15 Cold Email Templates To Generate More Leads

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It's no secret that templates can make you more efficient at sending cold email campaigns... with a caveat.

Templates should be used as a starting point to help speed up the process of sending cold emails, but there's a balance to be struck between sending an entirely templated campaign (never a good idea) and 100% personalized emails (gets results, but is really inefficient and time-prohibitive).

Below are 15 cold email templates, as well as some tips on how to use them from a conversation I had with Rex Bibertson, Co-Founder and COO of The Sales Developers.

However, for best results, templates should never be pulled from a site and sent as-is – they should always be adapted to fit the tone and style of the sender. This is part of the personalization process, but it also helps ensure that you're not making the embarrassing mistake of sending the same email as a competitor (even when you're only competing with them for inbox space).

A cold email template is a skeleton that you need to flesh out. Take the time, and you'll have created a powerful tool that lets you squeeze every bit of potential out of what is already a massively effective channel.

Read on to check out the templates, or click below to jump to cold email strategy and copywriting best practices.

1. 15 Cold Email Templates
2. How to Use Templates Effectively
3. Cold Call Email Best Practices
4. Subject Lines
5. Body Copy
6. How to Personalize at Scale

Cold email works best by combining personalization and scale. Click here to learn how Mailshake's email outreach and follow-up automation helps you achieve both.

15 Cold Email Templates to Test

Start with a template to give you a framework. Then build and expand upon it.

1. Tie your email to a recent event
2. AIDA
3. Be as direct as you can
4. Sujan's 3-Sentence Format

5 and 6. Ask for an introduction
7. Before-After-Bridge (BAB)
8. Mention a Competitor's Product
9. Problem-Agitate-Solve (PAS)
10. When you're unsure whether you're emailing the right person
11. Praise-Picture-Push (PPP)
12 and 13. When you know someone's been on your website
14. Share a Valuable Resource
15. Rock the Boat

1. Tie your email to a recent event

Subject: Congrats!

Hi {{name}},

Just saw the news about {{trigger event}}. Congrats!

Usually when this happens, {{insert value prop}} becomes a priority. So, I thought you might be interested in finding out how we helped {{similar company}} {{benefit}}.

I know things at {{company name}} must be crazy now, but If you'd like to learn more, let's set up a quick call.

How does {{specific day and time}} look on your calendar?

Alternatively, here's a link to my calendar or feel free to send me yours.

Download this template

Template from: Replyify

This approach is a winner because it shows you're not sending out a mass email campaign to every company that might have a small chance of being interested in your product. Instead, you've noticed something that they've specifically achieved, and have matched that to your product.

2. AIDA

This is a classic copywriting formula that can easily be applied to cold email outreach. AIDA stands for attention-interest-desire-action, and it outlines the steps to include in your main body: grab their attention, outline why it should interest them, build desire, show them how to take action and get the benefit you've outlined.

Subject: Time Saving Software

Hi {{name}},

What would you do with an extra 10 hours each week?

I ask because clients like yourself have seen savings like these – if not more – after adding our software to their tech stacks.

Just ask experts like Gary Vaynerchuk, Tim Ferriss, and Malcolm Gladwell, who we're happy to count as satisfied customers.

I'd love to set up a time to walk you through a personalized demo. Would you have some free time next week to connect?

Download this template

3. Be as direct as you can

Subject: 10x {{prospect's company's}} traction in 10 minutes

Hello {{name}},

I have an idea that I can explain in 10 minutes that can get {{company}} its next 100 best customers.

I recently used this idea to help our client {{SaaS company/competitor}} almost triple their monthly run rate.

{{Name}}, let's schedule a quick 10-minute call so I can

share the idea with you. When works best for you?

Download this template

Template from: Heather R Morgan, writing for Hubspot

This template reportedly generated a 57% open rate and a 21% response rate, likely because:

- The subject line highlights an attractive proposition, but leaves enough to the imagination to make the recipient want to open the email and learn more.
- It very quickly describes what the sender can offer the prospect (100 new customers) and what they need from them (10 minutes of their time).
- It uses social proof as evidence of how this proposition has worked for others.

