SourceWhale

MASTER YOUR OUTREACH

Proven best practices

Learn how to build high-performing sequences that combine multiple channels, hyper-personalization and automated follow-ups to boost response rates

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Introduction

"How can I make sure I'm heard above the noise and get those all-important responses from my outreach?"

It's not uncommon for recruiters to ask themselves how to differentiate a successful sourcing and business development process from an average one. This can be the difference between filling a role and hitting your target, versus questioning your ability to get the job done - sound familiar?

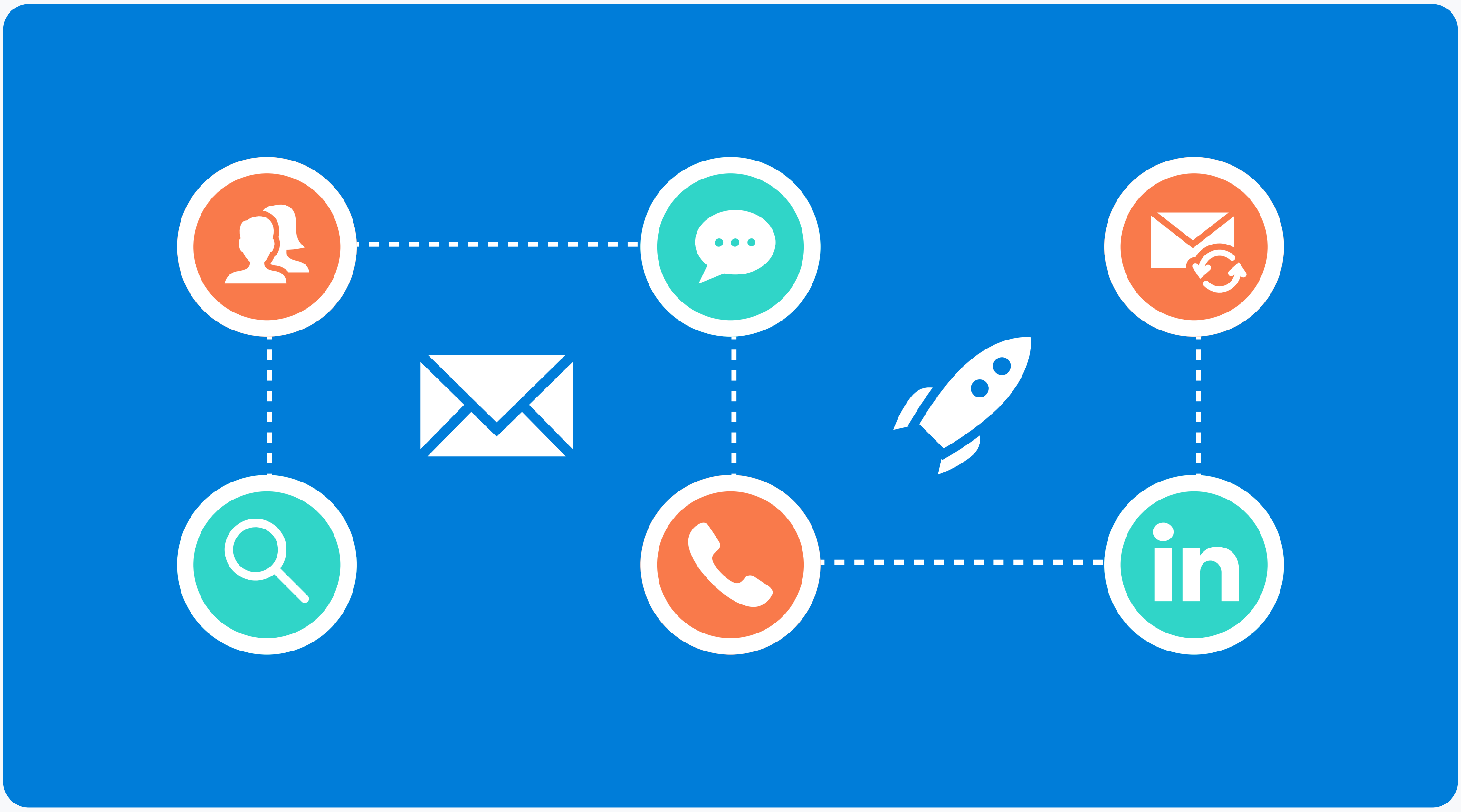
There is nothing worse than sourcing the perfect candidates, adding them to your outreach campaign to then realize a few days later that barely anyone has responded to your messages. What am I doing wrong? Why aren't they replying to me? What can I do to improve my response rate? A few questions that are likely to come to mind.

With over 1.3 million other recruiters out there, it's imperative to have a solid process in place to stand out from the crowd.

