

10+ PITCHES THAT WORKED

By Diana Kelly Levey

As a freelance writer, I find it's always helpful to see some examples of how to write a solid pitch, learn more about what should be in the pitch, get tips on how to work the pitch into the email, as well as email subject lines that might make an editor more likely to open them, and research or examples that should be in the pitch.

That's why I'm including a few examples of pitches that got assigned and landed me assignments from editors.

DIANA KELLY LEVEY IS A JOURNALIST, DIGITAL EDITOR, AND MAGAZINE EDITOR WITH OVER 15 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WORKING ON STAFF AND AS A FREELANCER.

DIANAKELLY.COM

FOR EXISTING CLIENT

MEN'S JOURNAL / MEN'S FITNESS ONLINE

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

"I'd be interested in a fitness roundup of the best wool workout gear for winter! Does that work for you?"

FINAL ARTICLE

The Best Wool Workout Gear to
Keep You Dry and Warm

QUICK TIP: WHAT IS "TK"?

"TK" means "to come" and is used in magazine publishing to mean the information will be filled out later. I often use it in pitches as another way of saying # when I don't know how many tips will be in the article.

THE PITCH

Subject Line: Fashion and Health Pitches

Hi [Editor's Name],

I was on a Woolmark press trip a few weeks ago testing out products with outdoor workouts and even doing yoga indoors to see how the products wick. They retained their shape after washing and didn't even smell after using them one day and letting them air out (it was part of the testing the recommended we do.) That's a pretty good perk considering many high-end fitness clothing isn't cheap so if you had to wear them twice in a week, it's NBD.

So I thought the Men's Journal readers might be interested in learning more about why they should look for this fiber as they update their wardrobe this winter. (I've written some fashion pieces for Men's Fitness before:

<https://www.mensjournal.com/style/anatomy-dress-shirt>
<https://www.mensjournal.com/style/your-guide-falls-top-10-accessories/>

Why Wool is Having a Serious Fashion Moment
TK New, Stylish Ways to Wear Wool From Head to Toe
(I see you have this older piece.)

Wool blends (particularly Merino wool, that softer, no-itch/sneezing type) are being incorporated into more high-end fashion lines than ever before. No longer a product you strictly associate with sweaters and socks, wool has made its mark on fashion runways. Companies incorporating wool blends include P.E. Nation for activewear, Adidas, 3.1 Phillip Lim, All Saints, APC, Lululemon, Theory, Olivers, Under Armour, Michael Kors, and many designers in between. I propose a slideshow highlighting shifts, pants, underwear, coats, activewear, sneakers, hats, gloves, etc. that feature wool.

(Woolmark is even teaming up with APL sneakers soon, too!)

FOR EXISTING CLIENT

MEN'S JOURNAL / MEN'S FITNESS ONLINE

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

“Let’s do ‘TK ways to avoid getting fat when you work from home’ as a slideshow, and not limit it to freelancers but anyone who works from home. We’d want to also talk to a trainer who specializes in training clients in their homes to understand some tricks that people use to stay committed to an at-home exercise regimen.”

FINAL ARTICLE

How to Avoid Getting Fat When Working from Home

[I interviewed a nutritionist and personal trainer to provide expert tips for the piece.]

THE PITCH

Subject Line: Pitches for Men’s Fitness online

Hi [Editor’s Name],

I saw you have the article highlighting the gig economy and freelancing for your readers. I thought something like this might be of interest.

How to Avoid Getting a Gut When Working from Home How to Stay Healthy While Working from Home

This piece would help you separate “work life” from “home life” when you work from home all day.

Many new freelancers love living in comfy pants or shorts (or let’s be honest, their underwear) so they don’t notice when extra pounds creep on. If you’re not strapping on pants with a waistband and belt, you might not notice that you’re waist is expanding.

In this piece I’ll cover common weight traps that affect people working from home and how to avoid them.

- It’s easy to nosh all day long and keep hitting up the fridge, especially when you’re by yourself and you’re avoiding doing work you’re supposed to.
- You might forget to eat meals.
- You might tell yourself “I can work out any time I want” and “I’ll do bicep curls when I’m on a break” but it never happens.
- You wind up sitting for a super long time. In an office your day might be broken up by meetings but when you’re by yourself and on a deadline...sitting for a long time is likely. It’s bad for your metabolism and your posture, neck and back pain.

I’ll talk to a guy or two who works from home and explore how they stay healthy. I could also include tips from a nutritionist (many of whom work from home) and link to the “at home workout” content on Men’s.

FOR NEW CLIENT

HAPPIFY

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

“Hi Diana,

Thanks for reaching out! We do work with freelance writers, and I was impressed with your clips. We're always looking for consumer-friendly articles that help our 3 million+ users improve their emotional health and well-being, whether that means dealing with loneliness, improving relationships, boosting self-compassion, sleeping better, or setting meaningful goals, among many other topics. What is your rate?”

