



**MENTOR•HER**

# YOUR FREELANCER PITCH

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT  
STORY

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PUBLISHED ON  
WEEK FIVE

FOR  
FREELANCING



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# INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to Week Five of the Mentor Her programme. From Week Two and Three, we hope you have been able to become clearer about who you are as a freelancer, how to stand out from the crowd and market yourself online in order to attract those decision makers to your profile.

The next thing is to finding out how to identify and pitch yourself privately to potential decision makers in your industry of choice.

Following on from last week, the first thing you need to do in order to begin researching how to get your next gig and who is going to give it to you, is to identify decision makers.

First, consider your industry. Make a list of the small to large corporations that are operating within your industry in your location.

For example, if you are pitching your journalist services in Ireland. Look at your local publications, from local newsletters to reporters working your area. Then, consider your county publications, from radio stations to print, who operates in these areas? And then, look at national media- the largest newspapers, television shows and radio stations.

For each, explore their websites, their social media and the content of their publication or show. Identify the individuals working within these organisations and find out where they are most active. Consider Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram and connect with them first here.

Your first thought may be to seek out the main writers, hosts or show presenters in these organisations, but who you really need to find is the people who are making decisions. These are generally not the big name stars that you are familiar with. Go to LinkedIn and look up the people in these organisations that have titles like "Editor", "Head of Content Marketing", "Head of Marketing", "Blog Manager" etc.

These are the people who you need to contact in order to land your next gig. If you can't find their email address online, connect with them on social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) and engage with their content regularly before reaching out.





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# THE PROCESS

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Once you have identified a decision maker, it's time to start on the process of connecting, constructing a pitch and landing your next dream job.

## IDENTIFY + CONNECT

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The first thing to do is write a list of companies, the decision makers within them, their email address and/or social media handles. Connect with them and engage with them regularly before approaching.

## GET AN EMAIL ADDRESS

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If you can't find an email address online, reach out on social media with the intent of getting their email address. Decisions and deals are never made through Instagram, or even LinkedIn. If you have their email address it not only means that you have a platform that they are checking in on at least once a day, you can also send attachments like your portfolio PDF.

You can get their email address by briefly describing who you are, what you do and offering to send them some examples that you feel they might be interested in.

## SEND YOUR PITCH

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Once you have an email address, the next thing to write is your email. If you have no real connection to them other than you either picked up their email address online or were able to engage with them on social media briefly- take the template on the next page lightly and see how you can incorporate your uniqueness as a freelancer. See the next two pages for more.

## FOLLOW-UP

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After sending your pitch, one of two things will happen: they'll ask to see your work or they won't respond. Or, as a third option, they might respond with a straight "we're not interested". If you don't get a response, you should follow up with an email in 3-4 business days. If you have a phone number for a company or even for your connection, it's worth giving them a ring to see if they received your email. If you are ringing to check in, always follow up this phone call with an email to remind them of who you are and what you're offering.

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# CONSTRUCTING A PITCH

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Review Week Two's manual on "How to Stand Out"- who are you, and what does your personality, experience, style or work ethic do to show your Unique Selling Point as an influencer?

## TAILOR YOUR PITCH

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You should maintain different sales pitches that you can adjust depending on which possible employer, decision maker or company you're offering your services to. Just like in marketing, you'll pitch your services differently to a radio station that primarily plays music, to a journal that publishes political articles.

One thing to note that if you're pitching your services to a large company, these decision makers- alongside being interested in your talent- may also want reassurance that you are going to be a safe choice for the job. Decision makers in HR often need to prove their hiring decisions to their own higher-ups, so if you can assure them that you have a strong work ethic, won't bring any unwanted controversy or make things difficult for them in any way, you'll put yourself ahead of others in your position.

## KEEP IT REAL, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

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When constructing sales pitches, you should draw on your personal experiences, beliefs, opinions and style as much as possible. Don't make promises you can't keep or build up the reach or quality of your service more than it is. Obviously, this could easily come back to you haunt you in the long run. Yet, it may be an important aspect to your sales pitch to nurture a bit of hyperbole. If you need to add a bit of fluff or put emphasis on an aspect of your sales pitch that might not be 100% to the truth- proceed with caution. If you're exaggerating parts of your pitch, always make it realistic, never add in parts of your story that can be refuted or proven otherwise.

## HAVE YOUR PORTFOLIO READY

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As a freelancer, the most important thing to get done before you start marketing, trying to identify decision makers or even compiling a pitch is to have your portfolio ready. This was one of the first things on the list to climbing the freelancing corporate ladder in Week Three.

A portfolio can vary greatly, depending on what industry you're in. The easiest thing to do is to start with a PDF, the same way you would present a CV. On it, you should include a bit about yourself, examples of past work, snippets of articles or designs you have done in the past and any references or reviews you have received can be incorporated into the text and design. The best thing about PDF is that it can be emailed easily and lands directly in a decision makers inbox for them to click through on their own time. If you have a large following, consider adding in your analytics to this too, how many Twitter, Instagram or Facebook followers you have and what is your reach?

For most freelancers, having a website will be the most important way to show off your work. If you do have a website or are working on one, make sure that your work is easy to access, interactive where it needs to be and clear and concise for potential decision makers viewing it. Ensure your website domain is bought and paid for, to establish even more credibility i.e. firstnamesurname.com instead of firstnamesurname.wordpress.com. And, lastly, ensure that that link is available and accessible in every email footer, social media description and email you write!



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# YOUR COLD PITCH

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The next thing to do is start writing Cold Emails. A Cold Email is something you send to someone who you have no connections to, like cold calls- it's something that will arrive in their inbox out of the blue and you have to hope and pray that they'll pick you up. The trick is to write engaging copy, that is confident and conversational but also doesn't sound too much like you've copied and pasted it from a template online. The below is a template for our Journalist Freelancers on the Mentor Her programme.

## EXAMPLE

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Hi (name),

I hope you're well.

I've been really enjoying the **(fantastic/interesting/intriguing/other positive adjective + (recent topic name))** that you've been publishing at **(company name)** recently, especially **(an example of an article that you actually read to show real interest)**.

I thought I would reach out to you to see if you are taking on other content writers at the moment. Right now, I am **(what you are currently doing, focused on writing about, interested in exploring that's relevant to the reader and demonstrating why you would be a good fit)**.

**If you have past work experience, or something relevant to this company, add it in here.**

Are you currently seeking new writers? If so, please let me know and I would be happy to send you on an example of some articles I feel would really suit **(Company name)**.

Thank you for your time,

Kind regards,

(Name)

(Website)

(Email address)

## WHY IT WORKS

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This pitch works for a number of reasons:

- You're using a first name, meaning you went out of your way to get in contact with this individual in particular.
- You're showing an interest in the publication but also solid proof that you actually have read something they produced.
- You're getting right to the point: telling them about yourself, what you're doing and why you could be a good fit.
- You're ending the email in a question, which is a marketing technique that makes people respond to emails more than an email that does not end in a question.
- Your eagerness to show off your work and continue the conversation further is a testament that you are interested in developing a relationship with this person, rather than just sending them your portfolio straight out of the blue.



Final Week



MENTOR•HER

# KEYS TO CONFIDENCE

ENDING WITH A BANG!  
GETTING EXCITED TO MOVE  
FORWARD

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PUBLISHED ON  
WEEK SIX

FOR  
FREELANCING