

# 17 Ways to Create Subject Lines That Standout in The Inbox

Your subject line is one of the most important parts of your email. If it doesn't get your subject's attention and entice them to open your email, then even the most spectacular newsletter you've ever created won't get read. That's why it's so important for you to take your time to create subject lines that get clicks. To that end, check out these 17 tips, ideas and templates...

## 1. Keep It Short

Most email clients truncate your email subject line, meaning your subscribers aren't going to see the whole thing if it's too long. That's why you'll want to keep your subject line to 60 characters or less.

Note: some email marketers have tested subject lines and found that even shorter subjects get more clicks. How much shorter? About 30 characters. This may not be true for your particular audience, which is why this is something you should test out for yourself to find out what types of subject lines create the best response.

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## 2. Avoid Clickbait

As you work your way through the tips in this guide, you're going to see different ways to get your reader's attention. The one thing you don't want to use, however, is clickbait. These are outrageous and/or misleading subject lines that don't have much relevance to the content inside your email.

For example, imagine creating a subject line like this: "Actress Julia Roberts Dead?"

The line suggests Roberts is dead, which will get people opening the email. But then if the email confesses that she's not really dead, you're going to

trash your credibility. People aren't going to trust you next time. They'll unsubscribe, or they'll simply stop opening your emails... no matter WHAT the subject line is.

Point is, don't use clickbait, not even once. Doing so could harm your long-term open rates and any destroy any trust and credibility you've built with your audience.

### **3. Present a Benefit**

When people see your email, they're going to be wondering, "What's in it for me?" In other words, what benefit will the subscriber get if they click on and read your email? Whenever possible, your subject line should answer that question.

E.G.,

- Six surefire housetraining tips (see inside)...
- The easiest way to lose weight...
- How to double response rates...

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### **4. Arouse Curiosity**

Another way to get more people clicking on your subject lines is by arousing curiosity. You can do this in the following ways:

- Ask a question. E.G., "Are you making these dog training mistakes?"
- Use a question mark on a statement/claim. E.G., "Best fat loss tip ever?"
- Arouse curiosity about how someone will get a benefit in what seems like a counterintuitive way. E.G., "Eat chocolate and still lose weight?"

As always, be sure to arouse curiosity in a relevant way. (I.E., no clickbait!)

## **5. Convey Urgency (Where Warranted)**

If you have an email that's urgent, such as an offer that ends soon, then convey this urgency in your subject line.

E.G., "Last chance for 50% off..."

There are two keys to this strategy:

1. Use the strategy sparingly. If you're making every email sound urgent, you're going to lose credibility.
2. Don't use fake urgency/scarcity. If it's not truly urgent, then don't make it sound like it is. Obviously, faking urgency will destroy your credibility.

The overall key here is that you're looking to help people. It's HELPFUL to let them know if time is running out on a special offer, as they'll be upset if they miss it. It's NOT helpful to try to boost response with fake scarcity claims or similar.

## **6. Be Specific**

The more specific your subject line, the more credible and attractive it will be. That's why you'll want to be precise and specific when using numbers.

Consider these two examples:

"Reasons why you can't lose weight..."

Versus

"7 reasons why you can't lose weight..."

In most cases, the second line with the specific number (7) will get more clicks than the first headline.

## **7. Personalize Subject Lines**

If you collect first names while building your list, then from time to time you'll want to use the recipient's first name in your subject line. (Not always, as doing so will lessen the impact of this strategy. But do it from time to time to highlight a particularly important email.)

For example:

"Hey [first name], do you want more sales?"

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## **8. Ask a Question**

Asking a good question in your subject line can engage readers, arouse their curiosity, qualify them, and get them clicking through. I've shared a couple examples above of how to ask questions in your subject lines. Here are three more examples:

- Is this food sabotaging your diet?
- Do you love Paris?
- Are you at risk of a heart attack?

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## **9. Utilize Social Proof**

Social proof is when you suggest that other people are doing something specific, which makes the reader want to do it too.

Here's how to do it:

*Use phrases that suggest others are doing something.* E.G., "Who else wants to lose weight fast?"

*Be specific with a number. E.G., "2443 other people can't be wrong..."*

*Inform the reader others know something that they don't know. E.G., "What top golf pros do to shave strokes off their game..."*

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## **10. Avoid Anything Spammy**

If your subject line looks like an advertisement, many of your readers are going to simply ignore it. To that end, avoid anything that looks like spam such as:

- Aggressive sales messages.
- Subject lines in all caps.
- Multiple exclamation points.

Here's an example that hits all three points above to look like spam: "SALE ENDS TONIGHT—ACT NOW!!!!!"

## **11. Make People Feel Special**

You should be sending exclusive content and offers to your mailing list, as that's one benefit to get people to join your list. When you do send these offers or content, let people know it's something exclusive, which will make them feel special.

Here are example subject lines that help make people feel special:

- Exclusive offer for subscribers only...
- You're invited...
- Free report for your eyes only...

## **12. Help People**

I've said this before, but it's worth saying again: the main goal of your newsletter should be to help people. With that in mind, you also want to create subject lines that show people that you intend to help them.

Let me give you a few examples:

- Your black mold problem, solved...
- Free SEO video – get more traffic...
- Want to travel well on a budget? Here's how...

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### **13. Be Unique**

When your subscriber is scanning through all the emails in their inbox, most of the subject lines are going to look pretty similar. Similar words, similar offers for free content, similar promotional offers.

If you want your email to stand out, it needs to be unique. It needs to say something unexpected in order to get attention. In other words, it can't blend in with all the other emails filling your recipient's inbox.

One very simple way to be unique is to say something unexpected in the subject line. This might be as simple as an unexpected word, or it may be an unexpected viewpoint.