THE INTRODUCTION

Subject Line: Intro to experienced content marketing writer and magazine writer

Hi [Editor's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. Congratulations to your team on the first place win in the #ConV2X competition.

I wanted to introduce myself and inquire about whether Happify uses freelance writers. I'm a content marketing writer with an editorial background somewhat similar to yours at magazines and websites, writing for magazines, websites and content marketing clients since 2006. My focus has been on health, weight loss, and wellness but I particularly enjoy reading about and reporting on psychology topics.

My clients include Headspace, Nike, Oribe, Noom, Alex and Ani, Pfizer, Walgreens, Walmart, CVS and more. Additionally, I worked on staff in the publishing industry on staff at *Redbook*, *Weight Watchers*, *Prevention* magazine, and *Muscle & Fitness*. Editorial clients include *Real Simple*, *Reader's Digest*, *Shape*, *SELF*, *Men's Health*, Fox News Health, Everyday Health, Apartment Therapy, Bloomberg Businessweek, TheKnot, and many more print and online publications.

You can see what clients and editors have said about me on my clients page as well as samples of work on my website. I have also included a few relevant clips below.

I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully working with you in the near future.

Best,
Diana Kelly Levey

[INCLUDED RELEVANT CLIPS]

FOR NEW CLIENT

HAPPIFY

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

“Hi Diana,

Great to hear from you and I'm glad to hear things are starting to clear up! We actually use a fair number of CBT exercises in our 4-week sleep track on Happify, and you're right, there's a great deal of research around CBT as an effective way to treat insomnia as well as occasional sleep problems. Let's explore this one further!

We can also promote/link to the track at the end. Would 12/18 work as a deadline?”

FINAL ARTICLE

Could CBT Solve Your Sleep Problems?

THE PITCH

Hi [Editor's Name],

How are you? I hope your holiday season is going well since we last connected. I've finally crawled out of the mountain of boxes in my new home and had time to send some pitches. I'd be happy to flesh these out more if you'd like or come up with more pitches for nutrition and fitness Revive's sections since you're probably beefing those up for January.

Could CBT Solve Your Sleep Problems?

A recent study on inmates found that completing just one-hour of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT-1) session was effective in preventing the development of chronic insomnia in 73 percent of prisoners. After one month of the treatment, the prisoners reported a reduction in anxiety and depressive symptoms.

Granted, you probably don't have the same sleep stressors and life concerns a prisoner faces that may interfere with sleep, but that doesn't mean the average adult should dismiss this therapy. A 2015 had found that a one-hour cognitive behavioral therapy session led to a 60 percent reduction in insomnia symptoms in the general population.

I just finished editing a 100-page magazine on Sleep for a client and found that many sleep experts suggested CBT to help with a number of sleep issues besides insomnia, from helping seniors deal with sleep problems, to sleep apnea, people who have chronic pain and sleep, anxiety, and more.

I'd like to write an article covering how CBT may be the answer to readers' sleep problems and how it can improve their overall mental health.

<http://www.sleepreviewmag.com/2018/11/prisoners-insomnia-cbti/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4248667/>

FOR EXISTING CLIENT

HEADSPACE

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

“Diana, would you be interested in a different spin on this, ‘How to start the year off right ... financially’?”

We’re all set for holiday content, so I think a New Year twist would be a nice way to make this fit.”

FINAL ARTICLE

Are You Afraid To
Check Your Bank Account?
5 Tips To Get It Back On Track

[For the article, I interviewed Rachel Cruze and Kathleen Gurney, Ph.D., founder and CEO of Financial Psychology Corporation.]

THE PITCH

**Subject Line: The Mindful Way to Spend Money
This Holiday Season without Going Broke**

Hey [Editor's Name],

How are you? I saw this piece “mindful money tips” on The Orange Dot and was wondering if you’d be open to a piece for the holidays on how to be a conscious and mindful spender during the holiday season without going broke.

I got a hold of this new book from Rachel Cruze (daughter of personal finance guru Dave Ramsey) “Love Your Life, Not Theirs: 7 Money Habits for Living the Life You Want” and she addresses some issues I think we all can relate to with her real-world advice (including even the most mindful Headspace meditation practitioners) whether it’s comparing ourselves to a friend’s beautiful yoga or meditation retreat photos, another’s love quotes about her “perfect relationship,” over even being slightly jealous of that fancy kitchen a nutritionist we follow makes her perfectly healthy recipes in.

In Cruze’s book, she discusses finding contentment in your life with what you have. And that even when we are “fake” on social media (yes, even adding filters to make our photos look better counts—guilty!), it’s causing our happiness to be more fleeting. I read Cruze’s book and am in contact with her reps as she is doing her book tour now.

