

How to Ask For Referrals

Find Willing Clients

Whenever a client goes out of his way to thank you with a phone message or email saying positive things about your business, follow up immediately by asking him to write a testimonial letter. In addition, each time you finish your work with a client who seems satisfied, request a testimonial letter. To help make the process of writing a testimonial easier, provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope so the only thing the client has to think about is writing the letter itself.

Give Detailed Request

Don't just ask for a "testimonial letter." Instead, give a few specific areas that the client can write about in the letter. This helps him get started and can also encourage him to write about the areas that you want potential clients to know about. For example, you could recommend that he write about the speed of the service, the demeanor of the people he worked with at your business and how working with your business has benefited him. These guidelines help him write a testimonial that is relevant and will be usable in your marketing. Include a suggested word or paragraph count so the letter is not too short or long for your use. Also ask the client to sign the letter and include his job title and location. If he is not comfortable using his full name, allow him to use initials for his first name, last name or both.

Related Reading: [How to Write Thank-You Letters for Clients](#)

Get Final Permission

When you receive the testimonial letter, read it over right away. If any portions are grammatically incorrect or are unclear, contact the client and propose changes that would make the letter more readable. Get his final approval before publishing the letter with those changes. In addition, if the client mentions something in the letter that you would like him to elaborate on, call him, thank him for the letter, and ask if he would be willing to add a few more sentences about a specific part of the letter. Most times, he will be happy to comply. Lastly, ensure that the client approves of your use of the testimonial letter for any business purpose.

Federal Guidelines

The Federal Trade Commission offers a few guidelines on how to handle endorsements or testimonials. One of the main things to worry about is that you must reveal when material connections exist between you and the person writing the testimonial. This means that if you gave person cash or another material gift for writing a testimonial, you must reveal this anywhere you use the testimonial. In addition, you cannot lead potential clients to believe that the results described in a testimonial are typical if, in fact, they are not. Lastly, it is illegal to fabricate a testimonial. You must get the letter from clients and cannot create it yourself.