more trust and deepen the relationship before you get to that point.

Using a PS.

Everyone says ''use a PS'', no-one teaches you what to actually say.

I recommend three types of PS...

1. ***The Personal PS*** - this is something that you've noticed about them personally in your research.

Example:

PS. Love your dog, Molly, looks as wild as my Vizsla, Maggie.
PS. Saw we both went to Newcastle Uni - what a city!

2. ***The Redirect PS*** - this is something you can use to redirect people to other emails, pieces of content you've sent.

Example:

PS. Sent you a connection request on LinkedIn - I think you'll get value from my posts there.

3. ***The Invite PS*** - introduce marketing events to the prospect.

Eg. *PS. I'm hosting an event for VPs of Sales on commission plans. Check it out on our website [think you'll enjoy it].*

Subject Lines:

Here's my rules for maximizing your open rates:

- lower case
- 3 words or less
- Be very specific
- Mention the problem

Bad examples:

1. Increase efficiency using AI
2. Join our next high efficiency workshops for leaders
3. Sell more with our best in class sales effectiveness tool
4. Time Mgmt & Sales Conversion & Full cycle reps & Effectiveness...

They are all way too complicated and wishy washy.

Good examples:

1. cold calling
2. sdr cold emails
3. Q2 outbound pipeline
4. june outbound pipeline

The subject line is quite literally the subject you are about to discuss in the body of your email.

The more specific and focused this is, the better.

<u>Example 1.0:</u>

Hi X,

Read your LinkedIn post that you've hired 100+ sales reps - you must have some serious interview skills [and patience].

Guessing you know how hard it is to ramp reps fast as well. Most rely on the reps' self teaching.

The VP Sales at ACME use my Outbound training programme and have seen ramp time reduce from 6 to 3 months.

Worth a chat?

PS. Running a webinar on ramping BDRs on 23rd May if you're interested.

<u>Example 2.0:</u>

Hi X,

Saw you hired 2 new BDRs last week - bet you're thinking about ramping them as fast as possible!

On average it takes 5 months to ramp a BDR.

The VP Sales at ACME used my bespoke Outbound training programme and halved ramp from 6 to 3 months.

Worth sending a 30-second video explaining more?

PS. Saw you went to Newcastle Uni - me too.

Chapter 2 - More 1st Touch Templates

Not every 1st touch email needs to use The One Framework I just taught you!

In this chapter I'll show you 3 more templates you can use to get your sequences started strongly with great Cold Emails.

2. The Cornered Email

Example:

Chris, looks like you're hiring 2 SDRs.

Would it be helpful to get a more granular look at how they're ramping on cold calls? My cold call scripts, are proven to help ramp SDRs faster.

Cheers - Chris

Template:

Chris, looks like you're [Insert observation].

Would it be helpful to get a more granular look at how [Insert problem and desired result]. My[Insert solution], is proven to help [Insert desired result].

Cheers - Chris

3. The Displacement Email:

Example:

Chris - saw you're using Pavilion University for upskilling reps. Hope you're liking it.

I know their courses are great for AEs and Leaders. However, a lot of their SDRs have been switching to my courses as they need more focus on how to do ''warm-outbound'' and build relationships with prospects.,

Could you see ''warm outbound'' being a thing you'd like the team to learn?

Template:

Chris - saw you're using [Insert competitor] for [insert desired outcome]. Hope you're liking it.

I know their[Insert positive outcome 1 of competitive solution]. However, a lot of their [insert persona] have been switching to my [insert solution] as they need more [insert desired solution the persona wants more than positive outcome 1].

Could you see [Insert solution] being a thing you'd be interested in?

4. The Slowly Slowly Email:

Example:

Chris - looks like you're hiring SDRs.

Sales leaders with growing SDR teams usually lean on a playbook to ramp reps as quickly as possible.

Does that sound similar to what you’re doing at ACME?

Template:

Chris - looks like you're [insert observation].

[Insert persona] with [Insert common situation] usually lean on a [Insert solution] to [Insert desired outcome].

Does that sound similar to what you’re doing at ACME?

Chapter 3 - Follow-up Templates

Now you've sent a great 1st touch email you need to accept a lot of them won't be responded to! But this is where 99% of reps go wrong. They either give-up or revert to low-quality follow-ups.

In this chapter I'll show you 8 follow-up templates you can use to make sure your sequences produce high quality prospect experience from start to finish with great Cold Emails.

You will note I have used the same observation / piece of research in ALL my follow-up emails.

This is a critical part of any great sequence. You don't need to do new research for every email you send. Instead, rinse and repeat your one great observation time and time again in all your touchpoints.

Not only does this help maintain a high quality of writing, it also helps you prospects understand why you're there through the process of reiteration and repetition.

1. The Reiteration Email

Example:

Chris - saw you're hiring 2 SDRs. I imagine you're thinking about how to ramp them fast. Usually, my customers focus on product knowledge. And reps problem knowledge lags.

We're helping reps at ACME ramp faster. They've improved every quarter this year since we began training their reps.

Worth a chat?

Template:

Chris - saw you're [Insert observation]. I imagine you're thinking about how to[Insert desired outcome]. Usually, my customers focus on[Insert wrong action most people take]. And [Insert bad result of wrong action].