To get ahead of the competition, we've put together a guide sharing some of the industry's best tips and tricks to take your outreach to the next level. As our sales team and in-house Talent Acquisition Manager use SourceWhale for their own outreach, we're able to constantly monitor effectiveness and hear from our customers first-hand what's working well and what isn't, as well as stay abreast of the latest trends and best practices.

By harnessing the power of multistage multichannel sequences and hyper-personalizing at scale, get ready to start having real conversations with prospects to supercharge results.

In this guide



What is sequencing?

A sequence, otherwise known as an outreach cadence or campaign, is a scheduled series of clearly defined touchpoints sent to candidates or prospects.

A sequence can be used for two things in recruitment:

1. Sourcing (candidate)
2. Business development (client)

The goal of a sequence from a sourcing perspective is to get a response from the candidates you've identified as strong fits for a role in order to fill the position. The goal of a sequence from a business development perspective is to convert your prospects into customers that pay for your recruiting services.

Sequences usually contain at least 3-5 steps and follow a multichannel approach.

Create a winning sequence – 10 step guide

Nailing the basics is crucial.

Whilst some of these steps may be obvious, they are often forgotten or we try to rush this part of the process as we have targets and deadlines we're trying to meet.

However, ensuring you're taking the time to build out a compelling sequence will save you time (and frustration) in the long run and enable you to attract the best talent and engage a wide client base.

Here's a 10 step guide that we recommend following to build a killer sequence:

Step 1: Do your homework

Research is an essential part of the process that shouldn't be overlooked. Whether you're a staffing agency recruiter working with a new client or an in-house recruiter hiring for your company, ensuring you've done your research on the business and role prior to creating an outreach sequence is key. Things to be mindful of include:

- **Understand the role and key responsibilities**
- **Company stats**
- **Industry knowledge**
- **Company USPs**
- **Research of the candidate/ prospect's profile**
- **Research into a company's live jobs**

Relevant company stats could include the following; team size, funding, revenue, growth plans, location and more. Company USPs could include the following; awards won, customer reviews, employee reviews, LinkedIn followers, articles.

Step 2: Tone of voice

Consider your audience and how they would want to be approached. For example, the tone of voice used when messaging a university graduate will be different to that of a Vice President of Sales at a financial institute. Different things to consider include:

Use of emojis
Use more emojis for junior-mid level roles than for senior executive positions

Formal or casual approach
Use a formal approach for senior executive search positions

Use of punctuation
Avoid too much punctuation with senior executive positions

Level of detail
Executive search positions require more level of detail than junior positions

Step 3: Gather useful content

Including useful content such as links to a company website, job description, customer reviews, webinar, event or a company video can be a great way to add credibility and give your candidate/prospect something visual to look at.

Though try to avoid overloading your messages and aim to spread these out across the entire sequence. Remember, the content you're sending to a recipient should be relevant otherwise they will likely ignore it.

SourceWhale gives you the option to send files as attachments or links. We recommend using links where possible as they are better for deliverability and help you avoid landing in spam.

Step 4: Create a multichannel multistep sequence

71% of responses come from sending a follow-up message, so creating a multistep campaign is crucial. We recommend sending a minimum of 3-5 steps to increase the chance of getting a response. Our in-house TA Manager follows a 12 step sequence, but bear in mind that some of the steps are 'softer' touchpoints such as a LinkedIn connection request and LinkedIn follow as opposed to a message.

We recommend sending regular touchpoints to candidates to help you stand out from the competition and provide multiple opportunities for them to respond. We also suggest you space out touchpoints for your business development activity over a few weeks or even months, as hiring needs may change over time and hiring managers are busy.

There's no one-size-fits-all approach as this will change depending on the industry you recruit in and the roles you recruit for, but following this as a guideline should help.

Ensuring that these steps are leveraging multiple channels including LinkedIn, email, phone, SMS and more allows you to reach larger audiences and increase the chance of grabbing attention. Whilst some people live on LinkedIn, others may barely use it. So it's important to cover all possibilities and go where your prospects go.

Here's a 12 step example that our in-house TA Manager uses:

The industry average InMail response rate is between 18%-25% according to LinkedIn[1]. Using a multichannel multistep approach has increased our TA Manager's overall response rate from **25% to 60%.**

Step 5: The message

Assuming you've done your research, established tone of voice, gathered relevant content and created multiple steps as a foundation, then this part should be fairly straightforward.

At SourceWhale, we've built our own conversational AI, WhaleGPT, that's embedded on the platform. This means writing personalized content for your outreach has never been easier. Unlike other tools available on the market, WhaleGPT has been designed specifically for recruiters. Whether it's for headhunting or BD, your 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc. follow-up, you can generate relevant messages that are aligned with industry best practices in a flash.

For specific advice on what to include in the messaging, see our **14 Top Tricks** section on **Page 11**.

If you're stuck for ideas, we have also shared some example sequences on **Page 17**.