As we go into holiday season, I’d like to get Cruze’s take on the “comparison living” aspect that infiltrates our lives (especially through social media) and how that doesn’t make us feel good. It can cause us to spend money we don’t have to keep up with a lifestyle we *think* others have. I’d like include Cruze’s tips to address ways to better plan for holiday spending in a way that lines up with your budget, values, and relationships so you can feel good about how you approach gift giving (and charity giving) in a way that makes you feel good, without having spending regrets in January. We can also cover a few “just in case” items to possibly have on hand for last-minute gifts and what to do if someone spends more on you than you can afford.

Let me know if this is of interest for a November or December piece. (Cruze also has a section on money and relationships that might be a different angle if you’re thinking January content.)

FOR EXISTING CLIENT

DAILYBURN

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

“Hi Diana,

Thanks for all the ideas! I like TK Sleep Myths to Put to Bed and TK Signs You're Seriously Stressed (and What to Do About It) <-- needed a little more of a service angle so I think it's important to tack on something like “and what you can do about it.”

For deadlines, what works for you? Maybe 2/24 and 3/3? Thanks!”

FINAL ARTICLES

Signs You're Way Too Stressed –
and How to Deal

6 Sleep Myths to Put to Bed

THE PITCH

[Before sending this pitch, I reached out to an editor I had worked with before to see if she needed pitches in any certain area. She responded saying they were accepting nutrition, sleep, and stress pitches.]

Subject Line: Spring Pitches

Hi [Editor's Name],

I hope your week is off to a great start. Here are some of my latest ideas. Happy to send over more details if you're interested or work on other ideas you just need writers for.

Thanks for the opportunity to pitch you!
Diana

Daily Burn Pitches for March

[I sent more ideas than this.]

TK Sleep Myths To Put To Bed

There are still a lot of misconceptions around sleep and I'd like to highlight 7-9 of them by interviewing a sleep expert and including the most up-to-date research around these myths. Here are some I'll clear up:

- You can make sleep hours missed on the weekend (or vacation)
- Daytime sleepiness only means you didn't get enough (or quality) sleep last night
- Stay in bed if you wake up in the middle of the night and can't fall back asleep

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/how-sleep-works/myths-and-facts-about-sleep>

TK Signs You're Seriously Stressed

Things like you can't sleep, your hair is falling out, your skin is breaking out, you keep catching colds, etc. I'll talk to experts and back this up with the latest research.

FOR NEW CLIENT

APARTMENT THERAPY REAL ESTATE SECTION

[I previously wrote for their fitness editor at the website, so I was new to this section.]

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

"Hi Diana!

I recognize your byline from when I was at Real Simple :) I would love if you could write all of these for me! They're great pitches! I can give you \$X for each—does that work for you?"

FINAL ARTICLES

8 Hidden Costs to Think About After the Closing Date

Most People Don't Put Down 20% — But Should You?

The 8 People You Need When Buying a Home

THE PITCH

Hi [Editor's Name],

Nice to e-meet you. I know [The other editor who introduced us via email] from our Prevention magazine days, and then I wrote for her at RealSimple.com before penning a few fitness pieces for ApartmentTherapy.com and nutrition pieces for TheKitchn.com

I mentioned to that editor that my husband and I are buying our first home (fingers crossed) and it's been interesting to be thrust into a topic I didn't know a ton about...so I had a lot of first-time homebuyer questions that I thought articles could answer. Some quick ideas I had for articles:

TK Reasons You Shouldn't Clean Out Your Bank Account at the Closing Table

This article will address those expenses buyers don't think about when they're buying a new home, particularly for first-time home buyers: furniture, appliances, hiring contractors to fix those little things the inspector told you about, outdoor furniture/grills, snowblowers, curtains (window treatments are so expensive), landscaping, and more.

How to Form Your Real Estate Team

This article will cover who you're going to need in your corner when you're buying your home (realtor, broker/bank, inspector, termite inspector/contractor, lawyer, potential contractors to help with fixes, movers, painters, etc.). So much of this industry is based on referrals, but this article will help buyers weed through duds in order to create your home-buying dream team. (What to look for in a professional other than a family member's referral).

How to Decide the Right Down Payment for Your Life

You've heard that 20% down payment is the ideal number (so you can avoid PMI), but first-time home buyers without a lot of extra cash might want to take advantage of certain loans available, determine whether it's worth it to break into their IRAs to withdraw some money without incurring all of the taxes (if they pay it back), whether you should put down 5, 10, 15 or 20 percent. (Reasons not to might involve keeping a strong savings to tackle student loan debt, car loans, if you're going to leave your job to stay home with kids, TK.)

