

# ACQUIRING

## MODULE 4: ACQUIRING & FOLLOW-UP

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So what you'll need when you start, when you actually sit down to do your sessions: your VO marketing time checklist, which I'll show when we get done with our slideshow here. Just to start, you know, set your goals. What type of emails are you sending? What are you hoping that they'll do? Or actually, what are you gonna do in that marketing time? Because you're not, the first thing you do isn't gonna send an email. First, you have to research, you know. And you're gonna set goals. You're gonna find the people, you're gonna research the people. And then the last thing, you have to write the emails, then you send them.

You could separate it out into four different chunks. Today I'm doing this thing. Tomorrow, this, and do it and that flow. And the more you do it, the faster it gets because you start to figure out what works for you, and what you like as far as sending emails. So, as far as what your (preference is), in your own personal templates. So, you'll need that checklist, your contacts that we've been talking about how to get.

As the main cover letter, I put that in parenthesis, that is a totally personal decision on whether or not you wanna do that. Sometimes I like to do that just to go above and beyond, just as another differentiator. And especially if I'm sending to a really corporate type of company or to an HR department, I'll include those things, just because that's, you know, in HR, they're used to seeing those things. And I know that most voice actors probably aren't sending them. So even if they're not looking at them

and evaluating them, it's another one of those, *oh, she went to that effort*. So, we'll talk a little bit about resumes and cover letters. Just know that you don't need to have those things.

You'll need your rates, or be prepared with these things - your demo - which we'll talk about here in a little bit, knowing what your availability is and being realistic about that. And then the terms of service that we talked about earlier with the service standards sheet that we used.

All right. So you've got all these things together. Now, what? Okay. We're gonna do the work. So, to actually do it, you open your email provider. You compose a new message. You copy and paste the address of the person that you identified as the key contact. You copy and paste your form introductory letter into the email and you personalize it.

If you're using a CRM that does a lot of these for you, it doesn't have to be as, you know, you open your provider, you copy-paste. Some of those things can be kind of automated within your CRM. If the contact company specified a submission method, be sure you adhere to it 100%. So, if you know a lot of what we are doing because we're not necessarily sending to agencies, they're not gonna say, *if you want to be a voice actor for our company, make sure you fill out this form and then send it to me directly*.

Most of them aren't going to say it, but if you do find one that says specifically, this is how you get in contact with us to get on our roster, just make sure you follow that. If not, use your best judgment on whether to, depending on what the purpose of your E-

mail is, whether you want that you're sending your demo along with it, or just included in your email signature.

All right. Any questions about anything we've covered so far?

Participant: So can you say that again, Carrie? You need to attach your demo or you said put it in the?

Carrie: So, I wouldn't, yeah, I wouldn't attach it. I would include a way to stream it. So there should be a way from your website that you can link. Some people will send a streaming link from something like SoundCloud. The reason I don't necessarily recommend that is because once they get on SoundCloud, like sending people to YouTube or Facebook, or even LinkedIn, it has that thing on the right that says, other similar people. You don't want people looking at people other than you.

And on SoundCloud linked to your streaming demo, there's going to be other people that are, that show up similar. So I recommend if you're sending them, send them to your website and it should be an easy way for them to stream it.

All right. And then just a quick look at a potential resume. This is a very simple and stripped-down resume. I don't use this current format anymore, but the format isn't especially important. It's more just having it here. I like using Canva, which has really nice template for resumes.

So you want to have a resume in your back pocket, just in case you can go to Canva and use those templates to fill in the blanks and your education. You're gonna mostly put relevant things. So your, who you coached, your areas of study, you know, if you

have a degree that's relevant, like maybe if you are applying to a K through 12 education company and you have a degree in education, now that might be something that you include and send off with your profile. You can include examples of different types of voiceover that you've performed for different E-Learning companies - if it's with E-Learning development tools and like Lectora and Storyline.

So if you happen to have downloaded the demos for those things and played around with them, you can say you have some familiarity with those things, or even with the general jargon, related those things. Obviously, you're gonna say you have a prepared home studio, different accents, your different age ranges, your audio editing experience, and then your software.

And then, under work experience, if you want to include specific examples of work that you've done, you can do that as well.

