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Assignment:

As part of the certification process for becoming a Certified Conversion Copywriter with CopyHackers, I was required to analyze an autoresponder series for someone with a huge following and list. You can see how I approached it, the original version and how I improved upon it, and the reasons I did what I did. There was not an attempt at segmentation and this sequence could be much longer, but the first 5 – as the most important – were the focus on the analysis.

5 emails received

Email #1: 0 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: [James Clear] Confirmation Required

Hi, it's James Clear. I see that you just entered your email address on JamesClear.com

Please click the link below to confirm your subscription to the free weekly newsletter:

[Confirm subscription](#)

If you don't want to subscribe, please ignore this email.

Talk soon,

James Clear

(Note: Thank you page after confirmation: <http://jamesclear.com/confirmed?>)

Critique of Email #1

What I expected to get: I was expecting to have to confirm my email.

What I got: A prompt to confirm my email.

What's working: Simple, to the point, emphasis on one action. Writing the "from field" to be from James Clear makes it personal.

What could be optimized: I would make a slight change to the subject line to make it more urgent and specific. Then I would be a bit lighter (thank them) and more specific about what they are going to get. For example, I signed up from the home page so I'm not just expecting the newsletter but also the Transform Your Habits ebook. I want that confirmed for me when I get this email. I also want to tell them what they need to do to get it, and how they can opt-out.

Email #2: 0 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: Welcome! Here are your free guides...

Welcome! I'm James Clear.

Thanks for signing up for my popular email newsletter!

As soon as you passed your email address along, I delivered a generous fist pump and called for an immediate celebration dinner. The menu was up to me, so naturally I prepared a glorious "brinner" and ate all the breakfast foods I could find.

Yes, it's true. I'm excited to have you here. Because this is our first proper meeting, I have three things to tell you (and some free gifts for you).

Thing #1: What to Expect

You'll be hearing from me every Monday. Each week, I write about behavioral psychology, habit formation, and performance improvement. My goal is to share science-based ideas that will help you live the optimal life you want.

These emails are read by hundreds of thousands of people each week including the managers of professional sports teams, CEOs of major corporations, Olympic athletes, best-selling authors, Grammy Award winning musicians, and more. ([Here's proof.](#))

I hope that you'll find my work to be true, useful, and clear.

Thing #2: What's Coming Next

The first 5 emails you will receive are going to "show you around the place."

I'm going to give you a taste of all the resources available to you on

JamesClear.com. We'll go through [my articles](#), [my reading list](#), [my seminars](#),

and more.

Pay close attention to these first 5 emails so that you know where to go on

JamesClear.com to get the information that is most useful to you.

Thing #3: Free Downloads

Finally, as a member of our community you get access to my popular guides.

You can download them at the links below.

- Transform Your Habits: [Download PDF](#)
- Mastering Creativity: [Download PDF](#)

Thanks for reading! I'll have the next email coming your way soon.

James

Critique of Email #2

What I expected to get: My free guides.

What I got: The free guides, though further down the page than I wanted, plus more things to do.

What's working: The structure and organization.

What could be optimized: The email is very impersonal. The intro with the big headline is generic. He only asks for email in his optin form so he can't personalize it here, but I would recommend he change his forms to include a first name. There is just no sense that he's talking to me and that giant headline makes me feel like I'm being yelled at. "Welcome" feels stale and boring.

After the headline he thanks the reader for signing up to get his "popular" newsletter. I'd be inclined to insert a testimonial instead of calling it out like that. It sounds unnecessarily self-serving.

The rest of the copy in the email feels very intense and formal. James is a formal guy, but I don't feel connected. It seems like there was an attempt to make it light in the first full paragraph when he talks about the celebration dinner, but it feels forced and not genuine. And it's not congruent with the rest of the copy, which is very formal and dry. As I am reading I get the feeling that I'm about to enter a "contract" and that feels heavy and unsettling.

Thing #1, thing #2 work. However, I think the way he does it makes it seem like this is going to be a lot of work. For example, I need 5 emails of information in order to get my bearings on

JamesClear.com? Wow! That's a lot. I feel behind already. I also think there's a missed opportunity in this email to make one of the "things" a question that will prompt an eager response from the reader. Doing that will make the reader feel like they matter a little, which I don't think they would feel at this point. Inviting a response can go a long way to establishing a relationship and letting the reader know James is in this for them. It also begins to train the reader that this is a relationship. James is not just going to be "blasting" them and asking that they take it. There is an effort to connect and with the amount of noise in email these days, doing that successfully can set you apart in a significant way.

