

**How To Write Letters  
To Have An Endless  
Supply Of Motivated  
Sellers Calling You  
To Buy Their  
Properties**

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# **How To Write Letters To Have An Endless Supply Of Motivated Sellers Calling You To Buy Their Properties**

Picture this, you are sitting in your home, the phone rings, it's a motivated seller looking to sell their property. An hour later the phone rings again. It's another motivated seller also looking to get out of their property. During the day, you have had a total of eight phone calls from people calling you who are interested in selling their property.

What is going on? Why are you getting so many calls in one day when you have spent the previous months searching for deals and didn't have any luck? These people are responding to your direct mail campaign. You've sent them a letter and gave them a compelling reason to call you and now they are doing just that.

This is the beauty of direct mail. Having your target customers raise their hand by calling you and telling you that they want to do business with you. Not only is this a great way to get leads, but these are the easiest people to do business with because they have already pre-qualified themselves by calling you and they are certainly motivated.

The basic components of a direct mail campaign is targeting a list of people to mail to, creating a message to fit that target, and giving them a compelling reason to call you.

Direct mail is a numbers game. If you receive a 1% – 2 % response from your mailing, that's good. That's what you should expect. That means for every 1,000 pieces that you mail out, you should receive responses from 5 – 10 people.

It doesn't sound like a lot, but if you can purchase just one house from that mailing, at an average profit of \$20,000 , you will more that make your money back.

I once sent 1,000 letters to out of state owners of multi – family buildings and only got three people to respond. Fortunately one of those three was a gentleman from Florida who was tired of being a long distance landlord. He told me that he wanted to sell his three family property for the assessed value only, \$164,000. It needed some work and he wanted to sell it as is.

He told me that from talking to some friends that lived in the area, if he did the work to the property and fixed it up, they said he could get \$230,00 for it but he had had enough and wanted out.

So I bought it for the assessed value, painted the exterior (cost me \$3,500), took down old wallpaper and repainted the units (\$4100), refinished the floors (\$1,400) and added some linoleum in the kitchens and baths (\$2000, total rehab \$11,000). The property is now worth \$130,000 more that what I paid for it! You don't have to find too many of those to make you happy!

There are two different approaches to a direct mail campaign. The first is to plan a series of two or three mailings to the same group or list. These mailing are called steps. If you plan to send three consecutive mailings, which should be about 7 days apart, this is called a three-step mailing campaign.

These campaigns are designed to get the target to raise their hand and call you to do business directly or you could offer a Free

Special Report that will entice the person to raise their hand for the report and this will identify the person as a means of future business.

When starting a direct mail campaign, the first thing you want to do is to select your target market. You want to answer the question, “what group or groups of people would most likely respond to my offer”.

Below is a list of groups of people who for some reason or another, would probably contain a better than average amount of motivated sellers:

- Pre-Foreclosures – people at the start of the foreclosure process
- Expired Listings
- Out of Town Owners
- Landlords Evicting Tenants
- Property Owners Going To Court For Health Violations
- People Getting A Divorce
- Attorneys – Estate and Divorce Attorneys
- Obituaries

You will find lists of these people in the following places:

- ✓ Pre-Foreclosures – Local and financial newspaper, court house, list service providers
- ✓ Expired Listings – Multiple Listing Service, Realtor Relationships
- ✓ Out of Town Owners – Town or City Assessors Office
- ✓ Landlords Evicting Tenants – Housing Court

- ✓ Property Owners With Health Violations – Housing Court, local board of health officials (ask them which landlords may be in trouble).
- ✓ People Getting A Divorce – Probate Court
- ✓ Attorneys – Telephone Book
- ✓ Obituaries – local newspapers

A direct mail campaign can be done with either letters or post cards. Post cards work well because you don't have to worry about the prospect opening the letter. A lot of people sort their mail over the wastebasket and throw away anything that remotely looks like junk mail.