4. Sujan's 3-Sentence Format

As the name implies, this template takes a more-is-less approach, and it delivers excellent results. You don't literally have to cut your message down to only three sentences – your intro, description, your ask – but you should try and keep it as close to that number as possible.

Hi {{name}},

My name is {{your name}}, and I'll keep this quick.

I'm the founder of a software tool that saves busy executives like you as many as 10 hours each and every week.

Could I have ten minutes of your time next week for a personalized demo that'll make clear why entrepreneurs like Gary Vaynerchuk, Tim Ferriss, and Malcolm Gladwell love our product?

Download this template

5. & 6. Ask for an introduction

Hi {{name}},

I was looking to get introduced to {{person you're trying to connect with}} from {{that person's company}}, and saw you were connected to them. I'm not sure how well you're connected to them, but if the relationship is strong, I'd really appreciate an introduction to chat about ways they can work with {{your company}}.

Please let me know if you feel comfortable doing this and I'll forward a proper request for the introduction that you can forward to them.

Download this template

Template from: Scott Britton at Life Long Learner

I don't see this approach used often. In theory that might be a bad sign, but in this case I don't think it is. We all know that getting a positive response from a prospect is easier if a mutual contact introduces you. This template turns this approach on its head by asking a stranger to initiate the introduction. It won't work on everyone, but it's not a huge ask – approach this one in the right way and you might be surprised at the results.

Here's another template (from the same source) that does a good job of leveraging this approach.

Hey {{Name}},

Was hoping that you might be able to introduce me to {{person you want to reach}} at {{their company}}?

I wanted to connect with him because our email list targets a similar demographic with limited overlap. Seeing as our products are non-competitive, I wanted to touch base to see if he was up for brainstorming ways to leverage our existing user bases to grow both of our lists.

We did this with {{competitor}} in the past, and both parties

received a 15% lift in new subscribers.

Any help is much appreciated.

Download this template

7. Before-After-Bridge (BAB)

This structure comes courtesy of the good folks over at Buffer. The gist of it is to quickly get recipients imagining their lives after using your product or service. Simple, but effective. The idea is to paint a picture of life before your solution, life after it, and how to get from one to the other.

Hi {{name}},

If you're like most executives, you know how frustrating it can feel to have your time wasted.

Our software changes that, freeing up as many as 10 hours each week for clients like Gary Vaynerchuk, Tim Ferriss, and Malcolm Gladwell.

If you'd be willing to give me just ten minutes of your time, I'll show you how you can achieve the same with our innovative platform. What's the best time to connect next week for a personalized demo?

Download this template

8. Mention a competitor's product

Hi {{Name}},

Just ran across your website and noticed you were using {{Your competitor's product}}. How are you liking it? I run a {{service}} called {{your company}}.

It's just like {{your competitor's product}}, only {{key differentiator}}. If you're up for it, I would love to jump on a quick call with you and get your opinion on how we could make {{prospect's company}} better (and see if it would make sense for us to work together).

Would {{date and time}} be a good time for you? (If not, I'm flexible, just let me know).

Download this template

Template from: Bryan Harris of VideoFruit

This approach targets prospects who are using a product similar to your own, which means you can safely assume they may be interested in using your product instead. All you need to do is highlight your product's USP to show why it's a better choice for the prospect than the product they're

currently using.

9. Problem-Agitate-Solve (PAS)

Obstacles and challenges are frustrating, irritating, annoying, and often costly. This template leverages that be throwing a spotlight on your prospect's pain points. It highlights the problem facing the recipient, agitates and emphasizes the pain, and then offers a solution to eliminate or reduce.

Hi {{name}},

When's the last time you finished everything on your daily to-do list?

If you're like most busy executives, you're constantly struggling to stay on top of everything – let alone be the effective leader you need to be.

Our software helps motivated entrepreneurs like Gary Vaynerchuk, Tim Ferriss, and Malcolm Gladwell save as much as ten hours per week that can be directed back at your top priorities.

I'd love to give you a personalized demo. When are you free next week?

Download this template

10. When you're unsure whether you're emailing the right person

Send something like this...

Hi {{name}},

I'm {{your name}} and I lead the business development efforts at {{your company}}. We have recently launched a new solution that {{one sentence pitch – what your solution does}}.

