

# HOW TO CONNECT WITH BUSY INFLUENCERS

We all come across people both online and offline that we'd love to connect with, but for whatever reason we view as "untouchable." We say or think things like...

*They're too busy for me.*

*Why would they respond to a nobody like me?*

*They're too important to interact with me.*

And sure, most of the people you want to connect with are very busy, but you might be surprised at how accessible some of them are. Here are a few things I've noticed about the influencers you're trying to connect with:

## 1. THEY'RE NORMAL

Well, most of them are. I'm always amazed after spending time in conversation with an influencer I had been trying to meet how normal they are. I attended a conference recently and spent significant time with several different influencers I went to meet. When I got home, I told my wife one of my biggest takeaways from the conference was how normal these influencers were that I looked up to. They all have some of the same doubts, fears, concerns, worries, and insecurities that the rest of us have. They may be influencers, but they're still just normal people.

## 2. THEY (USUALLY) LIKE TO HEAR FROM

Very rarely are influencers hermit crab people who never want to interact with other humans. They use social media, attend conferences, and connect with other people because they're normal. While there are always exceptions to the rule, most influencers do what they do because they genuinely like helping people. They want to make a difference. So if their work has made an impact in your life or business, you should share that with them!

### 3. THEY WERE ONCE IN YOUR SHOES

Most influencers were never handed a magical golden ticket that escorted them to the front of the line. Hopefully whoever it is you're trying to connect with is still grounded enough to remember that. They remember just starting out and trying to connect with people who were influential to them. And I can assure you that they remember who was helpful and who wasn't and how both those positive and negative experiences affected them.

### 4. THERE ARE PEOPLE THEY LOOK UP TO AS WELL

No influencer has arrived at the mountaintop alone. There are not only other people who have helped them get to where they are but there are also other influencers they may be trying to connect with as well. They are always looking to grow and learn, so I can assure you that while you're trying to connect with them, they're also trying to connect with influencers in their own world.

---

So now that we've established their normalcy, how do you actually get on their radar and connect with them? Below are 10 of the best methods and strategies I've personally used to connect with influencers:

### 1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Do some research and know what they like and don't like. What are their hobbies and interests? Family? Where are they from? Know something about their business.

Buried deep in one of my old websites, I made a passing remark that I liked Skittles. I remember speaking at an event and being given a big bag of Skittles and the host commenting that they found that on my site. I know they had to do some serious searching to find that, so it meant a lot to me knowing the homework they had done.

There was a podcaster I wanted to connect with at a recent conference. I had listened to his podcast enough to know a few insider jokes he frequently referenced on the show. You wouldn't know these insider jokes if you hadn't listened to a few episodes. So when we first met, I referenced a few of the jokes, so he knew I was "legit" and had actually listened to his work. That may not seem like that big of a deal, but trust me, it is.

If you're going on a first date, you would be wise to do some research first. Check out their [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or other social media profiles. You don't need to become a creepy stalker but you can learn a lot about someone just by doing some strategic searching.

## 2. START SMALL

Don't try to seal the deal on the first date. One of best places to do that is Twitter. Retweet them. Reply when they ask a question. Interact with them. Pay attention to their Twitter habits.

For example, one influencer I was trying to connect with recently was [Dave Ramsey](#). Dave is a big brand/personality in the personal finance space and is very, very busy. But I knew he tweeted almost always first thing in the morning. How did I know? Because I did my homework and was paying attention (you read #1 right? :)

When my podcast first came out, I noticed in one category within [iTunes](#), his podcast was ranked #1 and mine was ranked #2. I took a quick screenshot and tweeted it to him. He immediately retweeted and added the comment "I call it a tie!"

I got his attention in part because I tweeted him when I knew he was most likely to see it. Keep reading to get another lesson from this interaction :)

## 3. OFFER SINCERE COMPLIMENTS

People don't like flattery. You don't need to fangirl out over someone. That's a great way to make influencers feel awkward and uncomfortable. That's not what you're going for. But they do like genuine appreciation. That appreciation for a book, product or service could turn into a testimonial or quote that could be used in the future. If their work has really impacted you in some way, don't hesitate to send them an email or tweet.