Let's talk about your demo. So there's less of a standard for E-Learning demos than there are for other types of demos, like commercial and promo. If you're getting promo demos made, you will hear very specific, hard numbers like, it shouldn't be over a minute or you be over a minute 20 - pretty much down to a minute for a commercial demo.

You wanna have, you know, between seven spots. For promo, there's a pre-approved format for what a promo demo looks and sounds like. For E-Learning, the same concept as with a commercial in the sense of you want to show your range. And one thing that is pretty common in E-Learning demos is that it's hard for me to differentiate the types of reads that are on it.

So maybe you have one basic way that you read E-learning and you're just reading different scripts, basically the same way. So one way to get around that is to make sure you're diversifying the types of read that you are putting on your demo because if a bunch of HR benefits, types of reads, or scripts, the reads are probably gonna come out sounding pretty similar. So you can have story-based E-Learning. You can have really funny E-Learning, things that are really casual. And then you can have the really formal also. And if you know where your pocket is, we talked about where that type of read that really is where you're comfortable doing, you're going to lead with that because that's the thing that's going to be your connection point. That is gonna make you stand and draw them to you and hopefully you to them.

So, you'll start with that strong read and you don't want it to be too obscure. It should be pretty standard read that these are going to say, oh yes. like we, you know, you don't wanna make it your pirate read or whatever unless you're targeting something specific. So, if there is a legitimate reason for you to have something kind of obscure on the front, then you can do that.

Otherwise, you want it to be a nice, you know, warm, nurturing, read really well. Lead with that. If you do the corporate read really well, then, start with that. And if you do the more conversational, casual - *Hi, how are you? I'm gonna train you for this mid-level position read really well* - then you'll start with that. And to put different variations of reads in there and not just reads, similar to commercial but different industries.

Something else to think about is that there are different E-Learning. So there's E-Learning that is targeted toward employees who are working at a company - so these are people who they have training.

If you download an app on your phone - maybe it's a banking app - they might have a series of E-Learning modules that you can take as an end user to learn how to use your app. And so this isn't stuff that you're being forced to take. This is consumer stuff. And so that's gonna have a different feel.

And so you can do one that's like mandatory compliance training. Do something that's more, *this is how to use this app*. It might even be something, if you're into video games, this is how to install your - oh gosh, I don't game - your Xbox, or whatever. This is how to plug in your control. I don't know, but so just from different industries and thinking about it from different perspectives, you know. If there's a software program that you need to learn - how to install - is there a training module that accompanies that? And so you're gonna have different industries, different audiences, and then also different tones or purposes.

So this is to inform, but also to you know, it's also gamified. So there are some rewards, you're gonna follow this path and along the way, you're going to pick up points for your passport. Each time you answer a quiz correctly, you'll pick up these points in your passport. And at the end of the lesson, you have to have at least eight of the 10 points on your passport, whatever it is.

They're gonna have different types of different purposes for those reads as well. So you want it to be diversified and that's going to help you not have the same one-note read over and over for your demo. Now, as far as how long it is, you can, I mean, for an E-Learning demo, you could have it anywhere in a minute and two minutes. Probably keeping it around a minute and a half is gonna be good. I don't remember what the latest statistics are. Even with listening to auditions, I've heard that a lot of times they'll

listen to the first five seconds of an audition. So you wanna start with it strong and don't definitely leave your best read to the end because they might not get there.

The better that they like what they're hearing, the more likely they are to keep listening. But, you do want it to, you know, the thing about demos is it's both an art and a science. So the science part is, if it lags, the read's amazing. If you have really long transition points between reads, it's gonna be hard for whoever's listening to keep their attention, to keep them engaged in it.

So you wanna have nice transitions between spots? Keep it moving, and it should feel like they're being taken on a journey. It shouldn't just be spot. It should be an intentional flow so that they're feeling, so that it's a natural transition to the spot. If that sounds really, *oh my gosh, I have no idea how to even think about what does it mean for things to flow from spot to spot*, that you wanna make sure that you're working with a demo producer or at least getting some input from someone that so they can help you as you're creating your E-Learning demo.