Based on your online profile {{mention profile link}}, it appears that you might be the right person, or at least point me to the right person to talk about {{problem solved by your product}}.

I'd like to speak to someone from {{company name}} who is responsible for {{key decision required to buy or use your product}}.

If it's you, would you be open to a 10-minute call on {{time and date}} to discuss how {{solution name}} can help your business? If it's not you, can you kindly point me to the appropriate person?

Thank you for the help!

Download this template

I'm guessing that, like me, you receive tons of emails that ask you to point the sender in the right direction. I'll also bet that you almost never respond.

That's because these sorts of emails rarely give you a reason to help the sender out. The example above bucks this trend. It demonstrates that you've at least done a bit of research into who you're contacting, and have matched your product to their business model – you're just not 100% sure whether the person you're reaching out to is the best person to deal with.

11. Praise-Picture-Push (PPP)

A little sincere flattery never hurts, especially if you can use it to reinforce how much recipients could be accomplishing with your solution. Enter PPP. Start with a genuine compliment about a recent achievement or accomplishment, paint a rosy picture of all they could achieve on a regular basis with your product, and then encourage and compel them to take action.

Hi {{name}},

Congrats! I just saw that you were chosen as a speaker for the 2019 Inbound Marketing conference next month.

As you're preparing for your presentation, it's natural to fall behind on other tasks. If you're struggling to keep up, I'd love to show you how our software can help you reclaim ten hours or more per week.

Can I have ten minutes of your time next week to give you a personalized demo?

Download this template

12. & 13. When you know someone's been on your website

Hi {{Name}},

You recently visited {{website}} and {{took this action}}.

If you're interested in {{content topic}} then I can recommend the following additional resources:

{{relevant resource 1}}
{{relevant resource 2}}

Our company also offers {{product/service}} which could help you {{achieve this specific result or statistic}}.

Are you free for a call tomorrow at {{give 2 possible times}} to discuss this further?

Download this template

Template from: Contact Monkey

This one isn't targeted towards an entirely cold lead, since the prospect's completed an action on your site resulting in you capturing their email address. However, since there isn't any indication that they're actually interested in talking to or buying from you, it's close enough to a cold lead.

It's also something you should be leveraging when the opportunity arises. Don't add prospects who arrive through your website to a mass email list – send them a personalized email that acknowledges the actions they've taken on your site, as in the template above.

Not sure about that template? Here's a similar alternative from the same source:

Hi {{Name}},

Thanks for {{taking this action}} on {{website}}. Are you looking for a cost-effective way to {{achieve this result

relevant to content topic}}?

I have done some research on {{lead company name}} and I can offer some advice regarding {{area 1}} and {{area 2}}.

Do you have time for a call tomorrow at {{give 2 possible times}} to discuss a solution for your company?

Download this template

14. Share a Valuable Resource

Above all else, you want to be seen as an asset to your recipients. You want to provide value to them every time they chose to open one of your emails. One of the quickest ways to do that is to share valuable and highly relevant resources with them.

Subject: Thought you might like this article

Hi {{name}},

Your latest article on {{subject}} got me thinking.

I found this article on {{article title}} that may be beneficial to you and your team.

Here's the link to check it out – {{link}}

Hope you find it helpful. Keep up the great work.

Download this template

15. Rock the Boat

It's easy to fall into familiar routines. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it sometimes prevents us from seeing or exploring new and potentially better ways of doing things.

A well-timed challenge to the status quo can produce big results. No one has the time to stay on top of all the trends, developments, tools, and tricks in their industry. So do that for them. Find – or be – a new tool or product they may not have heard about yet, and share it with them.

Hi {{name}},

My name is {{your name}} with {{company name}}.

We help busy executives free up time for higher priorities.

I wanted to learn what productivity tools you're currently using and show you what we're working on.

Are you available for a brief call next week?

Download this template

Ultimately, remember that an email template is a starting point. It's not a finished product, but it does provide the bones you need to supercharge your outreach. Try these 15 to see what works and what's relevant for you and your audience.