Step 6: Testing, testing

Monitoring the results of your sequence is key to discovering what's worked and what hasn't. Tracking the data allows you to refine your messaging over time and easily monitor the overall effectiveness of each campaign.

A I see you 🕵️ {{firstName}}

32	44%	17%	10%
Messaged	Opened	Replied	Interested

A I see you 🔥 {{firstName}}

28	39%	0%	0%
Messaged	Opened	Replied	Interested

1. A/B Testing

A great way of tracking results is by A/B testing. Simply create two versions of the same message but tweak small parts, like your subject line, to see which one gets the best results.

2. Measure overall effectiveness

Another way of tracking (and reacting to) the data is by monitoring the overall performance of your campaign. This means keeping an eye on metrics like open, response and interest rates.

2023	81%	32%	15%
Messaged	Opened	Replied	Interested

You can collaborate more effectively by sharing campaigns that have yielded the best metrics and repeat what works. Performance dashboards are also a great way to incentivize your team and track individual output even when working remotely.

💡 Recruitment engagement platforms like SourceWhale enable users to A/B test content and track the data of individual or multiple campaigns to accelerate results.

Step 7: Adding visuals

This step will be more relevant for some than others depending on who you're approaching or the industry you're recruiting for. Revert back to **Step 2** on tone of voice to establish whether this step is necessary.

If you gathered the content on **Step 3**, then this part should be easy. Examples of what to include could be:

- Emojis
- GIFs (with SourceWhale you can get creative with custom GIFs and even record your own)
- Links
- Videos
- Images (or custom images)

Adding emojis to the subject line of your emails/InMails could result in a:

29% boost in opens	**28%** increase in click rates	**93%** increase in click through rates

SourceWhale's platform allows users to upload images and add custom variables such as name or job title to the image itself adding an extra layer of personalization.

Step 8: Define the time

Decide on how long you'd like your sequence to last. For example, if it's a 12 step campaign, the candidate/prospect could receive one touchpoint a day meaning the sequence would last for 12 days.

SourceWhale allows you to choose when each touchpoint will go out so you have full control e.g step 2 is to send 1 day after step 1.

Step 9: Double vision

As a final step before sending your winning sequence to candidates or prospects, make sure to share it with a member of your team to check for spelling mistakes etc.

Step 10: Send away!

Congratulations! You've created your winning sequence.

Time to send send send.

14 proven tips for boosting your response rate

At SourceWhale we use our platform daily. As a result, we stay on top of best practices and know exactly which outreach techniques are garnering the best metrics. We have also built our very own Content Coach that scores your outreach and offers data-backed recommendations for improvement. Trained on the analysis of over 21.8 million pieces of recruitment outreach, all you need to do is hit a score of 85 and above to achieve better engagement, more meetings and higher revenue. Start to confidently write your messages with some proven top tips and tricks:

Tip 1

Include 6-12 multichannel steps for the best chance of a response (depending on your audience). Remember, some of these could be softer touches like a LinkedIn follow or connection request.

Tip 2

Personalization is key. Head to the LinkedIn profile of your candidate/prospect and reference their interests or recent posts to show that you've taken time to do your research.

> Writing a personalized sentence in each message increases the response rate from an average of **18%** to **34.5%.**

Tip 3

Aim to include 2+ custom variables per touchpoint for shorter messages and 4+ custom variables for longer messages. This could include the following: name, job title, company etc. SourceWhale allows you to add these into your sequence and auto fills the correct information when sending to a candidate.

> **{{firstName}}, {{tomorrow}}** at 10am?
>
> Appreciate that you have recieved multiple messages from me and it's probably because you're not considering a new role right now. That's fine - I expected that to be the case.
>
> However, when the vacancy for my role went live at SourceWhale back in July I wasn't looking either. Someone reached out to me, just like I'm reaching out to you, and after a 5 minute chat I was curious.
>
> Fancy learning more **{{tomorrow}}**?

Remember that some of these may be more effective than others depending on what industry/roles you recruit for but these are general tips that should work for everyone.

Tip 4

Send a LinkedIn connection request as a first or second step. Once the candidate/prospect has connected with you, you can view their contact details and directly message them as opposed to sending a cold InMail.

Tip 5

Finish each message with a call to action. See some examples below:

Fancy learning more {{firstName}}?	When are you free {{tomorrow}}?	Open for a quick chat {{firstName}}?

Tip 6

Put the focus on them. There's nothing worse than receiving a message that focuses on the recruiter or the company they're recruiting for.

