

# Keeping it REAL

## Strategic Marketing Direction

### For novices of all levels

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[MarketingBuddha.com](http://MarketingBuddha.com)

#### How to deal with rejection letters from magazine editors or potential writing clients?

##### **PROBLEM:**

I follow writers' guidelines before submitting queries and instead of getting published or offered an assignment I receive a rejection letter.

##### **Short answer:**

Rejections should be expected. Editorial decisions depend on timing, topic uniqueness, whether or not your query painted a clear picture, whether you selected the best market for your story in the first place and if the editor ever received your query submission.

##### **Step-by-step strategies:**

In the freelance writing business "no" is synonymous to "not now". The rejection you received 24 hours ago could be a cover story next week. Use your time to revamp your query for another writing assignment.

**Use rejections to present a better alternative.** Send another query within 48 hours of your rejection letter. Start with a thank you and jump to a magnetic lead. Try an anecdote that involves a confession or secret. You're aiming for a human connection that extends beyond the editor to her audience so give your query emotion. Reveal that you not only know your editor's audience, but that you also know how to talk to them.

**Use rejections to clarify your intent.** It's your responsibility to anticipate an editor's needs. Ask what you could have included to make your query more persuasive. Quotes, statistics, survey results, your qualifications and expertise let an editor know you're capable of gathering facts and that you pay attention to detail. If your query came up short on clarity, go back and fill in the gaps.

**Use rejections to explore other markets.** If you are passionate that a particular topic has merit, then pursue other writing markets. Search for local, regional and international markets at <http://mondotimes.com/> and <http://www.allyoucanread.com/Default.asp>.

**Use rejections to improve a skill.** Loose translation—take responsibility for your learning curve. If you've asked for personal feedback and receive it, evaluate that input and make necessary improvements. Then, go back to the editor with

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a submission that incorporates her suggestions. Your ability to take constructive criticism and apply it productively demonstrates your flexibility and how easy you are to work with.

**Use rejections to get referrals.** If a particular submission or project proposal is declined, use the rejection to create touch points with other editors. Simply ask the editor who she knows that might benefit from your expertise—it could be someone across the hall or in the next cubicle! Once you get contact information, follow up immediately. Name your source to establish a faster rapport.

*This content was written by freelance writer, Sonya Carmichael Jones. You have her explicit permission to share or publish it as long as it is published in entirety and the author's resource box is left intact. More info about the author at [MarketingBuddha.com](http://MarketingBuddha.com).*