With a post card, you can capture the prospect's attention with a compelling headline, and create interest that will compel them to read the rest of the post card text.

The drawback of the postcards is that you are working with limited space to tell your story to get your prospect to act.

When sending a letter on the other hand, your sales letter can be as many pages as you think necessary to get your prospects to call you.

Some people may think, "Who would read a long sales letter, I certainly wouldn't." The person who would read a long sales letter would be someone who truly needed your services. There is an adage in the direct marketing business that states, "The more you tell, the more you sell."

The first thing you need to do with a letter is get the thing opened. You must slip below the prospect's radar screen that is zoned in on detecting junk mail as they sort through the mail over the trash barrel.

You do this by using plain No. 10 envelopes, hand addressing every envelope with blue pen, putting your name and return address in the upper left-hand corner and using a live stamp.

If you really want to get below their radar, you could use a square envelope, though this could become costly. The receiver may think that they are getting an invitation, which they actually are, an invitation to purchase your product or service, and will be more inclined to open the envelope.

Here are some don'ts for envelopes. Any one of which will dramatically lower the amount of people who open your envelope.

- Don't use labels (O.K. for Post Cards)
- Don't use metered postage
- Don't put a business name in the upper left hand corner
- Don't computer generate the names and address on the envelope
- Don't use bulk rate (only 50%) actually gets delivered

You should be delegating these menial tasks to someone else. The going rate to stamp, stuff and address an envelope is about .12 cents per envelope. Well worth it. This frees you up to go find other deals. Not only that, but it gets the job done. If you leave it up to yourself, you may have a tendency to put it off. Consistency is the key to marketing.

You should plan your mailing so that your target receives the post card or letter on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Never on a Friday or Saturday because people are too busy making plans for or enjoying the weekend. On Mondays they are trying to re-cooperate from the weekend and are too busy making plans for the work week.

Having your mail delivered on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday will increase your response rate.

Now, you've got your prospect to open the envelope or look at the post card. They will take the next two seconds to decide whether or not they will read the rest of the text or throw it in the trash.

You only have two seconds to grab their attention and give them a reason to read your message. You must have a bold, compelling headline that immediately answers the question "What's in it for me?"

Your headline is the most important part of your direct mail piece. If your headline does not entice them to read further, it doesn't matter how good the rest of the material is, they will never see it!

Here are the elements for a great headline:

- Attract Attention
- Stimulate Curiosity and Intrigue
- Reveal the Strongest Benefit of Your Offer
- Make News, be seen as new or different
- Be Specific and Meaningful to Your Prospect

Your headline should contain the primary benefit that the person will receive from doing business with you. For example:

- ✓ Pre-Foreclosure - **Stop Your Foreclosure In 7 Days Or Less**
- ✓ Expired Listing – **Who Else Wants To Sell Their House In 5 Days Or Less?**
- ✓ Out of Town Owner – **Prices In Boston Have Never Been Higher, Is Now The Time To Sell?,**



## **Don't Miss Out On This Incredible Market! Read On...**

- ✓ **Landlords – There Is Nothing Sweeter Than Selling An Investment Property That Has Become A Pain In The Ass**
- ✓ **Health Violators – Has Your Investment Property Become A Headache? I've Got The Cure...**
- ✓ **Divorce – Selling Soon? Highest Prices Paid For Your Real Estate**
- ✓ **Attorneys – A Reliable, Trusted Investment Company To Purchase Your Clients Properties. Our Complaint Free Record With The Better Business Bureau Makes You Look Good.**
- ✓ **Obituaries – We Buy Houses, Cash, Fast Closings**

(Sample - For Expired Listing)

## **Who Else Wants to Sell Their House in 7 Days or Less!**

I'm a local Real Estate investor looking to purchase real estate in your area. I am interested in your property. Please let me know if you are interested in selling.

I have the ability to pay cash and close quickly. For a **free** evaluation of your property, or if you want to tell me about somebody else looking to sell their property (I'll give you a cash bonus if I buy it!), call me at 555-555-5555.