My client is currently hiring for 5 AEs in the US and needs them to start next month. ✗

Congrats on the recent promotion [Name] – it looks like you're killing it! Given your experience at [Company 1] and [Company 2], I had to reach out. ✓

Tip 7

Put yourself in their shoes. For example, if you're approaching candidates that are high in demand they probably receive multiple messages a day:

I see you🕵️ {{firstName}},

Happy {{dayOfWeek}} {{firstName}},

I'm guessing you're a pretty good {{role}}?! Given your experience at {{company}} and your impressive sales experience over the past {{customVariable}} years, I can imagine you're a hot topic for recruiters. 🔥

Tip 8

Include other members of your team in your sequence to improve your response rate. Whether that's including a message from the CEO or Hiring Manager, this is a great way to stand out.

The example below is a step from one of our in-house TA Manager's campaigns sent from our very own CEO, which yielded great results.

I see you🕵 {{firstName}},

{{firstName}}, are you our next superstar?

Hi {{firstName}},

Our TA Manager shared your profile with me and I had to get in touch personally.

We are looking for someone to help us become a global leader in the Rec Tech space. Based on your experience at {{company}} we feel you could be a great fit.

Got 5 mins free {{tomorrow}}?

Best,
CEO

Tip 9

People are busy, show them that you understand.

I've tried reaching out to you multiple times and still haven't heard back. Can you please reply to me? ✗

I appreciate you're probably super busy trying to hit Q1 targets and manage your day job, let alone have time to reply to me. ✓

Tip 10

Uncover the pain. Think about their frustrations and highlight this throughout your sequence.

Hi {{firstName}},

I wouldn't be doing my job properly if I didn't follow up on my message {{previousStepDay}}.
.
I imagine you're probably busy trying to lead your team and hit Q1 targets, let alone have time to focus on hiring.

With uncertainty in the market, we're finding that candidates are more hesitant than ever to leave their current company.

This means it's now essential for tech companies to partner with a specialist staffing firm in order to engage with the most passive talent.

It would be great to schedule a 5 minute call to discuss how we can support {{company}}'s future.

When works best {{tomorrow}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}?

Tip 11

Think about what people WANT to hear. No one cares about free fruit or beers in the fridge. Share the stuff that matters like work-life balance, progression and compensation.

Tip 12

Give them options. If someone isn't replying there could be multiple reasons why. Create a list of options for them to choose from e.g. they're too busy, they're not looking for a new role or simply not interested. This way the candidate/prospect can quickly pick which one relates to their situation without needing to elaborate.

Tip 13

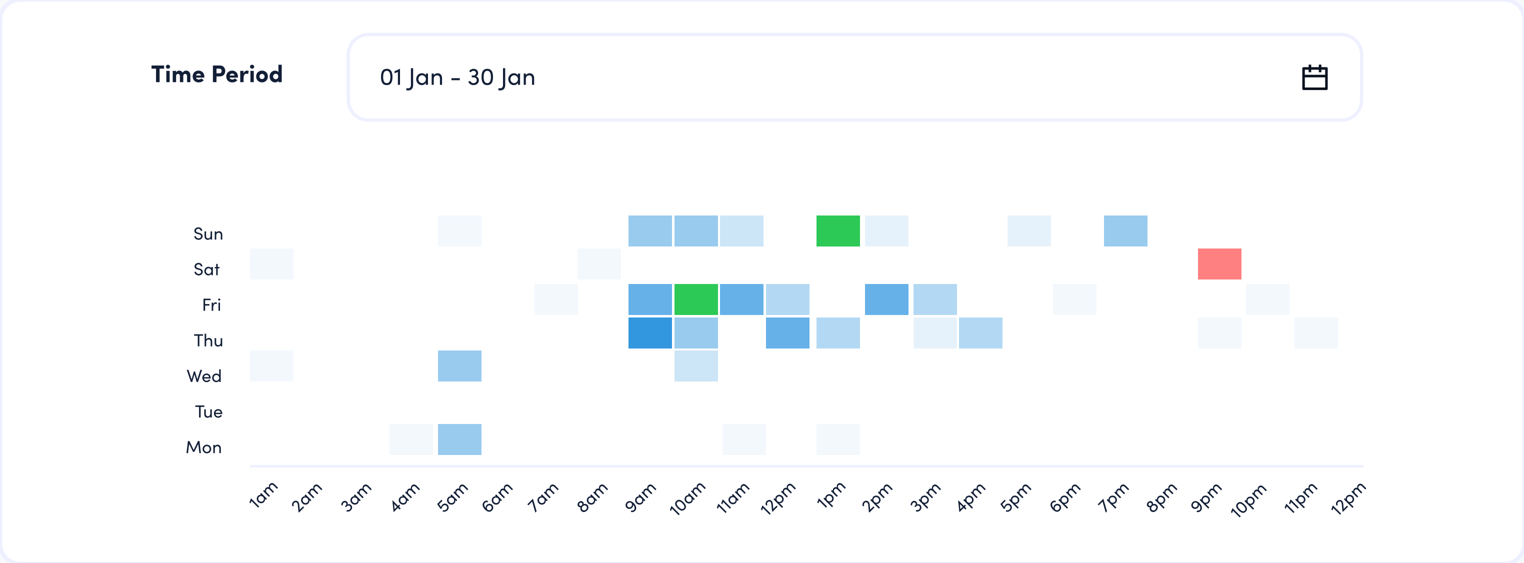
We recommend keeping each message under 500-700 characters. It's okay for the odd message to be a little longer, but no one has time to read paragraph after paragraph.

