

Simple Steps to Boost Your Marketing Confidence

By Hayley Michaels

In a perfect writing world, you sit at your computer, happily writing while a stream of well-timed, perfect writing gigs magically flow into your inbox.

Sounds good, doesn't it? Because you know the more gigs you land, the more money you'll make.

For that to happen, though, you have to let potential clients know who you are, what you do, and how you can improve their lives.

In other words, you have to market yourself.

If you're like me, and the thought of marketing yourself makes you squirm, there's a good chance it's because you lack marketing confidence. In fact, fear of marketing is what holds many writers back from achieving their goals, especially when it comes to the amount of money you can earn.

Fortunately, there's something you can do about that. It's a three-step process called the K.P.E. System, and it's designed to boost your confidence, particularly when it comes to marketing your services.

What is the K.P.E. System?

K.P.E. stands for:

1. Knowledge
2. Plan and prepare
3. Execute

Here's how you can use it:

1. **Knowledge:**



Marketing is about showing your prospects why they should choose you over your competitors. It's also about making it easy for them to engage and connect with you and learn about the services you offer.

To make that happen, you need to start by getting clear on the following:

- **Your personality**

Don't be deceived into thinking success in marketing only comes to experienced and outgoing people. Every person can find marketing methods to suit their personality and circumstances.

Find methods that match your personality and, for the most part, feel comfortable to you.

Extroverts gain energy from being around other people and enjoy being sociable. Introverts need time on their own. They prefer one-on-one interactions and are drained by spending too much time around lots of people.

At the same time, as much as an extrovert enjoys being around lots of people, they don't always like public speaking. An introvert may find presentations easy, but hates the thought of being in a crowded room at a networking event. These are examples of factors you need to consider.

It takes less energy to use your natural strengths than to do something you find difficult. By playing to your strengths, you'll feel more comfortable and be more likely to stick to your marketing plan.

It's equally important for your marketing methods to match your circumstances. Perhaps you have a full-time job or you live out of town, so it may be difficult to attend live events.

- **Your business**

Spend some time thinking about:

- *Your niche*: A niche narrows your focus and makes you a subject matter expert. Being knowledgeable about a particular subject immediately improves your confidence.
- *Your USP (Unique Selling Proposition)*: Write down what sets your service apart from your competitors. Include how your offerings solve your clients' problems and make their lives better.
- *Your target audience*: A clear understanding of your niche and USP will help you identify your target audience. You can develop marketing messages and a plan that focuses on their unique needs.

2.

Plan and Prepare:

Once you've clarified your core qualities, strengths, and prospects, you can plan and prepare your marketing techniques and strategies.

If you don't enjoy marketing, planning and preparation will make it easier. People tend to feel less confident about new, unknown or potentially difficult situations. The planning and preparation process will help you develop confidence.

Planning and preparation help in another way, too. Marketing is a process. It takes time to yield results. You need to do it regularly and consistently, so you'll need to plan it into your schedule to enjoy the most success.

Here's what you need to plan and prepare:

- **Your message**

What do you want to say, how do you want to say it, and how do you want to engage with your prospective clients?

- **The marketing media you want to use**

Will you use online marketing, offline strategies, in-person marketing or a combination of methods?

Once you're clear on this, you can build your marketing plan. Taking the time to do this will make it easier to integrate it into your work schedule.

- **How you'll implement your marketing methods**

For online marketing methods, try the following:

- *Batch processing:* If you're going to use blogging, email, social media, podcasts or vlogs, set aside time to create multiple content pieces at a go.

Create a series of posts, newsletters, tutorials or episodes. Doing this lets your creativity and thoughts flow clearly and easily from one piece of content to the next. You'll be able to focus on producing the best possible content for your chosen media. You'll also save time and improve your productivity by reducing interruptions and transitions. This will benefit both your marketing efforts and your client projects.

- *Automate your distribution:* Use automated distribution wherever they make sense. Tools like email auto-responders, social media managers, or editorials can help you stay organized and work ahead.