FOR EXISTING CLIENT

READER'S DIGEST ONLINE

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

"Hi Diana,

Thanks for these ideas! We like the idea 'Unexpected Professions' but prefer the hed 'TK Jobs That Could Make You a Millionaire Before You Retire.' In the intro, we can emphasize that wealth is a possibility with several professions, but these are the ones that are more likely to put you on that path. Does that work? Let me know a deadline that works for you."

FINAL ARTICLE

14 Careers That Could Make You a Millionaire Before You Retire

THE PITCH

Subject Line: The TK Habits to Start This Year if You Want to Be a Millionaire

Hi [Editor's Name],

I hope the end of 2018 has been going well for you. Thank you for keeping me on the pitching emails. I enjoy reading about the latest themes for RD.com.

I had an opportunity to get a galley copy of this book by Chris Hogan 'Everyday Millionaires' ahead of its Jan. 7 pub date and really enjoyed reading the practices and habits associated with net worth millionaires (what you own minus what you owe, not earning \$1 million). I thought it might be a great topic for a gallery on RD.com since "saving money" is ranked higher than "losing weight or getting in shape" as a new year's resolution according to stats.

Here are some ideas that could make for an informative slideshow for RD's Saving Money section of Advice:

TK Millionaire Myths to Stop Believing

(In the book, Hogan shares data like "only 31 percent of the **10,000 millionaires** they surveyed made over \$100,000 over the course of their career; and that wealthy people all inherited their money, or that they take huge investment risks)

TK Unexpected Professions That Could Make You a Millionaire...

If you spend wisely, invest, and budget properly. Some of the many stories throughout this book feature real people who are millionaires, many were farmers, some were teachers, military families, engineers, human resources workers, and many blue collar workers. I could highlight snippets from the book (or an interview with Hogan) about how people in these professions became millionaires.

Thank you for your consideration! Looking forward to working together in 2019! Happy holidays!

Diana

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL
FOR A CONTENT
MARKETING CLIENT

FOR A DOG FOOD COMPANY

WHAT HAPPENED

We emailed a few times and I did a ghostwriting marketing piece for a VP at the company.

THE INTRODUCTION

Subject Line: Introduction to Experienced Pet Health Writer

Hello [Content Marketing Editor's Name],

I hope this email finds you well.

I recently picked up some food for my adopted Lab, Jackson, at Petsmart and am excited to have him try your brand once he's done with his current brand of dog food.

I was wondering, does Merrick use freelance writers?

I am a freelance health and pet health content marketing writer specializing in dog wellness, grooming, caring for and the benefits of pet ownership.

My clients include Headspace, Nike, Beachbody, Pfizer, Walgreens, Walmart, CVS, and more. Additionally, I worked in the publishing industry on staff at *Redbook*, *Weight Watchers*, *Prevention* magazine, and *Muscle & Fitness Hers* for 11 years. Editorial clients include *Real Simple*, *Men's Journal*, *Men's Health*, Fox News Health, Apartment Therapy, TheKnot, DoctorOz.com, and many more print and online publications.

You can see what clients and editors have said about me on my clients page as well as samples of work on my website. I have also included a few relevant clips below.

I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully working with you in the near future.

Warmest,
Diana Kelly Levey

[INCLUDED RELEVANT CLIPS]

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL
FOR A CONTENT
MARKETING CLIENT

FOR A
BEDDING
CLIENT

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

“Hi Diana,

Thanks for following up—I apologize for missing your email earlier! We haven’t been able to update our blog as much as we’d like, so taking on a freelance writer is something we’d consider.

Could you provide me with your rates? Thanks, and I look forward to hearing back.”

FINAL ARTICLE

How to Transform Your
Bedding for Summer

THE INTRODUCTION

**Subject Line: Experienced Sleep Content
Marketing Writer**

Hello [Content Marketing Editor’s Name],

Does your company use freelance writers?

I’m a freelance sleep and health content marketing writer specializing in sleep products, sleep technology, as well as all aspects of sleep and health intersections.

My clients include Sleep Cycle, SleepNumber, Parachute Home, Philips, Beachbody, Walmart, Walgreens, CVS, and more. Additionally, I worked in the publishing industry on staff at Redbook, Weight Watchers, Preventionmagazine, and Muscle & Fitness for 11 years.

You can see what clients and editors have said about me on my clients page as well as samples of work on my website. I have also included a few relevant clips below.

I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully working with you in the near future.

Warmest,
Diana Kelly Levey

[INCLUDED RELEVANT CLIPS]

WHAT HAPPENED

We stayed in touch over the course of a year, I’d follow up and check in every four months or so and they eventually got their marketing budget approved. I had a phone call with the editor and wrote two pieces for them spring 2019.

Oftentimes, with content marketing clients, I’ll find that they have the ideas for the stories already and are looking for solid writers.