Most people are reading messages on their mobile phones so the messages will become compressed. The more a contact has to scroll to read a message, the more likely their attention span will run out.

Tip 14

Timing is key. You might have the best sequence out there but if you're sending it on a Saturday night, the likelihood is no one will respond. For candidate sourcing, we recommend sending your outreach on a Sunday-Friday between 7am-8pm. For business development, we recommend sending Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

SourceWhale's heat mapping allows you to track open, click and response rates so that you can see when is the most effective time to send your outreach. Our email scheduling settings allow you to then schedule your emails to send at your chosen time to increase the chance of the recipient replying.



What to avoid

Knowing what to avoid in a sequence isn't always obvious and it's not something that's spoken about very often. In this section, we'll share our suggestions of what to steer clear of to avoid sounding generic or spammy.

Bulk messaging

Sending messages in bulk decreases the personalization of a message and increases the chance of making a mistake. Life as a recruiter is hectic, but taking the time to individually send each message will save the headache later down the line and increase your chance of getting a response.

InMails **sent individually** performed nearly

15%

better than InMails **sent in bulk**

Insights from LinkedIn

Personalized InMails perform about **15%** better than ones sent in bulk according to LinkedIn[2].

Repeat messages

It's pretty common for recruiters to send the same message to a candidate on two different channels such as InMail and email as people tend to have a preferred platform that they respond to. However, people will often see that you've sent them the same message twice and this can come across as lazy or spammy.

Being vague

It's important to share valuable information with the candidate/prospect in order to come across as credible and to give them a reason to reply. Sharing fluffy statements such as "competitive salary, fast growing, great benefits" won't cut it. Remember not to share ALL the information all at once so that you have additional detail to share at the initial meeting.

Small talk

Whilst we encourage personalization, make sure you're getting to the point. Avoid generic statements like "I hope this email finds you well" or "I hope you're having a great week". It adds nothing of value to the sequence - cut to the chase.

Spam words

Before sending a message be sure to check that none of the words are spam words to avoid your emails ending up in junk. These could be words such as "special offer" "apply" and "opportunity". Here's a list of words to avoid: www.activecampaign.com/blog/spam-words

SourceWhale offers content suggestions that take into account things like spam words, email length and the number of links. These are all designed to reduce the chances of your outreach being marked as spam.

Sending at 00 hr

Do you ever start work and suddenly get bombarded with sales emails at 9am? Aim to send your messages at different times of the day and avoid sending on the hour as it makes it more obvious that your email was automated. See example using SourceWhale below.

8:03 to 18:14 1 sending days after previous step

Generic subject lines

The subject line is the first thing your candidate/prospect will see and this will determine whether they take the time to read your message or not - so make it count.

Sending generic, overused subject lines kill the rest of your message so get creative.

✗ **I'm hiring for 3 Account Executives**

No personalization. The attention is on you and not them.

✗ **Exciting career opportunity**

Vague and generic.

✗ **Did you see my last message?**

People are busy. Nothing about this message gives context or a reason to respond.

✓ **Hello from a fellow sushi lover!**

Demonstrates you've taken the time to look at their profile and draw upon common interests.

✓ **Great webinar session yesterday [Name]!**

A warm, friendly opener showing you've taken an interest in them.

✓ **Saw that [Company] made some layoffs - I hope you weren't affected**

A human approach that shows empathy.

Block paragraphs

People spend around 10-15 seconds on your message. Make it easier to digest by splitting big chunks of text into smaller sentences.

The response rate for the shortest InMails is **22%** higher than the average response rate for all InMails according to LinkedIn[3].

Example sequences

Now that we've established how to create a winning sequence, what works well and what doesn't, it's time to put it all into practice.

Our in-house TA Manager has created **3 sourcing and 3 business development** example sequences that we will be sharing snippets of.

Bear in mind that each of these sequences follow the same 12 step pattern as the timeline on **Page 8**. These steps can be edited to suit you, but we've found great success from following them in this order.

Sourcing examples

1. In-house recruitment

This first example has been created to showcase a sequenc

{{firstName}}, A fellow Mancunian! 🤝 (1)

Happy {{dayOfWeek}} {{firstName}},

(2) Seeing we're both Manchester based and I noticed you're a foodie on your LI profile! Would love to hear any restaurant recommendations you have?! 🍕

I hope you don't mind the super candid approach but I stumbled across your profile this {{timeOfDay}} and had to get in touch given your impressive {{customerVariable}} years of sales experiences at {{company}} and {{company}}.

