

ACTIONS & REMEMBERINGS FROM CHRIS JOHNSON INTERVIEW

Chris is a master salesman in the best possible way. Here's some great thoughts, actions and things to remember from his interview.

ACTIONS FOR THIS INTERVIEW:

- ☐ Write your 10/10/10. (See below for more information).
- ☐ Create a “last ask” and “last give” database of clients, customers, guest bloggers, and/or any other kind of person you work with (or want to work with). You can use an excel spreadsheet or a CRM (Chris recommends www.insightly.com). If you'd like you can use a different metric to keep track of. The point is being intentional about your network and giving more than getting. Generally let your “give” to “ask” ratio be 3 to 1.

BE RELENTLESS ABOUT QUALITY IN YOUR PRODUCT

Take a stand on quality. Make a better product than your peers. A low quality product attracts low quality people and takes 10x as many resources to serve.

WORK WITH THE BEST PEOPLE YOU CAN FIND

‘Nuff said.

HAVE A PROCESS OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Do a postmortem on any project you complete, be it a blog post, a website or anything else. Start with the assumption that there’s room for improvement and ask yourself:

- What work did you waste?
- On the work that felt wasted, did you do those tasks wrong or did you do them right and they just performed poorly?
- What process changes will you implement?

REACHING OUT TO IMPORTANT PEOPLE

The principle is this: help them out. Don’t ask for anything, at least not for a while. Generally let your “give” to “ask” ratio be 3 to 1. If you know someone who can help them with something specific they need, introduce them. Here’s a sample script you can use to introduce yourself:

“Hey, my name is Chris Johnson. I’ve followed you for years. I want to make sure that I can help spread your work whenever you need it. I have a Twitter following of 4,500, they seem to be pretty engaged. Let me know the next time you’re pushing something so I can get it out there because I believe in what you’re doing. You’ve helped me a lot over the years.”

IDENTIFY YOUR 10/10/10

10 people, 10 companies, 10 projects that you want to work with. If there aren't people, companies, or projects in your world, change those words to be things that are in your world. The point of this is intentionally identifying what you want and actively taking steps towards that outcome.

Tip 1: identify the *monetary value* of each item on the list and cross reference that with the *likelihood* of working with that person/company/project. Working with Oprah is worth 1 million dollars, but it's very unlikely. What 3 things on your 10/10/10 list have the highest monetary value plus likelihood? How can you start pursuing those relationships?

Tip 2: look for unique or uncommon ways to work with the people and companies on your list. For example, Chris wanted to work with Apple. It's very unlikely he'll be able to work on the commercial for the new iPad. But due to his previous work for publishers and authors, it's much more likely he can work with the iBooks department. Look for these "back doors" into interaction with your 10/10/10.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TIPS

- **Do a premortem:** as soon as the project start identify whose involved and what their personality types are.
- **Do a postmortem:** when a project is complete identify how the process worked and what to improve next time (see above for more information).
- **What now? What next? When?** Every single day you're involved in a project write that email to your client or partners. Even if it's redundant tell them what's happening in the project right now, what's next and when. This crystal clear communication is essential in every successful Simplifilm project.
- **Be informative:** whenever possible add a piece of "why" to your customer interactions, informing them why you're doing this step now and not later, or why this box is on the left instead of the right, or why this headline is better than that headline, etc. Clients want you to be an expert; have strong opinions. You'll likely have to get good at "I'm sorry" at first, but your strong opinions will get better over time.
- **"Unless I hear differently:"** In emails to clients, customers and contractors start using (and getting others to use) this phrase. This speeds up the process of everything because there's no waiting to hear back from people. "Unless I hear differently, I'm going to schedule the post for tomorrow morning... Unless I hear differently, I'm going to remove the flames from the logo... Unless I hear differently, I'm going to quit my job and find us a house to buy in Bangkok."

LEAD GENERATION & CONVINCING TIPS

- **You need several sources of leads.** Start with social media searching on Twitter, Facebook and other places. Example searches: [your keywords] recommend, [your keywords] need somebody, etc.
- **Do a 5 minute stalk on any leads identified.** Their Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, website and anything else you can find. You're just trying to get the gist of where and who they are.
- **Don't avoid the phone.** When you find them on social media, call them and ask "when do you need it? How can I help? Would you like a proposal?"
- **Work on your process until it automatically generates a rehire or a referral.** Chris tracks "last ask" and "last give" on his clients over time. Every day he spends a few minutes doing 10 good things for his database. Sort by "last give" (i.e., last time I gave this person something) and touch (email, call, text, tweet) ten people you haven't given anything to recently.
- **Make friends with people.** Reach out to people on your 10/10/10 list and give them s
- **When you have a lead list, your goal is to work the list not maximize each one.** 5 minutes on each lead to signal intent. "I noticed you're not featuring any guest content on your blog, do you know anyone you can introduce me to that might?" You're
- **Have a position and stick to it.** Establish principles and stick to them. "This kind of website costs this much. We don't work with businesses like that, only businesses like this. Etc." If you don't have principles read meaningful books.
- **Bring your own energy.** You want to work with people who are going to be successful *regardless* of working with you. And you want them to feel and recognize that you're in that same boat as well.
- **Don't get caught closing.** All those little pushy things you can say like, "do you want to get started today?" hurt your sales efforts if you want to build a long-lasting business. Don't tread on the sacred relationship with your clients.
- **Don't worry about being too polished.** Come as you are. Be yourself.



TECHNIQUES FOR CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE

RESOURCES

- [Insightly CRM](#) for keeping track of your database/customers/etc
- [Yesware](#) for awesome email tracking.

SAMPLE SIMPLIFILM CORRESPONDENCE

USE CASE: show you're an expert, offer advice, but don't be pushy or be "caught closing."

Dear _____,

I saw some coverage about your company, it sounds cool- so I'm reaching out.

If you make a demo, don't go with "cartoon character" type art. Animation works great, but... we've learned that when cartoon characters are on screen for more than 4 seconds, abandonment rate spikes. There are other things we've learned...

We put together a quick deck with what works, what doesn't for App Trailers & Demo Movies: <http://simplifilm.com/buyers-guide>

It covers our point of view which is informed by testing. We're here to help, and we believe that we're becoming the most helpful "last mile" in the software business.

1: FOLLOW LEADERS AND THEIR INDUSTRY ON GOOGLE READER/ALERTS

USE CASE: reconnecting with a client and maintaining the 3:1 give/ask. Minor gives are still gives.

"Dear _____,

I follow _____, casually, and I found these web posts:

_____ - Description

_____ - Description.



No agenda - just wanted to say hi- and I'm sorry we don't get to talk more often.

2: BIG HITTER INTRO: (VERBOSE)

USE CASE: being different from all the “takers” in the world.

Hey _____,

Been a fan for a while. I don't know that I've ever reached out, but I wanted to say that if you need anything pushed or an intro to someone in my network, let me know.

- *I'm connected to:*
- *Co founders*
- *Venture Capitalists*
- *Lots of coders*
- *Bloggers that are your peers.*

I'm happy to help - no strings or obligations. You've already benefited me SO MUCH with your 5 years of blogging, so its no trouble at all - if you have a project consider me a free plugging or recruiting service.

3: INTRO OFFER

USE CASE: offer something you have, be it connections to others, resources you have access to or anything else.

Hey _____,

I am pretty well connected on and offline. I'm a fan of your work, and I just wanted you to know that if you need any intro I can help. If I don't have a connection, I know who might and can steer you right.

Just a little thing - let me know if I can be a resource.

