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UNDERSTOOD
BRANDING™

A GUIDE TO IDEAL CLIENT INTERVIEWS

To connect with your ideal client (IC), you need to understand their world view. The only way to understand their world view is to speak to them! This guide contains everything you need to plan for, conduct, capture and integrate what you learn through conducting 30-minute ideal client interviews.

How many interviews do you need to conduct? You'll start to see valuable patterns after 4 or 5 interviews, and you'll validate those patterns around 8-10 so that's the sweet spot to aim for.

IC interviews result in an incredibly deep understanding of where your ideal client is coming from, what's working for them, what isn't working for them and what their hopes and dreams are for their future. All of which your brand needs to know to speak directly to them in your marketing, copy and sales strategies.

This information cannot be gleaned with a survey or other digital data gathering mechanism. The 1-on-1 interview is the MOST powerful tool to learn how to pull out a chair and get your IC a glass of water.

I want you to talk to folks who fit into one or more of these categories:

1. Former client/customer
2. Current client/customer
3. Past prospect who didn't hire you (but should have)
4. Person you'd LIKE to work with but hasn't hired you yet

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SCHEDULING INTERVIEWS / 1

Offer each interviewee something nice in exchange for the 30 minutes of their time. I send a branded mug and a thank you card, but you could also offer a service related to what you do.

Send an email like this:

Hi _____. I hope you're doing well. I have a favor to ask. To understand how I can get better at what I do and communicate effectively with clients, I'd like to interview you about [our work together OR what you were hoping for when you contacted me OR what's happening in your life right now]. This confidential interview would only take 30 minutes and would take place over the phone. I am not selling anything and I have a small gift to say thank you for sharing your time.

Can you help me? If so, click the link to schedule a chat time!

[include link to schedule chat time]

[program your scheduling system to send them reminders]

INTERVIEW FRAME UP / 2

You're going to interview them ON THE PHONE, not in person or over video. Them not SEEING you provides a layer of comfort that allows them to give you deeper answers.

1. Start with small talk/catch up. Keep it casual and light on your end.
2. When you start asking questions, do not interrupt their answer or be afraid of pauses. Sometimes folks need a moment to go 'back to the well' to bring you deeper information. Take two breaths in and out before breaking a silence.
3. When in doubt, ask a follow-up version of 'and what was /is that like for you?'
4. Either record the meeting or take detailed notes or both. You MUST CAPTURE THEIR WORDS somehow for any of this to work. Some clients choose to record the call and use a transcription service. I write copious notes during the call.

Here are the interview questions that get at your IC's worldview. I recommend asking them in this order:

- How would people describe you?
- How would you describe yourself?
- What were you taught your role in life would be?
- Are there aspects of that role you push away from?
- What belief systems did you inherit during your upbringing?
- How do you feel about those belief systems now?
- What's on your mind first thing in the morning?
- Where do you feel you are falling short right now?
- What unfair advantage have you been given? What disadvantage?
- What cultural stereotypes are you subject to?
- Do you consider yourself a success? Why or why not? What does success look like to you?
- What does a regular day look like for you?
- What are your thoughts right now about [insert the THING you help them with]?
- What are you craving or looking for permission to have or do in your life when it comes to [insert the thing you help with, i.e. your business, your beauty routine, your work/life balance, your self esteem, etc.]?
- Are there things that keep you up at night?
- If they are a past client or past prospect:
 - Where did you feel you were falling short [before we started working together OR when you were thinking about hiring me]?
 - What were you craving or looking for permission for when you were looking for [insert your service]?
 - How did you feel working with me? How did I make you feel?

Here's a Present for you!

Anytime after you've conducted 4 or more interviews, here's a link to schedule a free 30-minute brand chat with Maggie to use the patterns you heard to build messaging that speaks to your Ideal Client:

<https://maggiebergin.as.me/OhHello>