Just out of curiosity, have you ever considered a change?

We're scaling our AE team here at SourceWhale and we'd love your help growing our customer base from 500 to 2000 this year.

Open to a casual chat to explore further {{firstName}}? (3)

1. Hyper-personalized approach showing research into their profile and several custom variables to make it appear tailored
2. Finding common interests to build rapport
3. Call to action

Hey {{firstName}},

(1) Hope you don't mind but I shared your sales experience with our VP Sales - he's impressed! 👏

Not sure if you saw my email {{previousStepDay}} but we're hiring for an AE in the UK as of last week at SourceWhale.

I'm reaching out to the best profiles directly before posting the role and you're at the top of my list {{firstName}}. (2)

Check out this video 'Day in the Life at SourceWhale' to see what it's like working here! (3)

Fancy a casual chat {{tomorrow}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}? 🐳

1. Paragraph split into smaller sentences so it's easier to digest
2. Flattery - "You're at the top of my list" and "he's impressed"
3. Attaching useful links

{{firstName}}, your future sales career awaits...

{{dayOfWeek}} {{firstName}},

Loved your recent LI post about social selling! Couldn't agree more 🙌

Not sure if you saw my email **{{previousStepDay}}** but I'm currently working with a leading FinTech unicorn that have asked me to approach you directly for an AE role given your standout profile.

Here's an overview:

🔥 Leading FinTech Unicorn that's a hot topic in the payment space right now!
🏆 Voted #1 Payment SaaS by Gartner
⭐ 1000+ 5 Start G2 Reviews
🤑 VC backed by Accel & Insight Venture Partners
🌍 Scaling rapidly having grown from 120 - 450 employees in the last year

They've selected 15 AEs to reach out to and you're at the top of their list!

Fancy learning more **{{firstName}}**?

2. Staffing recruitment

This example is a sequence sent by a staffing agency recru

1. Personalized intro
2. Useful, specific information shared about the company
3. Emojis add visual appeal

{{firstName}}, earn the commission you deserve! 💰

{{timeOfDay}}, **{{firstName}}**,

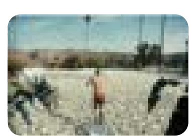
I appreciate that life as an AE can be hectic, so you may not have had a chance to read my last message **{{previousStepDay}}**.

I can also appreciate that as an AE, a strong base salary with realistic targets are key when considering a new role.

We've all heard of companies offering ridiculous OTE's but come to realise no one's coming close to hitting them.

The good news is, my clients are not only offering a base salary of £100k + Double uncapped OTE, the current reps are averaging around 233% of their target meaning they're on their way to becoming millionaires at this rate! 🔥🤑

Fancy diving into this further **{{tomorrow}}**?



1. Transparency around compensation
2. Highlighting pain points
3. GIF of someone diving into a pool of money is relevant to the subject line and adds humour

3. 'Open to work' candidates

Adapting a sequence to target the right audience is key. Therefore, when targeting candidates that have 'open to work' on their LinkedIn profile the approach should be different to a passive candidate. See two snippets of the example below:

Candidates who are 'Recommended Matches' or 'Open to Work' are about **35%** more likely to respond than others according to LinkedIn[4].

{{firstName}}, time to move on from {{company}}? 1

Good {{timeOfDay}} {{firstName}},

I'm often hearing that candidates are open to work because of one of the following reasons:

2

1. Poor leadership
2. Lack of flexibility
3. Lack of progression
4. Low compensation

Not sure if you're finding the same thing over at {{company}} {{firstName}} but either way, I'm confident I can help! 🙌 3

We're hiring for an AE here at SourceWhale and whilst I may be biased, I can honestly say it's an AMAZING place to work.

Fancy learning more {{tomorrow}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}? 🐳

1 Subject line grabs attention

2 Highlighting pain points

3 Offered a solution

Have I made a mistake {{firstName}}?

Hi {{firstName}}, 1

I've tried reaching out to you on multiple occasions now and haven't heard back from you. I'm presuming you've either:

🎉 Found a new role - congrats if that's the case!
🕺 Started to enjoy your current role
😬 Read my messages and simply aren't interested

Hopefully it's not the latter but it would be great to hear from you either way {{firstName}}.

2 If you're not 100% happy in your current role at {{company}}, let's chat! When works best for you {{dayOfWeek}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}? 😬

1 Putting yourself in their shoes

2 Highlighting pain points (as the chances are they're not 100% happy in their role)

Business development examples

1. New client

Getting a response when trying to partner with new clients to fill their roles can be tough.

More often than not, hiring managers have an internal TA team or there's already a list of other staffing agencies that they're using to fill roles. Going the extra mile to hyper-personalize your approach may mean you reach out to fewer people, but you should expect to see a huge increase in responses.

