

# *Client Love*

HOW TO LOVE THE FANS  
YOU ALREADY HAVE SO YOU  
ATTRACT EVEN MORE

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# Playbook 4:

## Gracefully Gather Praise

### Wait...I Can Ask?!

Sitting in a coffee shop, I overheard two professional photographers comparing marketing notes.

They talked about pricing, contracts, packaging and how to create additional service offerings for new target markets. One seemed to be mentoring the other based on his success, which was cool to see.

**But this exchange stopped me in my eavesdropping tracks:**

Him: *You need to ask your past or current clients to refer business to you. This is how you generate word-of-mouth.*

Her: *Really? Just “ask them?” I thought word-of-mouth meant that you just do good work for people and hope they recommend you. I didn’t know I could ask them to refer me.*

Him: *If you deliver value for people, they will want to refer you! It’s your obligation to share the good work you do with people who need it.*

Wow.

***“I didn’t know I could ask them to refer me.”***

We are sometimes so afraid of the word “sales” that we deem *any* request for business as pushy, slimy or in-your-face. And asking people to write a testimonial for you can be downright scary. This week, we’re going to change all that and turn you into a class-act praise-gatherer<sup>1</sup>

## Social Proof Matters

Referrals, online reviews and testimonials are necessary for **social proof**, “a concept that people will conform to the actions of others under the assumption that those actions are reflective of the correct behavior.”

Put in marketing terms, we don’t want to invest in something unless we know other people who are like us, even perfect strangers, have had a good experience

Product reviews are another type of social proof. Have you ever bought anything on Amazon (that was not directly recommended to you) without first checking out the Customer Reviews? I actually Sort by Customer Review rating before purchasing anything!

Trip Advisor. Yelp. Urban Spoon. Amazon. AirBnB. I could go on and on. Everything in today's economy relies on social proof. Even ride share services enable riders to rate drivers (and drivers to rate passengers!)

**Your potential buyers, customers or clients are no different. They crave social proof before making a decision.**

From a great [BufferApp article](#):

*“A lot of things go into a person’s decision to purchase a product, and social proof is certainly one of those important factors. Studies show that 70% of consumers say they look at product reviews before making a purchase, and product reviews are 12x more trusted than product descriptions from manufacturers.*

*Product reviews are just one example of social proof. However, these statistics do give us insight into the value of social proof when it comes to marketing.”*

Posting praise or testimonials on your website, or updating your LinkedIn Recommendations are not ego trips. They are vital marketing tools. Such social proof enables others to make an informed decision about your offerings and can persuade them to invest. These testimonials are actually not about you. They are about showing prospective clients your value before they buy.

## “I’m Totally Yelping About This!”

If social proof is so important to the success of our work, then why are we so afraid to ask for it? Think about the last fabulous restaurant or shopping experience you had. You know, the one with flawless service, to-die-for food or elegant surprise touches. I’ll bet nine out of ten of you went online to post a glowing review.

Did the establishment ask you to do this? Probably not. But you were compelled to spread the word.

Had they kindly asked, “If you’ve enjoyed your experience, could you please take some time to post a review online so others can find out about us? We’d really appreciate it!” would you have gotten angry or offended by that? Would that have made your experience any less wonderful?

Of course not. But this is exactly what we think will happen if we “bother” a client for a referral. We think we’ll be seen as “too pushy” if we request a review.

Being “pushy” is an attitude, a tone of voice. It’s not the *act of asking* that’s pushy. It’s *how you do it*.

If you deliver honest work that gives great value to people, then, like the guy in the coffee shop said, you have an obligation to ensure others who need what you’ve got can find you.

## You Need to Ask!

Think back to before you went to that last great restaurant or shop. If you’re like anyone today, you probably only went after getting a referral from a friend or by looking at online reviews, right?

Think about the last professional you hired. Did you read the testimonials on their website? Of course you did. You probably checked out mine before signing up for this course!

**Don’t rest referral or testimonials responsibility solely on the shoulders of your clients’ goodwill.** We all mean well, but we get busy. Clients forget. They may have all intentions to do so, but they don’t post that stunning online review or think about how your services might be perfect for a friend of theirs.

**When it comes to testimonial, reviews or referrals, sometimes, you have to ask. Lovingly. Kindly. Confidently.**

## Some Classy “Ask” Templates for You

Like any muscle, you have to flex your “asking muscle.” The more you do it, the better you will get at it. As long as you do it with love and class, and, of course, deliver a stellar experience or quality product, you’ll be fine. I promise.

