Twitter Thread by Ankur Warikoo



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The art of cold emailing

A thread...

Cold emailing is the act of sending an email (or a DM) to someone who doesn't know you (hence the word, cold!)

Every day I get 300+ emails, most from those I do not know, and a shocking number of them are poorly written.

Here are 10 things that work for emails that I reply to

1. A different (but not aggressive) subject line

Ask yourself, what is the most likely subject line that EVERYONE will tend to write.
And then DO NOT write that.

What works?
Personalization (I think Vidur and Uzma will love this)
Intrigue (This is when I first saw you)

What doesn't work?
Common themes (Seeking investment; Job application)
Aggression (Your content sucks - true story btw. It was used only to catch attention)
Buzzwords (AI/ML startup by Stanford founder)

2. The salutation

It is crazy how this small thing is so impactful.
How do you start your email?

Hi Ankur / Hey Ankur / Good Morning Ankur / Dear Mr. Warikoo etc

Adding harmless emoticons helps (■)

The worst ones?

Dear Sir/Ma'am (ridiculous how many of these I get everyday)
Hi (that's it! Nothing else. Just a hi!)
Wasssup bro (I am not your bro!)
Guru Ji (please!)

The idea is to strike a warm connect over a medium where your words are reflecting your emotions.

3. The purpose

Assuming you are writing to someone busy, you do them a world of good when you state the purpose of the email right upfront.

This way, they know what you want from them.

It is critical you do not dilly-dally in the purpose. That just makes it hard to decipher.

Worst ones?
This is for a potential collaboration that we wish to explore (loose af)
Trying to explore synergies
Want to see where I can fit in the team

Good ones?
I want to show the progress of my startup, current traction and see if you would be interested to invest?

Simple!

4. Relevance
This is the crux of the conversation where the best emails establish relevance.
This requires homework, research and customization.

Which is why, you cannot, by definition, send more than 3-5 cold emails a day.
Anything more and you are most likely doing it wrong.

You have to, in this section, find
Sender-Receiver-Fit (SRF)

You as the sender, have something to offer or ask, that fits what the receiver is seeking or willing to offer.

When you do not get a reply, it is because there was no SRF.

5. The ask

Post attempting SRF, you ask.
Clearly and precisely.

Mistakes people often make?
1. Assume on behalf of the receiver (oh, this must not be imp for them)
2. Ask broadly (I am looking for guidance!)
3. Not ask at all (hoping to hear from you)

6. Follow up

This is where most people fail. They take no response as rejection. While in most cases, it may simply be lack of priority.

Always follow up - once.
And in the follow up ask, specify your next step...

“To make it easy for you, in case I do not hear back, I will assume this isn’t priority right now. I respect that.”

“In case I do not hear back, I hope it is fine that I check back in x. Please let me know if you would much rather not hear from me.”

7. Myths about cold emailing

It is not about your grasp over the English language.
Establish your comfort.
The key is to communicate, not to impress.

8. Myths about cold emailing

It doesn’t work

Cold emailing works. I have made it work for myself and on a daily basis I hear from people who have created opportunities simply by sending an email.

Remember, if you do not ask, the answer is always no.

9. Use cases which work the best

Hiring
Send emails to the hiring manager, not to HR. They need the candidate more than HR.

Mentoring
Send emails to those who could help you in life, through their experiences.

Feedback
To solicit views on how you are doing, what you are doing

10. The golden tip

The best cold emails I have got have one thing in common

They are authentic (you can make out from the way the email is written. For instance, no one uses the phrase “any inconvenience caused is deeply regretted” in real life)

They sound human!

For all those in your 20s, use cold emails to create opportunities that you didn’t know existed for you. This is your exploration tool.

For those in your 30s, use cold emails to build a network that builds on your identified strengths.

And always remember life’s simple truth

If you do not ask, the answer is always no.

If you liked this thread, please do yourself a favor and send a well researched cold email today to someone.

And retweet this thread, so that it reaches others :)