{{first Name}}, I hear {{company}} are hiring 3x AEs? 🚀

1

Hey {{firstName}},

I was having a nosey at your LI profile and noticed 2 things:
1. You've just moved to Edinburgh - literally my favourite place to visit in the UK!! 😍
2. {{company}} are hiring for 3x AEs

2

Having looked at {{company}}s employees, it doesn't look like you currently have an internal TA Team so I thought I'd drop you a message to introduce Recruit4U.

3

We specialise in scaling GTM Teams across the tech sector. Here's some more info: Company Pack 🚀

It would be great to discuss your hiring goals and how we can partner together!

Fancy a quick intro chat {{tomorrow}}?

1 Hyper-personalized

2 Friendly tone - not overly 'pushy' or 'salesy'

3 Useful link attached

1 Company details add credibility

2 Putting yourself in their shoes

3 Call to action

Hey {{firstName}},

1

Appreciate I may not have provided enough detail on our recruitment services so let me give you a brief overview:

🌏 Place top-performing GTM talent into tech companies globally
⏰ Average time to fill is 33 days
🔥 100 trained consultants who follow a rigorous headhunt process
🚀 Scaled teams at Salesforce, Meta, Workday & more!
🤑 No fees until placement

2

It makes life easier as a {{role}}, when your sales team are top performers right {{firstName}}?

3

I'd love to discuss how Recruit4U can find you the best talent out there!

Open to a chat {{tomorrow}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}?

2. Old client

This example is warmer outreach to a client you have previously worked with that has joined a new company. Here are two snippets of the example sequence below:

{{firstName}}, Long time, no speak!

{{timeOfDay}} {{firstName}},

1

I see that you've just started a new role over at {{company}} - congrats! 🎉

I've heard great things about the team so I'm sure you're going to love it over there.

2

Not sure if you remember but we partnered together a few years ago when you were back at {{previousCompany}}? Recruit4u helped scale your GTM by 15 people!

3

Appreciate you're probably settling into your new role but it would be great to discuss {{company}}'s hiring plans over the next year!

Fancy a quick coffee catch up {{tomorrow}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}?☕

1 Friendly, familiar tone

2 Hyper-personalized

3 Informal and non pushy call to action

Hey {{firstName}},

I wouldn't be doing my job properly if I didn't follow up on my message {{previousStepDay}}!

I imagine you're probably busy trying to lead your team and hit Q1 targets, let alone having time to focus on hiring!

With the uncertainty in the market, we're finding that candidates are more hesitant than ever to leave their current company.

This means it's now essential for tech companies to partner with a specialist staffing firm in order to engage with the most passive talent.

It would be great to schedule a 5 minute call to discuss how we can support {{company}}'s future. 🚀

When works best {{tomorrow}} or {{twoWorkingDays}}?

1. Paragraph split into smaller sentences so it's easier to digest
2. Putting yourself in their shoes
3. Highlighting pain points

3. Selling a candidate

This final example focuses on pitching a great candidate otherwise known as a "keysell" to grab the client's attention. See two snippets below:

{{first Name}}, I'm working with an AE that's INSANE! 🔥

Good {{timeOfDay}} {{firstName}},
I can see that you're currently hiring an AE to join {{company}}'s UK team.

One of the best AEs in the current market has asked me to approach you regarding this opportunity.

Here's a short summary of their profile:
🚀 5 years AE experience within high growth tech startups
Received 4 promos in less than 2 years
Achieved 256% target FY22
Closed a $1.4M deal with Workday
🔥 Voted Top 10 AE by Sales Confidence 2023

You'll need to be quick here as this candidate is currently interviewing with two of your direct competitors!

Open to discussing further {{tomorrow}}?

1. Impressive and specific stats
2. Sense of urgency

{{firstName}},

Thoughts?

1. Short to grab attention
2. Custom image (a SourceWhale feature)

Creating a winning sequence - executive search

What's the difference between white collar and executive search?

White collar

White collar jobs refer to occupations that are typically performed in an office environment and involve some sort of consultative, administrative or managerial duties.

Typically these jobs require a specific level of education or experience and tend to receive annual salaries over hourly wages.

Executive search

Executive search is a specialized type of recruitment that focuses on recruiting Directors and C-Level professionals (CIO, CTO, CFO etc). Typically these are hard-to-fill positions that require a highly effective recruitment process in order to attract and engage senior talent.

Given the seniority of the roles in an executive search, there is much greater significance placed on finding right-fit candidates. When recruiting for these high impact roles the stakes are exponentially higher, therefore the recruitment process must be flawless.

Executive search - sequencing top tips

We have gathered research from our very own executive search customers to determine what works best when approaching senior talent. Lots of our findings are in line with our 14 top tips on **Page 11**, but we found some specific examples related to this type of search.

Here are our top 7 tips...

