Month 3 Agenda: Growing Your Network

Now that you’ve worked on your EFA member profile and your continuing education, a great next step is to begin expanding your network and finding new clients.

Reflection Starters:

1. How many new clients have you gained in the last year?
2. Where did they come from? (Word of mouth, EFA peer, EFA Job List, EFA profile, LinkedIn, friends/family, new contacts from other places?)
3. What would you like to do more of/less of going forward?

1. As freelancers, it’s our job to make ourselves visible in the market, but specifically to be KNOWN and FOUND by our ideal clients. Ask yourself:
   a. Who is YOUR ideal client?
   b. Where do they “shop” for editors?
   c. Where do they hang out? Where can you meet them? (Tip: A great place for editors to meet potential clients is at writing conferences, publishing conferences, local writing groups, book clubs, social organizations, universities, colleges, and writing programs/centers.)
   d. What social media do these potential clients use? And what content would they be interested in? (Think about the content in your social media posts. Is it relevant to them?)
   e. To what extent do you need to educate your ideal clients’ (a.k.a. your target audience) about the services you can offer them (e.g., Do you need to explain your services more specifically, such as what a proofreader or indexer does? Would it be best to describe your niche and experience more broadly? Would they be interested in learning about your editorial processes?)

2. Now that you’ve come up with a list of people, places, and content to focus on, set weekly networking tasks for the next month. For example:
   a. Week 1: Have you connected on LinkedIn with fellow editors and writers you’ve recently met?

[diversitywelcomeprogram@the-efa.org]
Learn more about the EFA’s Diversity, Equity, and Belonging initiative.
b. Week 2: Are you following potential clients on Twitter/Facebook/Instagram/YouTube/blog posts to learn about their business needs/communication style/future goals?

c. Week 3: Consider sending a simple check-in email to past or potential clients to get back on their radar or sending “Thank You” cards to existing clients that you have worked well with in the past. Avoid mass emails or letters. People want to feel special. Check-ins or “circle backs” can be useful tasks to set on your calendar at regular intervals. For example, if you have a good sense of how far ahead your schedule tends to fill up, it can be helpful to reach out with something along the lines of: “I’m now booking clients for XX time period. I wanted to let you know so you can get on my schedule if you have something in the pipeline.”

d. Week 4: What has been the most rewarding experience so far with your networking? How might you continue to create those positive situations in your future? What didn’t work for you? What can you improve? What might be steady habits to help you continue to build up your network?

3. Other ways to network: Consider joining the Diversity, Equity, and Belonging (DEB) group and your local EFA chapter. Remember that the EFA is a volunteer-run organization, so there are many avenues for you to contribute to the organization and work with fellow members. Volunteering is also a great way to get a pulse on the type of work out there and to build relationships that may yield referrals for freelance work in the future.

**Action Items for Month 3:**

- Visit the EFA Member Benefits page to make sure you are taking advantage of all the discounts and freebies available to you as a member of the EFA.

- Grab a copy of the workbook “Networking for Freelance Editors” by EFA members Brittany Dowdle and Linda Ruggeri to establish solid networking goals and stay on track with them in the next year.

- Schedule a date next month to review this agenda and the action items you listed. Set days and times now to complete any tasks that might still be pending.
With this you have completed the Welcome Program! We hope you’ve enjoyed the content and have met other EFA members and editors with whom you can continue to grow. Feel free to follow up with us at diversitywelcomeprogram@the-efa.org with any unanswered questions you may have or general feedback you’d like to provide. We are always happy to hear from new members!

Learn more about the EFA's Diversity, Equity, and Belonging initiative.