### One way to ask a client for a referral:

*“I’m so glad you’re happy with my work. It’s been great working with you, and I’m looking to help more clients just like you achieve their goals. If you have any friends or colleagues who could benefit from my work, could you please send them my way? If they end up becoming a client, I’d love to offer you a (discount/gift card/free session) as a thank you!”*

### One way to ask a colleague for a referral:

*“Our services are very complementary and I noticed that those who work with you first get a lot more out of working with me later. If you’re game, would you like to refer more clients my way (and vice versa) and perhaps we can do a 10% referral commission together?”*

## **One way to ask an existing customer for a referral:**

*“We love that you dig our style! We noticed you buy gifts and accessories from us every month and we wanted to say thank you. If you’d like to share the secrets of your gift-giving superpowers with friends or family, please send them our way with this code xxxxx. If they end up loving us as much as you do and spend \$100 or more, we’ll reward you with 25% off your next purchase plus a free bonus gift. On us!*

## **One way to ask for a website testimonial:**

*I truly hope you’ve enjoyed working together as much as I have. If you did, would you be so kind as to (post an online review/offer a testimonial for my website/write a LinkedIn recommendation)?*

*By sharing your experience with a review, other amazing people like you with similar goals will be able to find my services and see what’s possible. Attracting more clients just like you would be fabulous!*

*Two options for you:*

*You could draft something (thank you!) that talks about the process, what we achieved together and how you think our work will ignite your business. And if you had any initial doubts going into this, that would be helpful to share as well, as others might be thinking the same thing.*

*Or, since you’re super busy, I’m happy to draft something for you to review and edit to your own voice if that’s easier.*

*Whichever way that’s easier for you, let’s also promote YOU in the process! With your testimonial, I’ll post your headshot and website link to get you more exposure and traffic—after all, people should know how fabulous YOU are as well!*

*Thank you again for working with me/attending my event/taking my course. Just let me know if you’d like me to whip something up for your review or if you’d prefer to draft something on your own. I so appreciate your time. It means the world to me.*

## **One way to ask for an online review (I used this one for my book!)**

*If you enjoyed *Branding Basics for Small Business* (2nd Edition) and felt it was valuable for your business, could you please post a brief Amazon review? I would so appreciate your help! Online reviews help authors like me get found on Amazon by people searching for that topic and many of you have graciously told me you read it and learned so much. Please, of course, be honest and as brief as you like (unless you truly feel like it was “the most epic business book you’ve ever read.” Then gush away!). Thank you, thank you, thank you! xo Here’s the link: <http://bit.ly/brandingbasics2>*

**None of us can grow our business alone. Don’t be afraid to ask. Especially of those who already know the caliber of your work.**

# Your Assignment: Gather Your Praise!

**Draft your ask!** Write an email asking a client to endorse your work with a website testimonial. Be sure to mention if you're going to give them anything in exchange or promote their work, too.

**Ask for referrals:** Write an email asking either a client or a fellow colleague to refer people to you. What will you offer them in exchange? How can you help them?

**Who are three people you will ask for each one? Names and emails:**

*People to ask for endorsements:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*People to ask for referrals:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**The hard part: SEND THE EMAILS THIS WEEK!** Follow up with a nice phone call or handwritten note if you don't hear back.

# One Last Thing...

Many people are afraid to ask for help. They are especially afraid to ask for anything that seems like validation or approval of their work. After all, what if they hated your product, service or event, right? Wrong. Most likely they did not. Or you are asking the wrong people!

Learning how to ask confidently, gracefully and with style takes practice. It's a muscle that you must flex in order to get better at doing it.

This is not about stroking your ego. If you are uncomfortable with people "rating" you, get over yourself. You have work to do in the world and you will be judged. Accept that.

**But also know that if you are providing honest value and a great experience, you should never, ever, ever be afraid to ask if someone will go on the record about it.**

It's frankly rude to expect people to just "remember" to do this, or to pro-actively offer it up. You are essentially asking them to take on the burden rather than making it super easy for them to support you.

**Again, being "pushy" is an attitude, a tone of voice. It's not the *act of asking* that's pushy. It's *how* you do it.**

Now go ask!

*Maria*

# Goodies and Inspiration

Check out this book about why social proof matters: [Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion](#) by Robert Cialdini, Ph.D.

[You're going to be judged.](#) It's okay. Get over it. Do your work. Live your passion.

How to ask someone to [endorse you via LinkedIn](#).

This is great: Here are [five non-awkward ways to ask for a recommendation](#). Includes another great template for you!