The sign off is "I'll have the next email off to you soon." Since I know I am getting 5 -- because I need to be brought up to speed -- again it feels like it's going to require work and I'm not looking forward to this. Rather, I want to know what awesomeness awaits me in the next one. I would end with that.

Email #3: 3 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: The Beginner's Guide to JamesClear.com

The Beginner's Guide to JamesClear.com

by James Clear

You recently signed up to my free email newsletter. Thanks again! Today I'm going to show you around [JamesClear.com](https://jamesclear.com) so that you can easily find the information you need to get the results you want.

The first thing you need to know is that although my work covers a broad range of topics like psychology, productivity, and health, the central thread that ties it all together is building better habits. You can think of me as a habit scientist who is trying to answer the question, "How can we live better?"

The second thing you need to know is that there are three places where you can get this information.

1. **[My articles](#)** - This is the bread and butter of the website. In my weekly emails, I share lessons I learn through my reading and research on behavioral psychology, habit formation, and performance improvement. I also publish a series of personal reports each year like my [Integrity Reports](#) and my [Annual Review](#).
2. **[My reading list](#)** - My reading list shares over 100 good books to read on a wide range of subjects. This is a great place to go if want to know what other experts think about the topics I write about or if you're simply looking for interesting reading suggestions.
3. **[My seminars](#)** - A few times per year, I will run a live online seminar for my readers. Each seminar covers a different aspect of behavioral psychology, building better habits, and improving performance. You can learn about upcoming seminars and purchase recordings of my best-selling classes [on this page](#).

Check out those links and spend a little time on JamesClear.com. There are hundreds of articles and dozens of resources for your use. I'm confident that you'll find something helpful and interesting.

Critique of Email #3

What I expected to get: A guide for navigating his website.

What I got: A guide for navigating his website.

What's working: The organization and structure. It's easy to skim and see the points he thinks are important.

What could be optimized: Immediately I am put off by "The Beginner's Guide". I don't want to be called out as a beginner and if there is an advanced status (is there an advanced status?), I want that. Actually, I don't want that either. I don't want a guide to his site. At no time over the

past 3 days did I say to myself, “If only I had a guide to James’s site.” Here’s why: 1) If I really wanted to know what was up with James, I have probably done a bunch of digging already. These days I’m not just going to give away my email unless I’ve been convinced that doing so will make my life better. So, I probably dug around a bit before I even hit the submit button in the opt-in form 3 days ago. 2) Even if I did not dig around before giving my email, I’d like to think that I’m smart and capable enough to navigate a website. You have to be very careful when you call something a “beginner’s” such and such. It is - for better or for worse - something that creates a you vs me relationship. And in this case, being a beginner to someone’s site is a little bit absurd and you are potentially sacrificing a lot of good will by choosing that word. Perhaps even changing the language to “Would you like a tour”. Or grab your wine, we’re going on a walk. Something more inviting and less dividing.

This email is very James focused and I’m not that interested in reading it. It’s a “Look at what I do, all of the books I’ve read, and events I run” email. These facts are not interesting or useful to me in this moment and I feel like I have to do something else that takes more energy to get value when what I really want is value in the email I’m already reading. A better way to do it would be to mention that he writes articles, reads a lot, and hosts events but then give the reader some specific starting points. This can give them another glimpse into James’ work and that will hopefully be interesting to the reader. Interesting enough that they will click on the links.

Again, this email feels like work and I’m wondering where the payoff is.

Also, it’s weird that it has the headline followed by “by James Clear.” It’s like a book or a blog post. It has not been formatted as an email, which contributes to the lack of connection. It feels like a “blast”. And it’s like he’s talking to himself in the 3rd person. He’s not writing to me personally, which I want in an email.

Email #4: 7 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: My Recommended Reading List: Over 100 Good Books to Read, Organized by Topic

My Recommended Reading List: Over 100 Good Books to Read

by James Clear | [Browse the reading list on JamesClear.com](https://www.jamesclear.com)

Today I'm going to share the best books I have read with you. My hope is that this reading list will help you develop broad and useful skills in the areas that matter most to you.

You'll find more than 100 good books to read, organized by category. You can jump to a specific category by clicking the links below.

