

How to Find Clients

Gaining clients can often be the hardest part of working for yourself and it is something we have to think about continuously. It does get easier once you gain momentum but getting traction initially can be tough.

There is no simple answer and it is often a case of trying different ideas and seeing what works for you. Here are 9 steps to help you get underway.

Step 1

Our first sources of clients tend to come from friends and family.

Identify which of your friends and family know your ideal clients and would be willing to help you. Make sure they understand precisely who your ICA is and what services you are offering. If you are not really clear about this yourself, you will not be able to articulate it and they will not be able to help you.

Step 2

Identify who amongst your friends and family is your ideal client. Select a handful to help you with research. Reach out to them and ask them if they would help you identify further what challenges your ICA faces. Not only will this help you gain further clarity, but it may also gain some initial clients. Ask them if they can recommend you to any of their colleagues.

Step 3

Select a number of people in your wider network and repeat 1 and 2.

Step 4

Extend step 2 to your wider social media friends and ask them questions about their challenges and how they deal with them. You will learn more along the way and more people will get to know what work you are doing.

Step 5

Identify who else has your ideal clients. Have a brainstorming session and identify who may already be providing services of a different nature to your ideal clients. List at least five types of people.

Example:

A pilates teacher may be looking for people who are also clients of a:

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- chiropractor
- sports physio
- gardeners' society
- midwife
- children's nursery

Identify at least 5 people for each category, connect with them and start building a relationship.

Step 5

Identify people in your own industry who provide similar services to you but to a different client base. Start to build relationships with a handful of these people and discuss the possibility of referring clients to each other when the fit is not right.

Step 6

Start to show up as an expert by blogging, speaking and responding to other people's posts on social media.

Step 7

Attend events where your ICA's hang out and think beyond the usual networking groups. They don't have to be business related at all. Remember the work you did when identifying your ICA.

Step 8

Ensure you have a referral system in place from day 1 and ask every client for a referral when you are coming to the end of your work.

Step 9

Build your credibility by asking every client for a testimonial and use them frequently in as many places as possible.