We're helping [Insert company name and result they achieved]. They've improved [Insert timeframe] this year since we began [Inert solution].

Worth a chat?

2. The Bump/Chaser Email

Example:

Hey Chris,

Given that you're hiring 2 SDRs, I thought this would be worth a conversation.

Did you have feedback on my previous note?

Chris

Template:

Hey Chris,

Given that you're [Insert observation] , I thought this would be worth a conversation.

Did you have feedback on my previous note?

Chris

4. The Timing Off Email

Example:

Chris - looks like you're hiring 2 SDRs.

Have sent a couple of notes but usually when I don’t hear back it’s because;

- You’re not interested
- Or you want more information before jumping on a call
- You just missed and you’d love to learn more

Which sounds most like you?

Template:

Chris - looks like you're [Insert observation]

Have sent a couple of notes but usually when I don’t hear back it’s because;

- You’re not interested
- Or you want more information before jumping on a call
- You just missed and you’d love to learn more

Which sounds most like you?

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Example:

Hey Chris,

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Did you have feedback on my previous note?

Chris

Template:

Hey Chris,

Given that you're [Insert observation] , I thought this would be worth a conversation.

Did you have feedback on my previous note?

Chris

5. The Educational Email

Example:

Chris, do you listen to ACME podcast?

Given you're hiring and likely ramping SDRs, I thought you'd find it helpful.

The VP of Sales at XYZ spoke in the last episode about how she scaled her team to a $900M acquisition using a new way to do Outbound [that I taught them]!

Check it out here:

P.S. Any thoughts on my previous note?

Template:

Chris, do you [Insert action they might take]?

Given you're [Insert observation] and likely[Insert desired outcome], I thought you'd find it helpful.

The [Insert persona] at [Insert company name] spoke in the last episode about how she [Insert result you read/heard] using a new way to do [Insert problem] [that I taught them]!

Check it out here [Insert link]

P.S. Any thoughts on my previous note?

6. The Invite Email

Example:

Chris - given you're hiring 2 SDRs, I thought you'd find this helpful.

We're running an online webinar on SDR hiring. The VP Sales at ACME will be outlining the mistakes they made from hiring >100 reps.

You can register here:

PS. Did you see my previous note?

Template:

Chris - given you're[insert observation], I thought you'd find this helpful.

We're running an online webinar on [insert observation]. The [Insert persona] at [Insert company] will be outlining the mistakes they made from [Insert action they took].

You can register here: [Insert link]

PS. Did you see my previous note?

7. The Video Email

Example:

Chris - Given your SDR team is growing, I thought you'd find my email helpful. As you know growth is exciting but puts pressure on leaders to deliver ramp-up quotas.

Assuming you're coaching the SDRs, thought you might enjoy this: [insert video here]

If so, worth a chat soon?

Template:

Chris - Given your[Insert observation], I thought you'd find my email helpful. As you know [desired outcome] is exciting but puts pressure on [insert persona] to deliver [insert desired result].

Assuming you're [Insert action you believe they're taking to achieve desired result], thought you might enjoy this: [insert video here]

If so, worth a chat soon?

8. The Break-up Email

Example:

Chris - I've reached out a few times because you’re hiring 2 new SDRs. I bet you’re thinking about ramping them fast.

I thought my training programme could help. The VP Sales at ACME improved ramp results by 110% from working with me.

Guessing the timing is off? Let me know if I’m wrong otherwise I’ll come back in a few months to see if you’re ready then.

Template:

Chris - I've reached out a few times because you’re [Insert observation]. I bet you’re thinking about [Insert desired outcome].

I thought my [Insert solution] could help. The [Insert persona] at [Insert company] improved [Insert result] from working with me.

Guessing the timing is off? Let me know if I’m wrong otherwise I’ll come back in a few months to see if you’re ready then.

Chapter 4 - Responding to objections on Email

Let’s imagine you’ve gotten a response on email but its an objection / push back.

This will happen a lot and that’s okay, the first part of your job is done! You’ve won their attention, you just need to get more of it!

In this chapter I’ll show you how to respond to objections on email and share a template you can use right away.

The Objection Framework:

Step 1 - Acknowledge

Step 2 - Give context

Step 3 - Reask your question and give the prospect an out

Step 1 - Acknowledge

Acknowledge their objection in your first line, this makes your prospect feel like you've listened to them! It's disarming and gets them to continue reading.

Step 2 - Give Context

Reiterate why you are messaging them. Most reps skip thiss critical part but an objection on email is simply a chance for you to repeat why you are valuable to them.

Most prospects won't register your first email so through the process of repetition you give them a second chance at understanding what you have to offer them.

Step 3 - Reask and offer an out

Repeat your original ask but offer them an out by using a closed yes or no question. This works because you are asking your prospect to re-think your value proposition and consider if it really is useful or not.

A second no here is a great indicator someone is really uninterested! Most first time nos or objections on emails are simply from prospects who don't really understand why you are in their inbox!

The Objection Email:

Example Template:

Hey X,

Sorry my email didn't land as well as I expected. I felt you would be the best person to contact about [insert problem] as we are helping other [insert personas] and seeing results like [insert result].

Bearing that in mind would you be open to chatting more or is it still a please leave me alone {insert what they responded}?

Cheers - Chris

And that's a wrap for this playbook!

If you'd like to check out more training from me go here:

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