But also remember the more memorable the compliment, the more memorable you will be. If you just send a generic email, "Thanks for your work. I like it. The end," good luck being remembered. But what if you sent them a handwritten thank you card. Or made a video on YouTube and sent them the link. Maybe you did your homework and sent them a gift card to their favorite restaurant. Do something to show your appreciation beyond just a boring ole thank you.

## 4. SHARE THEIR WORK

Part of the value of having a podcast is it's much easier for me to connect with influencers because I'm building a platform where I can share their work. Whatever kind of work people do, they generally want it to be shared with as many people as possible. So how can you share their work?

In a non-stalker way, how can you become the leader of their fan club? Influencers really like and appreciate people who will share their work and be a raving fan but do it in an authentic way.

What are some ways you can share their work with your network?

## 5. BUY SOMETHING FROM THEM

Most influencers have some type of course, book or resource available to help people. Generally, part of the reason they created that resource in the first place is to give you their best advice on a specific subject. It's a pet peeve of most influencers when people ask to "pick their brain" on a subject they've already written an entire book on. GO BUY THE BOOK!

After reading the book, if you have specific follow-up questions, that's different. But don't waste someone's time asking for advice when they've already provided that advice in a different format.

Also, remember that the higher priced the resource you buy from them, the more likely you'll be to get on their radar. If someone has sold tens of thousands of books and you bought one of them, they probably won't really know who you are.

But if they have an intensive course, coaching, or conference they host that you attend, you'll more likely get on the map with them. This works because it shows them you really believe in what they're doing and you're not just looking for a hand-out. You have actually already taken steps to invest in their information.

## 6. ADD VALUE BEFORE YOU ASK FOR VALUE

How can you help them? One way to do that is to see how your skill sets can benefit them. For example, as a speaker I've given a lot of presentations and have been booked to speak at a lot of different types of events. I have a pretty good understanding on how to get booked and how to deliver a good talk. So if I've done my homework and I know someone I'm trying to connect with is prepping a presentation, I may be able to reach out and offer to help. Before you offer any type of help, hopefully you've already at least interacted with them in a small way (email, Twitter, etc), so they're not entirely clueless on who you are.

There was an influencer I wanted to connect with that I had corresponded with a few times online. I saw they had a big presentation to work on, so I reached out and offered my help. He was really interested, so he emailed me and we had a Skype call to go through his talk. I didn't ask for anything out of it other than to just help him. My goal was to add value before asking for value. In [episode 12](#) of our [How'd You Get Into That](#) podcast, we interview videographer Michael Gebben. Michael has been able to do video work for big name people like Richard Branson, Tony Robbins, and Tim Ferris. Listen to our interview to learn more about Michael has used this principle to connect and work with these guys.

## 7. MOVE UP INCREMENTALLY

The nutshell is be realistic about who you want to connect with and what you're expecting. Think of everyone's social status on a scale 1-10. You're somewhere on the chart and the person you're trying to connect with is on there as well.

If you're a 2, it's going to be really hard for you to connect with a 9. But if you're a 7, you probably have a realistic chance of connecting with that 9. How do you move up the chart? Do good work that gets noticed. Influencers notice hustle when they see it.

A lot of people ask me how to get into speaking. I'm happy to open the playbook and tell them exactly what they can do. But Grant aren't you creating more competition? You would think. But surprisingly (or not surprisingly) most people won't put in the work necessary to move up the chart. In fact, when someone DOES do what I suggest, I'm much more likely to want to continue helping them.

Also, be realistic about what you're expecting from the "relationship." If you just want to meet someone, that's one thing. But if you want to interact, go to lunch or build a long-term friendship with them, you need to make sure that's realistic given where you are on the "chart" vs where they are.