How to Use Templates Effectively

Templates are great. They can inspire you to create email copy that engages your prospects and persuades them to take action – and they can help you speed up your results at the same time.

But they're no silver bullet.

Copypasta *never* works. No sales rep should expect to simply paste a template into a blank email, swap in their prospect's name, hit "send," and expect to see results. Buyers are savvy; they can tell when they're being hit with a template rather than a genuine, personalized email – and they're unlikely to be impressed.

So how should you use templates? Which emails are they best suited for use in? And what degree of editing do they require for best results?

Rex Bibertson shared a few tips with me in a recent video

call. I've summarized some of the key takeaways below, but watch the video below and check out the full article if you want to learn more.

Templates are best used for repeatable messages.

Rex most commonly uses templates for highly repeatable messages – things like meeting follow-ups. Same goal, same information. But what about more complex scenarios, like cold outreach? Should you ditch the templates altogether? Absolutely not; but using them requires a little more effort on your part.

What works for one business won't necessarily work for you.

Don't take those articles saying, "This Email Template Drove $1M in Net New Sales in Three Months" at face value. No doubt the email copy played a part, but so did the industry, the product, the price point, the location, and dozens of other factors.

Use templates as creative inspiration.

Chances are you receive plenty of cold emails yourself. Or you might have seen some great examples posted on LinkedIn. Again, don't just rip them off. But you should *absolutely* use them as creative inspiration. Much like the countless meme formats on Twitter, there's nothing wrong

with taking a winning format and iterating on it.

Ask yourself: Does it make sense to leverage an offer template?

Some of the most effective emails involve special offers – things like free trials and big discounts. The offer is the *reason* that these messages are successful. So there's little point in sending a similar email but with a much less compelling offer. It just won't work.

When personalizing, do your research in batches.

Rex spends two hours at a time on LinkedIn picking out key facts about his prospects. Using those facts, he'll craft a single sentence for each prospect that can be slotted straight into a template email. In that time, he can usually do enough research to personalize emails to 100 different prospects.

Personalize by category, rather than one-to-one.

Another great tip for adding personalization at scale: add personalized elements based on a type of prospect, rather than an individual. For instance, CEOs of SaaS startups generating up to $500,000 in revenue will likely have similar experiences and pain points. Figure out what your product can do for that category of customer, and reference it in your emails.

Been given advice on email length? Ignore it!

Rex doesn't believe there's any "perfect" email length. Sure, you'll almost always want to keep it as brief as possible, but that doesn't necessarily mean it has to be fewer than 100 words (or any other arbitrary amount). Short on its own isn't good enough; there needs to be a compelling hook – a reason for your prospect to respond – as well.

Cold Call Email Best Practices



Not all email is created equal. There are good examples and bad examples. Just throwing some words together and sending them out do not guarantee success. You need to stack the deck in your favor by remembering a few key best practices discovered via millions of emails sent.

Subject Lines

This is your digital calling card. If it's weak, generic, or spammy, your recipients will at best delete without opening. At worst? They may report it as spam, and then your sender

reputation takes a hit and it becomes exponentially harder to get your message to the right people.

Just how important is the subject line? In a word: extremely.

- Studies have revealed that anywhere from 35% (Convince & Convert) to 47% (Business2Community) open an email based on the subject line alone
- 69% of people report an email as spam from just the subject line
- A first name in the subject line can lift open rates by 20%
- Personalized subject lines are 22.2% more likely to get opened

The only way to find the perfect subject line for your message and audience is to test, track, and tweak. In addition to that, remember:

1. **Personalize.** Are you more likely to open a generic or personalized email from a stranger? First name, location, company name, or a reference to a previous encounter are just a few ways you can quickly and easily make it about them.
2. **Urgency and exclusivity**. A limited-time offer, flash sale, countdown, or "just for you" subject line is bound to perform well because we're all so worried about missing out. Just make sure you're genuine – if it's not

really limited-time or exclusive, don't say it is – because you'll lose their trust otherwise.