I have done E-Learning or I've seen and appreciated E-Learning demos that both have music and don't have music. The thing about E-Learning is that most of the E-learning work, as far as I know, doesn't have any music accompanied when it's final form. So commercials, they're gonna have music. They're gonna have sound effects.

Most of the time, it's, you know, people sitting in front of a screen and they're just listening to my narration, your narration. So, I will sometimes alternate music on every other spot because that's what it's going to sound like. The music helps to carry it forward, but the dry ones that's what it's gonna sound like.

Now this will really overproduce, not overproduce, but really produce E-Learning demos and have music on every single piece. And I think that's fine to do because that does serve the purpose of having it carry them through a little bit more. So it's totally fine to add music. It's also fine if you want to have one spot without it or what, you know, every other spot without. Even some people in commercial demos will have something just as a change of pace. Here's something with no music and it just helps to keep things different.

Any questions on all of that information I just threw at you about demos?

Participant: Carrie, I know that you've answered this question before, but where do we get scripts from?

Carrie: For practice, there are different places to go. You can go to [edgestudio.com/scriptlibrary](http://edgestudio.com/scriptlibrary). They have practice scripts there. I believe voices.com still has their script library, voice actor websites have a script library.

So those are places you can go for practice scripts. For scripts that you're going to actually put on your demo, those are, I mean, a lot of it's gonna be manuals you have around the house. If you actually go to Amazon and, you know, the support side and say, how do I do such and such? And it'll have a list of how to do it.

That's E-Learning and basically, just becomes the narration for that. And you're gonna change because you don't wanna, you know, take directly from a website, but you'll change it some for that. I think about what are the products and brands that you love. What do you have right in front of you?



And then, chances are you could create something for those things because you use them regularly. And if not, or if you just want some help with that, go to their website. You can find stuff just in the Google blurb when you type in a product and, that's enough to get you started. Another tip for creating your own scripts is if you do have something from a manual that you want to put into an E-Learning, just add something like *click next to continue* or *welcome to the course on da dah dah dah*, or ask double choice question after you read the script. And that takes it from just an informative explainer to all of a sudden it's E-Learning because of interactive elements,

Anything else on demos?

Participant: Carrie, have you had success with doing demos yourself or have you always gone through a demo producer?

Carrie: With E-Learning, I have had success doing them myself. And so that's something that you have to assess as far as, you know, being honest with yourself about what your technical ability is with audio. You don't feel confident, then that's something you definitely want to outsource because you don't wanna risk it.

The alternative would be, *study up and learn how to do it*. But I know most of us want to focus our inner chair where, you know, kind of stay in our lane in that sense and get the person who knows how to do the demo to help you with that. And you know, stick to voiceover, but if you do have a decent proficiency with audio, I would say E-Learning demos are the most simple ones to make because they don't have to have a lot of that production value. They don't have to have, well, they still need production value, but not complex production value. They don't need sound effects. And, it's just your dry

voice. That said, if you do know how to use effects and you want to make it flashier, you can do that.

You can make an E-Learning demo sound more commercial. I like it somewhere in the middle. I don't like them to be overproduced to the point where they sound like a big flashy commercial demo, but it is nice when it's high quality enough that it cuts through the crowd.

So, for example, don't have one with no music at all. Don't make it just completely dry because then it just feels like you didn't put as much effort in. If the client's listening to multiple demos and they hear yours and it's just completely dry, you know. Have a little bit of music to help it carry through.

I make my own E-Learning demos.

Anything else on demos?

All right, Carol. You may.

Participant: I'm sorry, You said how many pieces should you have on there? You said one to two minutes long. And what about five, four or five different samples or different things?

Carrie: Yes. Yeah, so, I mean, probably between around seven would be the most and it can be of varying lengths. So you could have one, you could do a little bit longer samples with E-Learning. But still, don't have it be longer just for the sake of being longer. Because again, we are competing with attention spans. So, lengthwise, if you can get it, if you can include all of the types of reads that you want, that you feel like

are gonna help the client to know how you can help them and make it in the length of about a commercial demo, then do that.

If you feel like you have to have it a little bit longer to fully flesh out what you can offer, maybe have different accents that you can do, or maybe you have a really technical read that you want to include towards the end, then you can have your, you can have them be a little bit longer.