There are several people I think I could get to go to lunch with me. But I knew Dave Ramsey was too busy to ask to lunch. But I was able to meet with him for 10 minutes which given Dave's schedule, 10 minutes is a big deal. Be realistic about the time/value you hope to receive.

## 8. CONNECT IN PERSON

I have found there is nothing more valuable to building relationships with influencers than meeting them in person. You can interact with someone online for months or even years and it not have the same impact on a potential relationship as meeting them in person will do. To connect in person, one of the most effective methods I've found is to pay attention to conferences they are attending or speaking at.

Be strategic in the conference you want to meet them at. Realistically, it's difficult to connect with a big influencer at an event where there are several thousand people. Why? Because there are that many more people who are trying to get their attention. Try to find smaller settings where they'll be.

For example, I wanted to meet author and blogger [Chris Guillebeau](#). We had emailed a few times, but again, I knew the value of meeting in person. As you may know, every summer Chris hosts an event called [World Domination Summit](#) in Portland. This event has become extremely popular and attracts over 3,000 people. As the host of the event, it would be virtually impossible to connect with Chris at an event of that size. Not only are there a ton of other people trying to also connect with him there, but as the host, his mind would be consumed with so many details of the event.

So instead, I attended the inaugural [Pioneer Nation](#) event Chris and his team put on. There were around 400 people at this event, and it was a bit more laid back compared to WDS. So there, I was able to visit with Chris on multiple occasions, whereas I don't think that would have been as possible at an event significantly bigger.

Also, if you're going to connect with someone at a conference, grease the wheel before you go. Reach out to them and let them know you hope to see them. That way when you meet, they have some context for who you are. Remember, there are a lot of people trying to get their attention, so it helps if you're already on their radar in a memorable way before you meet in person.

Another way to connect in person is to pay attention to where they live (but not in a stalker way :). I travel a lot, so I always have on my radar where different people live that I want to connect with. Any time I know I'm going to be in their email, I may send off a quick tweet or email to see if they're available for a few minutes. I've met many influencers and built many good friendships this way.

Going back to the Dave Ramsey story...I had connected with one of Dave's key staff members on Twitter (see #9 below) was going to have lunch with him on a trip to Nashville. That morning I tweeted Dave (remember I paid attention to when he would be online) that I would be in his office today and would love to say hey if he had a minute. He immediately tweeted back and said to have this other guy introduce us.

Boom.

You can also pay attention to when they'll be in your area. Maybe they're in the area for a meeting or some type of event. Even if they're remotely close, make an effort to connect with them. On multiple times, I've driven several hours out of my way to connect with someone. Meeting people in person is that important to me.

## 9. CONNECT WITH WHO THEY ARE CONNECTED WITH

Do some homework and figure out who that influencer is close with. Any time someone else can validate you to the person you're trying to connect with, it's much easier than trying to validate yourself to them.

If you're going to try and connect with another person, make sure it's someone you're legitimately interested in and want to connect with either way. People are smart and can tell if they're just being used so you can get in with someone else. That's not genuine or cool.

## 10. HAVE A LONG TERM STRATEGY

You won't be BFFs overnight. It just doesn't work like that. It can take years to develop strong connections with influencers. Don't just bounce around looking for one-night stands. That's dumb. And influencers will sniff that out and want nothing to do with you.

Think beyond today about how you can do everything discussed above. Figure out how you can do interesting (and quality) work that gets their attention. Do your homework on who they are and what their business is all about. Figure out what conferences they'll be at and consider attending. Find who they are connected with and begin to build relationships there. All of this is about thinking beyond today. Quality relationships take time.

---

Relationships don't magically happen. Especially with busy influencers. You have to be very intentional and strategic about how you build those relationships. But if you go about it the right way, you can form relationships and friendships that have the ability to change your business and your life. But again I stress...they won't magically happen. You've got to put in the work.

Grant Baldwin is the host of the top rated career and entrepreneurship podcast [How'd You Get Into That?](#) Through his podcast, speaking, and writing, he helps people find and do work they love. Learn more about [GrantBaldwin.com](#).