Here are some of the benefits of selling directly to me.

- I can purchase your property in its “AS IS” condition. No professional inspections, updating or repairs necessary.
- I can buy your house as fast or as slow as you need me to.
- You can avoid paying a 5%-6% real estate commission.

I look forward to our speaking.

Kindest regards,

You the investor.

P.S. For a Hassle Free closing and a fair price for your property, call me now at 555-555-5555.

Can you see how these headlines are designed to grab the reader’s attention and entice them to read further? If you were a frustrated owner whose listing had just expired, wouldn’t you want to know how someone plans to sell your home in “5 days or less” when the real estate agent couldn’t do it in 180 days?

If you were in pre-foreclosure and someone claimed that they could “stop your foreclosure in 7 days or less”, don’t you think that you would stand up and take notice?

This is why the headline is the most important part of any direct marketing piece. When using a post card, repeat the headline on both sides. On the front, simply instruct the reader to turn the card over to learn more.

You should write a list of 10 to 20 headlines for each direct marketing piece that you send out. Go through the list and choose the most compelling, attention grabbing, “I’ve got to have that” headline and use it.

If you are stuck writing your headlines, look through newspapers, magazines or on magazine covers to get ideas.

Here is a list of some famous headlines that by simply changing a few words I’ve been able to use in my investment business. The underlined words are the original headline. These headlines have been used for years, with great success, in almost every industry. They’ve been used this long because they work.

- “They Laughed When I Told Them That I Could Stop Their Foreclosure In 7 Days Or Less, But When The Bank Didn’t Show Up For The Auction They Couldn’t Stop Thanking Me”
- “Which One Of These Costly Home Selling Mistakes Will You Make?”
- “Who else wants to sell their house in 5 days or less?”
- “How To Rid Yourself Of Ungrateful Tenants And Put A Chunk Of Cash In Your Pocket”
- “Here’s Free Advice For Home Owners Who Want To Sell Their House Quickly”

Now simply use these headlines or change the words to benefit your situation.

Remember, headlines are designed to do one thing, to get your reader to read the first sentence of your text.

Your first sentence is designed to do one thing, to get the reader to read the second sentence, so you want to open with a very powerful first sentence. A good method to follow is to describe the problem that they now face; you need to emotionally charge your letter by reminding them of the pain that they are now in. Remember, you didn't cause the pain but you do have the cure.

Now it's time to craft your message (your offer). People will decide to do business with you for two reasons, if:

**1) You Can Provide The Solution To Their Problem**

**2) You Can List The Benefits And Show Positive Feelings For Doing Business With You**

You must focus on what people want not what they need. People do not buy needs; they buy the satisfaction they get from their wants. To create a response from your target you must address their strongest desires.

Most people want solutions, like to make more money, more leisure time, more conveniences, to make life easier, gain self confidence, to be successful, to be proud, to be respected, to be a master of their own destiny and to hold influence over others.

Most people want to avoid looking foolish, losing money, taking risks that will jeopardize their current situation, enduring pain (emotional or physical), and suffering personal embarrassment.

The better you can craft your message using what people want and what they want to avoid, the more successful your direct mail campaign will be.

Fill your copy with what benefits your targets will receive from doing business with you. Let them know what you can do for them. Make an immense promise. Let them know that you can do something remarkable. The average person sees over 10,000 marketing messages a day, you need to separate yours from the pack. Hype it up! Make the benefits impossible to ignore.

That being said, you also must be believable and credible. You do this by backing up your promise with proof. Proof from people that you have already helped. These are called testimonials. They are the most powerful way to get total strangers to believe in you.

People will believe what other people say about you before they will believe what you say about yourself. Ask your past clients to right a letter saying what a great service you provided them, how you helped them out of a tough situation, and what a great person you are!

Collect these letters and either put a couple in your direct mail piece or make a page of quotes to get your point across. When using testimonials you will need to get written permission from your clients. Always use their name at the end of the testimonial. If you don't, people will not believe that they are true.

