

cheat sheet

Techniques That Work When You're Being Ignored

Are you tired of being ignored by clients and prospects?

Do you send message after message but never hear back? "It's sooooo frustrating," wrote one reader of [Quick Tips from Marketing Mentor](#).

This cheat sheet covers why that's happening and provides actual language you can use to get a response —while also leaving a professional impression and keeping the door open.



Part 1: 5 Reasons You're Being Ignored

When you send a proposal, an introduction or a request for feedback, and all you get is silence, it could be that:

- **Your recipient has no info.**

They don't yet know the answer to your question and they don't make/have time to say so. They're waiting until they have an answer before they respond.

- **Your recipient has no decision.**

They're still deciding and think a decision will probably come down soon. They'll wait until it does to respond.

- **Your recipient has no courage.**

They did make their decision—and they didn't choose you! Silence has become the de facto "no."

- **Your recipient has no power.**

It's out of their hands, there's nothing they can do and they may be a tad embarrassed by their lack of power.

- **Your recipient has not received your message in the first place!**

Resend to find out!

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Part 2: 3 Ways to Get Them To Respond

Instead of giving up in frustration, here is actual language you can use on the phone or in email— simply tailor it.

- **Option 1: Just say no.**

"I don't mind a 'no,' but I would like an answer."

"I'm beginning to think you're not interested ..."

- **Option 2: Should I hold this spot for you?**

"Dear So and So,

I've tried to connect with you twice in the last two weeks.

I know you've been busy, and I hope you're okay.

As a reminder, I've left my schedule open to help you get your project started. I'll be glad to work with you, but I do want you to know some other companies are now interested in working with me as well.

Will you please let me know in the next 24 hours if I may release the time I reserved for you to help my other clients? Or, if you need to postpone the start of your project, will you please let me know what you would like for me to do next?

If I don't hear from you, I'll assume you're super busy and will not contact you again."

- **Option 3: Multiple choice.**

"Dear Name,

You may recall we've traded messages about _____.

You probably value persistence in your colleagues. I know I do.

Since I haven't heard back, I propose a simple multiple choice.

Please reply to this email message with one of three numbers indicating your current situation, so that we might move ahead with our respective projects:

1. Thank you for contacting me; we have no interest in moving forward with your services/proposal.
2. I'm so glad you followed up. Please call me to discuss next steps.
3. Our needs are set for now, but there may be a project in the future; please contact me again in a few months.

Looking forward to your reply."

Two More Tips

When the ball is in your court, don't be unresponsive! Practice the Golden Rule here. It should come back to you.

When people do respond, thank them for doing so. Reinforce the behavior you want repeated (just like training a dog).

Thanks to Janet Falk, Jenn David Connolly, Doug McClellan, Merry Perry, Sheri Wood and Walter O. Evans for sharing their tactics.