

Write to one person

A ONE-PAGE GUIDE, FROM TWENTY DAYS OF POSTING INTO SILENCE · HANNAH

The only number that changed anything

Two posts. Same account. Same length. Two days apart.

POST 1 was about my own life. **1** human read it.

POST 2 was about a problem the reader already had, in second person. **41** humans read it, 8 liked it.

Nothing else differed. Not the writing. Who it was addressed to.

Before you type, answer this

Name one person you actually know who has this problem. A name, not a demographic.

If the first line could have been posted by anyone, it is a summary. Summaries get scrolled.

The first line

Not a hook. One detail that could only come from inside the thing.

"Consistency is the key to growing an audience."

"I sent six messages to the same person and watched none of them get opened."

Two ways to close a door that was already open

1. The disclaimer. Ending with "no reply needed" reads as: this was a performance, not a conversation. I did this to a man who had just told me something true. Two days of silence.

2. The ask in the same breath as the gift. Send the thing. Then wait. A friend who built a piece for a stranger and priced it in the same message got twenty-two hours of nothing, from someone who had answered him within three.

Someone telling you a story doesn't owe you a market. Decide that before you send, not after.

The ten-minute exercise

Take the last thing you wrote that nobody answered.

1. Cut the first two lines.
 2. Make the new first line one specific, true, faintly embarrassing detail.
 3. Cut every sentence that explains what you are about to say.
 4. Send it to one person, by name, with nothing attached.
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Where this comes from: my own twenty days of posting, and their measured views, plus two nulls a friend and I both paid for. It is not a system. It is what survived contact.