I. Start Here

1. [10 Best Nonfiction Books](#)
2. [10 Best Fiction Books](#)
3. [25 Best-Selling Books of All-Time](#)

II. Best Nonfiction Books

1. [Best Biographies and Memoirs](#)
2. [Best Business Books](#)
3. [Best Creativity Books](#)
4. [Best Fitness Books](#)
5. [Best Leadership Books](#)
6. [Best Philosophy Books](#)
7. [Best Psychology Books](#)
8. [Best Science Books](#)
9. [Best Self-Help Books](#)
10. [Best Writing Books](#)

III. Best Fiction Books

1. [Best Novels of All-Time](#)
2. [Best Fantasy Books](#)

3. [Best Science Fiction Books](#)

IV. How to Read More Books

I use a simple process to read a lot of books. If you're interested in reading books more consistently, you may find it useful. I explain my whole approach in this article: [The Simple System I'm Using to Read 30+ Books Per Year](#).

V. How to Get Free Audiobooks

I love audiobooks. We all spend time each week performing repetitive tasks such as commuting to and from work, cleaning the house, cooking dinner, and so on. Listening to audiobooks is a great way to make this time instantly more productive and useful.

Right now, if you start a 30-day free trial with Audible, you can get your first 2 audiobooks free. Audible is a great service, but here's the best part: You get to keep the 2 audiobooks, even if you cancel the trial. It's a no-brainer. You can [sign up here](#).

VI. Share This Reading List

Find this list useful? This is a public reading list. You are welcome to share these book recommendations with friends and family using the links below.

[Share this reading list on Facebook](#) | [Share on Twitter](#) | [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Or, simply copy and paste this link anywhere:

<http://jamesclear.com/best-books>

Critique of Email #4

What I expected to get: A list of 100 of James' favorite books.

What I got: A list of 100 of James' favorite books.

What's working: There is a message match and the email is laid out well and easy to read/skim.

What could be optimized: I'm not inspired or excited to dive in. What I want as a reader is to be engaged, perhaps pulled in to what reading has meant to James, or in some way inspired and excited to keep reading. Maybe a story about the first book that had an impact on his life. And why the heck he wants to share these 100 books with me.

His subscribers are readers. He attracts a group of well-read people who want to learn and grow and read even more. But they have also seen enough lists of books to last a lifetime. Tell them in the email why his list is better, what will get to happen for them when they read such and such, or what happened for him. I'm not saying to myself, "Wouldn't it be fun to go read (or even sift through) all of these." There is just this really long list of links of something I need to "get through". Rather I might be more drawn in if he were to say, "Here are my favorite 100 books. Here's why. Which ones of yours are on the list?" Then ask them to reply and tell them which book is their fave and why. This will continue to build the relationship, give James some great info for another post (or 3 or 4), create some more interest around the list, and give his readers a reason to engage and share it.

Also, same as email #3, it's weird that it says "by James Clear." It creates a disconnection.

Email #5: 11 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: High-Performance Seminars: Multiply Your Mental and Physical Performance by 10x

High-Performance Seminars: Multiply Your Mental and Physical Performance by 10x

by James Clear | [Browse these seminars on JamesClear.com](https://www.jamesclear.com)

I have created multiple classes that teach practical ways to optimize your life and build better habits. I refer to these classes as "High-Performance Seminars" and I'm going to tell you more about them in this email.

As a writer and researcher, my goal is to provide you with a complete view of what it takes to build better habits and improve your performance. I study successful people across a wide range of disciplines (artists, athletes, scientists, philosophers, and more) to discover the habits and routines that make these people the best at what they do.

I take the lessons I learn from studying top performers and combine them with my own experiments and research on behavioral psychology to develop strategies for higher performance. I don't believe that there is one "best way" to do things. I prefer to develop a diversity of knowledge rather than relying on one or two principles.

Every 3 months, I distill the lessons I've learned into a 90-minute seminar that dives deeper into a specific area of habits and performance improvement. You can learn about some of my best-selling classes below.

The Habits Seminar: Build Habits That Stick

The Habits Seminar is my best-selling class on how to build small habits that actually stick. You will learn the science and psychology of why some habits stick while others fail. Most important, you'll learn what to do about it.

[Click here to learn more about The Habits Seminar.](#)

The Procrastination Seminar: Shave 10 Hours Off Your Workweek

The Procrastination Seminar is my class on how to beat procrastination and get started. You'll learn how to shave wasted hours off your workweek, finish what you set out to do, and create more time for your health, relationships, and life.