If you decide to use in-person marketing techniques, there's lots you can do beforehand to boost your confidence.

Your "in-person" techniques could include presentations, networking events, or cold calling. Planning and preparing are essential. You'll need to:

- Practice introducing yourself.
- Prepare a few conversation starters, such as chatting about local events or sports. From there you can lead into conversations about business.
- Know how you'll talk about your business. You want to be able to highlight your key services and strengths easily and confidently, so you don't waffle if you're nervous.
- Prepare a few relevant, open-ended questions to help you engage with others.
- Know how to end a conversation (politely).
- Rehearse. If you're nervous about networking or attending conferences, practice. Role play how you'll introduce yourself and what you'll say. Get a friend or family member to help you.

If you're going to do a talk, practice in front of a family member or friend who will give you feedback. Record yourself, so you can hear how you sound and eliminate any nervous gestures or phrases.

Don't feel you have to engage with everyone. Instead, research beforehand who will be attending the event. Identify people you would like to connect with and do some basic research about them.

If you want to try networking, but feel nervous, look for smaller, more intimate networking events. BNI (Business Network International) is an excellent example. You meet with the same people every week, and the purpose of the meetings is to build relationships with your fellow chapter members and help each other promote your businesses. It's a great way to build your confidence and grow your business in a more personal setting.

3.

Execute:

You've done the planning and preparation, now it's time to put your marketing plan into action with confidence. To keep your confidence levels high, remember the following:

- **Keep it simple**

You don't have to use lots of marketing strategies to be successful. Choose a few, and see how they work for you. Tweak them to make improvements if necessary or move on to new methods.

- **Check your attitude**

When negative thoughts or attitudes make it difficult for you to market your business, reframe the way you think about the services you offer.

The purpose of marketing is to show your prospects how you can solve their problems and make their lives easier.

I have found when I change my attitude and realize my services help people and improve their lives, I feel more confident and enthusiastic about sharing what I have to offer. Instead of thinking, "Why would anyone want to hire me?" ... change your perspective to, "I have so much to offer this company." You'll feel more excited about reaching out.

- **Have marketing materials you're proud of**

Spend the time and money you need to, to develop quality marketing materials that create a positive and professional impression of your business. This includes your business cards, website, and emails, along with your bio and headshot that appear on guest blogs and social media. You'll feel proud and eager to share professional-looking marketing materials.

- **Dress the part and check your body language**

These aren't just feel-good clichés; they're backed up by research.

What you wear creates an impression on others. But, it also affects how you perceive yourself, in turn influencing your behavior and how secure you feel.

Similarly, body language doesn't just influence how others see you. It affects how you see and feel about yourself and how you behave. Tall, correct posture is a sign of power and confidence. Studies show this type of posture helps you to act and feel more confident compared to hunching. Good posture increases your confidence-boosting hormones. So, a tall, confident stance, even when you don't feel confident, will give you the boost you need.

On days when you're meeting potential clients, speaking to them on the phone, or recording podcasts or videos, pay attention to your body language and appearance. Pull your shoulders back, lift your head, smile and dress professionally. You'll automatically feel more professional and confident, regardless of whether people can see you.

- **Harness the power of happy clients**

Ask satisfied clients for a testimonial, referral or to share their positive experience of working with you on their social media platforms. This way they'll be marketing for you. (This feedback is also something you can refer back to when your confidence needs a little boost.)

- **Build and nurture relationships**

Don't underestimate the power of relationships. When you find a valuable client, take the time to build a relationship with them.

Once you've finished their project, keep in touch. The next time they need work done, you'll be the first person they call, because they already know and trust you. It's easier to retain a good client than to continually find new ones.

There isn't one perfect marketing strategy. Instead, you need to create a marketing strategy that suits you. Whether you're shy, busy or inexperienced, you can find a successful way to market that's perfect for you and your business.

So, what do you do to boost your confidence when going after clients? Please share your tips and advice in the comments section below.

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