For example:

- An unexpected viewpoint: "Why this fat-loss trainer recommends chocolate..."
- An unexpected word: "My thighs are ginormous!"

All you need to do is interrupt your reader's thoughts for a split second (that's the goal when you use unexpected language). In that split second, you can get their full attention and get them to click on your email to read more.

## 14. Use Attention-Getting Words

There are some words that almost always seem to catch people's attention. These words are often referred to as "super" words, "trigger" words or even "power" words. Whatever name you want to attach to them, the point is to start incorporating them in your subject lines to see if they boost your conversion rates too.

Here's a swipe file of some of the top words:

- You
- Amazing
- Secret
- Discover
- How to
- New
- News
- Guaranteed
- Proof
- Free
- Quick
- Easy
- Fast
- Sexy
- Genius
- Lazy
- Startling
- Surprising
- Breathtaking
- Smart
- Savvy
- Revolutionary
- Remarkable
- Heartbreaking
- Excited
- Horrifying
- Love
- Steal

- Awesome
- Mind-blowing

Take note that some of these words reference emotion. Evoking some sort of emotion is often a good thing. E.G., “The heartbreaking reason you’re not losing weight...”

## **15. Use Active Language**

Another key to crafting a good subject line is to use reader-oriented, active language instead of passive language.

In order to create active language, you need to have a specific subject performing a specific action. For example: “You need to lose weight.”

The subject is “you” and the action is “lose weight.”

Now compare that to passive language: “Weight needs to be lost.” Whenever you have weak language such as “needs to be,” that’s a sign you have a passive sentence. You’ll want to rewrite it to be active.

When it comes to subject lines where you need to be succinct, you can drop the subject (“you”) and simply use a strong action verb as the first word in the sentence. In this case, it becomes more like a command, but it’s still powerful and active.

E.G.,

- Lose weight with this tip...
- Boost conversions fast...
- Get your free gardening inside...

You can see the point here. Use active language to get attention. This is as easy as starting with a verb, as shown in the examples above.

## **16. Avoid “No Reply” Addresses**



Elsewhere in these guides I've advised you to do use a recognizable "from" field. While it's not technically part of your subject line, it's important because it impacts whether people are going to even read your subject line. You'll also want to take this one step further by having a recognizable email address. Whatever you do, don't use a "no reply" email address, as that just screams "spam!"

## **17. Use These Templates**

You should start your own swipe file of subject lines by collecting examples from your inbox. You can also use sales letter headlines and article titles as inspiration, which you can collect from blogs and social media.

In the meantime, you can generate subject lines by using these templates:

Who else wants [a good benefit]?

E.G., Who else wants to save money on heating bills?

A weird trick [for getting a benefit]...

E.G., A weird trick for getting more traffic...

Does [some product or idea] really work?

E.G., Does CBD oil really work?

Here's how to [get a benefit]...

E.G., Here's how to win your next marathon...

I couldn't stop [laughing/crying/etc.] when [something happened]...

E.G., I couldn't stop crying when I stepped on the scale...

Last chance to [get some offer]...

E.G., Last chance to save \$100 – coupon code inside...

Have you heard about [some idea or product]?

E.G., Have you heard about PLRContentSource?

New [some piece of news] – this isn't good for [some group]...

E.G., New FTC rule – this isn't good for online sellers...

[Number] secrets for [getting a benefit]...

E.G., 3 secrets for selling your home for top dollar...

Surprising way to [get some benefit]...

E.G., Surprising way to boost your metabolism...

Get rid of [bad thing] for good...

E.G., Get rid of cellulite for good...

Are you making these [type of] mistakes?

E.G., Are you making these Facebook marketing mistakes?

The easiest way to [get a benefit]...

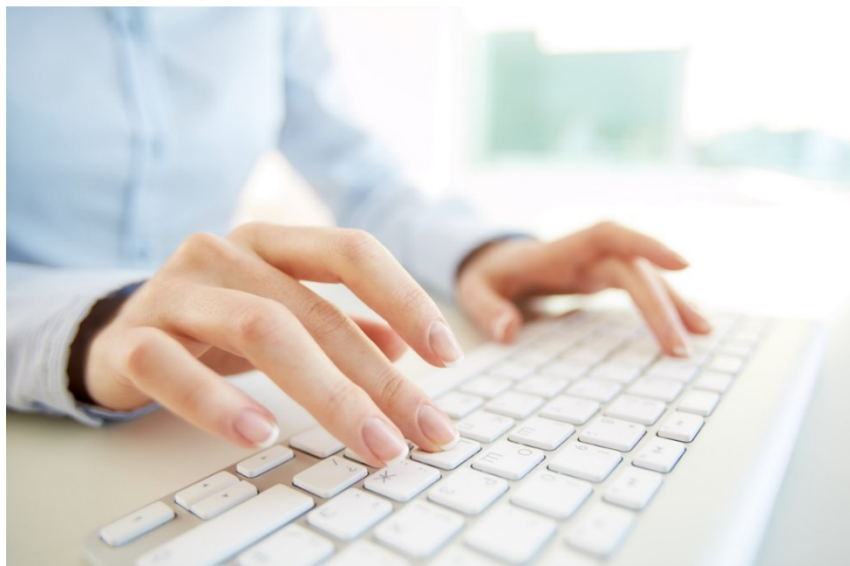
E.G., The easiest way to start a business...

Again, this is just a starting point. Be sure to create your own swipe file for inspiration so you can generate all the subject lines you need.

Now let's wrap things up...

## **Conclusion**

Your email subject lines can make or break the success of your entire email campaign, which is why it's a good idea to take your time to craft compelling subjects. You may want to start by brainstorming several subject lines using the tips and best practices above, and then test the best subject lines to see which ones produce good results for you.



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