Tip 1: Sell less, advise more

Senior executives probably receive multiple messages a day with people trying to sell them something, whether that's a product, a service or a role. The best approach to take is that of a trusted advisor instead of a recruiter or salesperson. Think of ways you can deliver value, whether that's by sharing your industry expertise, networking opportunities or competitive insights. The first message shouldn't be a sales message.

Tip 2: Do your homework

Research is something we discussed earlier in this guide, however, this is even more crucial when it comes to an executive search. To come across as credible in your field you must study the space that you're recruiting for and keep on top of new industry trends.

The research doesn't stop there. To grab the attention of a Senior Executive ensure that you're taking the time to properly research their profile. Take a look at their current company, work history, projects they've been involved in, direct competitors and so on. Use this information to carve out your message and personalize the hell out of it.

Tip 3: It's all in the detail

Our research showed that longer, detailed messages with 1500+ characters got a great response rate in an executive search sequence, as opposed to a white collar approach in which we found messages with less than 700 characters were more successful.

The more valuable and specific information you can share, the better.

Tip 4: Avoid the fluff

Whilst longer and more detailed messages get a good response rate for an executive search, it's important to only share valuable information and keep your message to the point. If it doesn't add anything beneficial to your message, leave it out.

Tip 5: Be patient

Senior talent are busy people. They'll take a little longer to respond and that's okay. Having patience is key.
We suggest leaving a few days in between each step in your sequence to give them a chance to respond and to allow your sequence to run for a little longer.

Tip 6: Utilize your network

Utilizing your network is also key when hiring for senior talent as they prefer to find new opportunities through networked connections or referrals. Ensuring you've got a great list of connections within the industry you work in is important.

Another great way of getting traction on a role that you may be recruiting for is to organize networking events to spread the message. This gets the word out there and also allows you to come across as a trusted advisor.

Tip 7: Credibility

Coming across as credible is vital when it comes to approaching senior talent. Here are some things you could consider:

- Company branding - ensure your company website and LinkedIn company page are regularly kept up-to-date
- Personal branding - ensure your LinkedIn profile is up-to-date and consider asking for recommendations from candidates or clients you've worked with to show you're good at what you do
- Stats and achievements e.g companies you've recently placed candidates with, awards the company or you have won

Key takeaways

With the market becoming increasingly saturated, continuing to refine your outreach strategy is key. Here are some takeaways you can implement right away to gain a competitive edge:

Track the data

To keep improving your outreach sequences you need to know what's working and what isn't. A/B testing and monitoring open, response and interest rates is a great way to keep track.

Hyper-personalize

Amongst the 1.3+ million recruiters out there, it's vital you take the time to personalize your outreach in order to stand out from the crowd and come across as authentic and human. Gone are the days of sending bulk messages.

Multichannel

Different people have different preferences. Don't expect everyone to live on LinkedIn and spread your message across a variety of channels to increase the chances of getting a response. Using data providers to gather contact details is highly recommended.

Multistep

71% of responses come from the follow-up message. A one or two step sequence isn't going to cut it.

One size does NOT fit all

A sequence that works in white collar recruitment isn't necessarily going to be as successful in an executive search. Remember to consistently refresh and refine each sequence depending on your audience.

Persistency and consistency

If you nail the basics and follow the processes day in and day out, the results will follow.

How SourceWhale can help

With a range of amazing features at your fingertips, unlock your full potential and boost candidate and client engagement to accelerate results.

ATS and CRMs integration

We integrate with 50+ CRMs and data tools so everything you do in SourceWhale will automatically update on all your other systems. Bye bye admin!

To-dos

The to-do section keeps track of all of your campaigns in one place and updates on a daily basis so you can stay on top of your follow-ups.

Custom variables, images & GIFs

The custom variables, images and GIF feature allows you to take personalization to the next level. Take it a step further and record your own GIF in the platform - it's a game changer.

Chrome extension

The SourceWhale extension allows you to add candidates/prospects into your campaign from LinkedIn, GitHub and almost 100 more job boards in just a few clicks whilst pulling contact information.

Automation

Our platform removes the manual, tedious parts of a recruiters job and allows your email and SMS steps to be sent out automatically so you don't have to worry about it. This saves users 7+ hours per week.

Reporting

Our reporting section allows users to track individual or team performance so you can effectively track the success of your sequences. The export button allows you to download this report in a matter of seconds so you can share this with leadership or hiring teams.

Content Coach

If you're looking to improve your messaging, our Content Coach scores and analyzes your outreach and offers data-backed recommendations to boost your chances of improving open, reply and interest rates.

WhaleGPT

If you need a helping hand writing your outreach, WhaleGPT is our in-house AI text generation feature that provides relevant content for your campaigns based on industry best practices.

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Unleash your full potential with SourceWhale

If you would like to learn more about how to build winning sequences in our innovative platform, reach out to a member of our pod.

Talk to us

SourceWhale