

## **5 Favors You Must Ask from Every Client**

“What? Ask a client for a favor? Are you nuts?”

OK, first of all, they’re not *really* favors. I just really liked the alliteration. But they are requests, and you might feel like you’ve got to ask before you’ll get them. So, maybe *favor* isn’t too far off the mark after all.

Second of all, about the “are you nuts?” part – well, maybe. But that’s got nothing to do with this. Asking a client for something (in addition to your fee) can feel a little awkward at first. This is especially true if you’re still working through issues about your value as a writer. If you feel like your time and talent aren’t worth much, it’s going to be hard to hold your head high enough to ask for anything. But that’s a topic for another day.

We’re going to look at what your existing client base – whether you’ve got one or one hundred – can give you that’ll help you build a thriving business. It won’t cost them a thing, but it’ll do wonders for your bottom line.

### **Favor #1: May I add you to my client list?**

To be honest, most clients will never even ask to see your client list – especially if the bulk of them are online. But whether you’re finding your clients through a site like Guru, using a direct mail campaign, by networking, or some other way, a solid client list can go a long way to establish your credibility. If you’ve got a brochure or a website, those are great places to create a list of your satisfied clients.

You may have some clients refuse – generally only on ghostwriting projects where they’d rather not have their employer or publisher know they had help. But it never hurts to ask.

### **Favor #2: Would you please share your results?**

Big time direct mail clients in particular want to see your copy conversion track record. They keep track of the effectiveness of every campaign they run, and are constantly looking to improve their conversion rate. (This involves math – sorry! It’s a ratio comparing how many pieces were mailed to how many people took action.)

As a freelancer, you won’t automatically be informed of these stats, because you’re not in-house. You’ll need to ask for them, and keep them. If you can show a high response rate to your copy, you’ve got a good shot at getting a copywriting project – online or off.

### **Favor #3: Would you please give me a testimonial?**

If your client is happy with what you’ve created, they may even send a testimonial without you asking. All you have to do then is ask for permission to use it. If they don’t offer it, you can easily ask by saying something like, “As I build my writing business, it would be so helpful to my prospective clients to hear about your experience in working with me. Would you mind sending me a few words I can use as a testimonial?” You can even write it for them and get their approval.

**Favor #4: Would you please serve as a reference for me?**

On Guru, it's really easy because a prospective client can just look at your feedback and ranking to see how well you've done with other clients. Offline, some clients will ask for references. You want to have a happy client's permission before sending prospects their way. Your references probably won't get many calls, but it's great to have them in place just in case.

**Favor #5: Would you please pass my name along to anyone who might need some writing done?**

It is the absolute best feeling to have a new client come to you because another client referred them to you. It's an honor and a privilege for someone to think that highly of your talent and skills that they'd put their own neck on the line to recommend you.

If you remember to ask these five favors, your client list will blossom and grow – and along with it, you'll build the thriving writing business of your dreams.