3. **Specificity and usefulness**. Does your subject line convey a specific and useful benefit to the recipient? Does it tell them exactly why they should open and read? It should.
4. **Be authentic.** Making outrageous claims that you can't deliver on may get you an open, but it won't win you a sale. Only promise and promote what you can reasonably expect to deliver.
5. **The "25 Headlines Challenge."** Upworthy knows a thing or two about click-worthy headlines. At one point, their writers were required to generate 25 headlines for each story, helping them to find the diamonds in the rough. Do the same with your emails. Write down 25 subject lines for each, then choose what you believe to be the strongest two and A/B test them to find the best one.
6. **Have a clear reason to reach out.** You can warm up your cold outreach by monitoring a prospect or company and reaching out when they've made a motion that indicates they may be looking to buy. Alex Greer of SignalHQ sat down with me for an interview on identifying buyer intent signals, and shared a useful visualization for identifying those opportunities at each stage of the funnel.

Body Copy

Subject lines may be 80 cents out of your email marketing dollar, but the body copy of the email itself is obviously still important too.

1. **Your opening line.** The subject line may earn you an open, but it's the opening sentence that convinces

recipients to keep reading. It should be an extension of your subject line, piquing curiosity and compelling readers to continue. The bottom line? It's not about you.

    1. Make your opening line about your recipients. Don't waste your opening line with "Hi, my name is so-and-so and I work at such-and-such company." No one cares.
    2. Clear beats clever every time. What's in it for them? What pain point can you address? Be specific.

2. **The main body.** Your subject line gets you in. Your opening line grabs attention. Your main body needs to deliver on whatever you've promised or claimed so far.
    1. Be authentic and real. The best emails are casual and conversational. Write like a human being, for other human beings.
    2. Personalize where you can with demographics, recent announcements, events, or accomplishments, or industry news. There's a lot of data available, but don't be a creepy stalker.
    3. Cut to the chase. They don't know you. Your subject and opening lines have bought you a bit of their time. Don't waste it. Boomerang recommends a sweet spot of 50-125 words in total, written to third-grade reading level.
3. **One compelling but low-friction ask.** One email, one

call-to-action. No more, no less. There should be one and only one thing you want your recipient to do with every message you send: watch a short video, schedule a free demo, share a link or resource, arrange a time to chat, and so on. Your CTA should be very low investment and easy to accomplish. Anticipate and remove the obstacles that may prevent someone from saying 'yes.' Too many choices or options can lead to selecting none.

The benefit. Your main body copy needs to answer one pivotal question: what's in it for them? Spell it out. What problem do you solve? Who else have you already helped? Whenever possible, quantify the benefit with concrete numbers: saved an average of $500, reduced acquisition costs by 29%, increased output by 55%, and so on. We respond to concrete stats more than abstract concepts.

Personalize at scale

Most cold emails don't need to be hyper-personalized. An easy formula to follow when deciding how to personalize your emails are:

1. Different emails for different targets
2. Research individuals and personalize the first sentence

For instance, at Mailshake, two groups that we target are

salespeople within sales teams, and consultants doing their own prospecting.

Obviously, these two groups have different characteristics and pain points, so my emails to both will be different.

On an individual level, though, I can take 5 minutes per prospect, check their LinkedIn, website, and other social accounts, and find an angle to open my email that connects to my offer and shows that this isn't the exact same email I'm sending to hundreds of other people.

With Mailshake, you can personalize your emails in bulk with powerful mail merge features, schedule follow-up emails that are paused or triggered based on whether a a recipient opens an email, clicks a link, or replies, and reply to leads straight from your Mailshake dashboard with Lead Catcher.

You can also set the amount of time between follow-ups (5 days between the first and second email, 7 days between the second and third, etc.), and the days and times you want them to send (for instance, between 8 am and 6 pm on weekdays).

Optimize your copy and overall outreach strategy by AB testing different subject lines, body copy, and full campaign sequences. And with native integrations to your CRM,

and third party integrations to hundreds of software tools via Zapier, you can automate your outreach even further by triggering campaigns when someone downloads an eBook, books a meeting, or signs up for a demo.

If social media and phone are a part of your outreach cadence, you can include those touch points in your outreach cadences as well with Mailshake Sales Engagement.

Bottom line: personalizing is absolutely essential to an effective outreach strategy, but it's only one piece of the puzzle, and there's no reason why you can't automate it.