

Module 11

Testimonials



Exercise / Module 11 / Testimonials

Testimonial: A testimonial is an endorsement from a client, customer, or associate who may or may not be an “unknown” person to the future client or customer, but they have personal experience with the creative’s work, product, or service.

Endorsement: An endorsement is typically a well-known influencer and/or celebrity who is giving their public support for your brand.

How do I Get Testimonials/Endorsements?

There are two primary ways: ask for them or collect them as they are spoken to you/emailed to you/mentioned to you

- 1) Ask: this seems like the hardest way but it is the fastest and most controllable.
- 2) Collect: this seems easiest but only if you are awake and organized enough to take advantage of the verbal generosity.

The Catalyst How to Method:

1st primary way: Asking

1. Ask super fans first. Super fans are your clients, customer, groupies that LOVE everything you do, make, teach. These folks may already have given you references in the past, they are people who don’t mind the request, they really love to help you.

Here’s an example email request you can use:

Hello Sally,

(Personal relatable comments then...)

I’m writing to ask if you wouldn’t mind giving me a short testimonial about (fill in what you need or are looking for them to say) to use for my website (and/or promotional material). I’m updating a few pages (or the whole website), and I’m hoping to add some testimonials of folks who have enjoyed my work/working with me/my class, etc.

Would this be ok with you? I can send you a very short blurb for you to review, or you can write a sentence or two and send it over. Whatever is easiest for you.

Thank you, Sally!

Remember the email needs to be short, sweet, direct and easy for them to respond to.

When they respond, be sure to THANK THEM!!! A personal handwritten note or very personal email reply is best.

2. Next look at your list(s) of clients, customers, students, colleagues, mentors, teachers, celebrities who know and love your work and ask them for testimonials or endorsements to use in your printed materials and website.
3. Social Media: you have probably received positive feedback on the work you are posting on social media, look back through your feeds and see if there is anything you can use as a testimonial. Be sure to contact that person to get permission before using it.

Write of quick list of who you can ask ASAP:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Second Way to get Testimonials: Write it for Them

People are busy, they often don't know how to write a great testimonial but would love to do it if they knew how. So instead of teaching them how, do it for them. Be sure to be very up front and tell them you know their time is limited but it would be great if they could give you a testimonial, you'll call them and they can dictate it over the phone, you'll email them the verbiage and they can sign off on it!

Here's how:

1. Interview them
2. Call them and ask them some questions. Some examples:
 - a. What did you like best about the work?
 - b. What did you like best about the piece of art?
 - c. How does it speak to you?
 - d. What is the secret sauce to us working together?
 - e. How have I helped you?
 - f. What transformation did you get out of it?

Write of quick list of who you can write a testimonial for ASAP:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Third way: Collecting

Testimonials and endorsements can happen everyday, or at least the seeds of them do. You need to be self aware/intentional to spot and collect the seeds as well as full blown versions.

The Catalyst How to Method:

1. Begin by creating a folder on your computer for gathering testimonials.
2. Notice, Collect and Copy the following into your newly created folder:
 - a. Grateful emails
 - b. Grateful text messages
 - c. Social Media love-take a screenshot and put in the file
 - d. Handwritten notes
 - e. In-person gratitude or compliments at a show
3. Once you have noticed the “love” follow up right away via email to get the official testimonial or endorsement. Be sure to remind them of the good words and thank the person for taking the time to write you an “official” testimonial or endorsement.
4. OR if their note or message was just right just email to ask them if you can use their message as a testimonial or endorsement on your website or in your promotional materials.

How to Write a Testimonial

Some tips:

1. **Short is better.** No one wants to read long testimonials, make sure it gets to the point. (tip: if the testimonial is long but has so many great bits too hard to extract, just bold the best parts)
2. **Direct is best.** It’s important to put the best and most impactful part of the testimonial first, often this means editing or ... the quote and cut some of the first part off to help the reader see the important part of the quote first. Try to make sure the testimonials answer or reveal what you need it to reveal to someone who doesn’t know you, your work, your product. (tip: you often have to edit or “help” the person giving you the testimonial, often they could say paragraph’s of great things about you and they have no idea what you are looking for, so tell them what you are looking for!)
3. **Authentic is a must.** Remember that everything you say on your website and promotional materials is marketing and most people understand that. So testimonials have the chance to be more candid and raw. And that’s a good thing! Make sure the tone comes across authentic and disarming and your customers don’t communicate too salesy. Most times this is not a problem!

What's in a Testimonial?

The more info in the testimonial the more credible it is. In an ideal world the testimonial will include:

1. The person's name
2. The person's title
3. Their company (use their logo if you can)
4. Their picture

Dilemma's:

1. They won't let me use their full name, what do I do?

Answer: Anonymize their testimonial. Meaning use their initials and the industry they are in. It may not be ideal but it is much better than nothing! Often times once they see it, they will say, just put my full name-no problem.

Best Testimonial for (most) Websites: Video!

Video testimonials may be the single most powerful piece of content on your website.

Where do I put/use my Testimonials?

Tip: Don't only put them on a testimonials page, website analytics show over and over again that page is the least viewed.

Best places to place testimonials on your website:

1. **Next to the products, or services you are selling.** For example, if you have a testimonial discussing how amazing your watercolor painting is, put it on the page highlighting your watercolors, or perhaps you have an endorsement for your skills as a cinematographer, put the testimonial on the page where you describe your work as a DP.
2. **Put your testimonials on your most popular pages.** Often this means on the home page of your website or the about page. Be sure to put the best testimonials where people will see it.
3. **Testimonials with key phrases or keywords should be put on the page on your site where those words are optimized.** Example: watercolor example above or DP example above.

Other important social proof:

1. Reviews
2. Interviews-written online or in publications
3. Podcasts

Homework / Module 11 / Testimonials

1. Go back over Module 11's exercise, spend time and be sure to complete each part of the work thoroughly.
2. Go back over the lists you created earlier in the course and this time create three new lists:
 - a. People who will give a testimonial themselves
 - b. People who you need to write the testimonial for
 - c. People who have said VERY nice things about you and your work either verbally, through email or on social media
3. Now you have those three lists, it is time to hunt these people down and ask for/write/find the testimonials. Be sure they allow you to use their full name and if they allow a picture of themselves even better! Or they could just talk right into the webcam on the computer and send you the video clip!
4. Write a testimonial for the catalyst course itself. Your testimonial needs to be authentic.
5. Find any testimonials you have from the past and either use them or update them by calling the person and revising.
6. Find a way to endorse or positively comment on AEM and another Catalyst artist's site or in social media this week.
7. Take your weekly time to pray regularly for your career success and for fellow Catalyst members and their success and spend time with the Lord.
8. Catch up on all the work in the course you haven't completed yet.
9. Rejoice in the HUGE progress you made!