You will want to create a strong sense of urgency throughout your letter. Convey to the target that they must act now in order to benefit from your services. Portray the illusion of scarcity. One way to promote limited scarcity in real estate investing is to let them know that you have limited funds available and you are looking at several deals. If you are offering Free Special Reports, let them know that supplies are limited, first come first serve.

Inform your target that you are a “specialist” in their situation. People like to do business with a specialist. You could be a Foreclosure Specialist, Real Estate Specialist, Multi-Family Specialist...be creative and specific to their situation.

Throughout the text of your letter you want to remind the target of the pain that they are in. Some direct marketers call this “sticking in the knife and turning it slowly.” For every element of pain that you introduce you want to offer a practical, credible solution. The solution may be an offer for a Free Special Report or some other mechanism you’re offering to solve their problem.

You’ll want to explain your solutions and detail the benefits of those solutions. You must tell people what and how you will accomplish your solutions for them. You must elaborate on how much easier your solutions will make their life. How much they will gain by using you and how much better off they’ll be by using you than they will be by not using you.

As you are writing your text, you want to think of any objections that the target may have to doing business with you and address them in the text. This will also increase your response. You also want to reveal any flaws that you may have and turn them into a benefit thus, preventing your letter from appearing “too good to be true” and unbelievable.

Use examples of other people who you have helped to prove your point and increase your credibility. Try to get testimonials from these people and add them in as well. This is a powerful one-two punch.

As you are writing your text, you will want to warn the target of what will happen if they do not take action. You are in essence

predicting the future, increasing the targets pain by showing them what will happen if they do not take action.

You will also want to explain that doing business with you is risk free. Explain to the target that you cannot help everyone but by setting up a simple appointment and going over the facts you can determine if you may be able to help them out of their situation and if you cannot, you may be able to refer them to someone who can. Let them know that there is no obligation and that your services are Free.

You are in essence taking the pressure off. This will at least get you in the door of a lot of prospective sellers.

Right before you close your letter or postcard, you will need to remind the target of all the benefits that they will be getting. There are many ways to do this. You can use a story of how you delivered benefits to someone else who was facing a similar problem. Come right out and tell them in a strait forward statement, or use a testimonial from another client who got the same benefits. You could also use bullet points of the benefits people receive from using your services.

The very last thing that you will want to write in your letter or postcard is a call to action. You want to explain to the target exactly what they need to do. This can be done in a simple sentence. For example, “To stop the foreclosure of your home, pick up the phone and call me now at 555-1212.”

Adding this call to action will dramatically increase your response.

After you sign the letter you will want to put in a powerful P.S. When a target opens a letter or looks at a postcard, the first thing they will do is to read the headline. After their interest is peaked,

they will want to know who sent the piece so they will look down at the signature. When they look at the signature, they will be drawn to the P.S. and will read it.

Your P.S. should restate the problem, restate the most desirable benefit and include another call to action. You may add other items such as a special bonus, a risk free guarantee and/or an element of scarcity.

There you have it! All of the ingredients of a successful direct marketing piece. After you've written a piece you'll want to test it. Remember, you are looking for a 1% – 2 % response rate.

If after testing, you do not get the response that you wanted. Go back and check all of the elements of the letter to make sure that you didn't leave anything out. When you go to make changes, it's important that you only change one thing at a time so that you know which change was responsible for the increase in response. If you change more than one thing at a time, you won't know what worked and what didn't. This knowledge will help you out with every new direct marketing piece that you do.

Direct marketing is the easiest way to get motivated sellers to call you. You should become a student of direct marketing as it can make you very wealthy. Not only should you read additional books on the subject, but you should also start reading and studying all that junk mail that you receive, especially if you get the same thing more than one time because that means that the piece is working for someone.

If you find something good, don't be afraid to change it to fit your business. This is how a lot of good direct marketing campaigns begin.