[Click here to learn more about The Procrastination Seminar.](#)

The Willpower Seminar: Master the Secrets of Self-Control

The Willpower Seminar is my popular class on how to master the secrets of self-control and stick with your goals. You will learn what makes the difference between those who display willpower on a consistent basis and than those who don't.

[Click here to learn more about The Willpower Seminar.](#)

Make Someone Else Better Too

Know a friend or teammate who could benefit from these high-performance seminars? Use the links below to share with them.

[Share on Facebook](#) | [Share on Twitter](#) | [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Or, simply copy and paste this link anywhere:

<http://jamesclear.com/seminars>

Critique of Email #5

What I expected to get: A list of seminars that will help me increase my performance.

What I got: A list of seminars that ~~will~~ might help me increase my performance.

What's working: The short paragraphs that give the reader a brief look at what each seminar is about are good teasers, or they could be. This list shows James' authority and introduces the reader to the range of topics he covers. It also shows how serious he takes his work.

What could be optimized: The intro is very dry and boring. It makes me want to take a nap. There are 11 instances of I's and My's in the first four paragraphs and I keep wondering what the payoff for me is going to be and when it's going to come. These are paid seminars but he has failed to persuade me to even click on the links, let alone give him money. In each of the short paragraphs he says, "This is my (popular) class on" Again, I'm made to believe that these are his classes and his work. The best I can do is hope to "borrow" the information but it doesn't feel like it's really going to help me or I'll be able to take it on in any meaningful way. He focuses on the details and what he has done to put them together rather than the payoff to the reader. The way it is written right now I would worry he would just spend the entire seminar talking about his work and how much effort he has put into his work. That's not inviting.

Overall Email Sequence Assessment

The first 5 emails I received felt like work. I did not feel connected to James. It felt like he was ticking a box or just slapping things in the sequence to fill space. It came across as lazy copy/content. I don't see a thread, I don't get excited to get the emails, and he feels entirely inaccessible to me. And I am his exact target market. I am a clinical sport psychology PhD dropout, I was an athlete my whole life, I read about these topics obsessively, and I love everything having to do with behavioral psychology and behavioral change. I wanted to connect to a human but with each email it felt less and less personal. And then in the end he wanted me to buy from him. There was a big disconnect.

My approach with the rewrites was to build more of a relationship, focus on the reader, and make them interested in staying on the list... if not buy something.

Rewrite of 5 emails

Rewrite of Email #1: 0 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: Response Required: Confirm your email address to get your guides

Hi, it's James Clear. Before I can send you the guides (and newsletter) you requested, you must confirm your email address.

[Click Here to Confirm Your Email](#)

Once you confirm your email, not only will you be set to receive my weekly newsletter where I share useful information and systems for living a better, healthier life, but as a thank you for signing up, I'll also send you my two most popular guides:

- Transform Your Habits
- Mastering Creativity

[Click Here to Confirm Your Email](#)

If you don't want to receive any more emails from me, just ignore this email and you won't hear from me again.

Talk soon,

James Clear

Rewrite of Email #2: 0 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: Here are your free guides...

Hi there,

Thanks for signing up to receive my newsletter. I know "getting a newsletter" doesn't sound terribly exciting, but I've heard it kind of is.



Here's what a [few others have said about it too](#).

And I'm going to work really hard to make sure you feel the same way.

But for now, there's something I'd like to tell you, two things I'd like to give you, and one thing I hope you'll be willing to do.

Thing #1: What to Expect

Every Monday an email from me will land in your inbox. You'll rush to open it, of course, and inside you'll find ideas on how to live a better life. My ideas are all backed by science because I'm crazy about research and exhausted by opinions that have no basis in fact. (You know that they say about opinions, right?)

These Monday emails are read by hundreds of thousands of people each week including the managers of professional sports teams, CEOs of major corporations, Olympic athletes, best-selling authors, Grammy Award winning musicians, and people just like you and me.

I hope you'll find my ideas to be true, useful, and clear.

Thing #2: Free Downloads

As a thank you for signing up for my newsletter, I wanted to give you two of my most popular guides. You can download them at the links below.

- Transform Your Habits: [Download PDF](#)
- Mastering Creativity: [Download PDF](#)

Thing #3: A Question for You

I want to make sure that I only send you information that's useful to you. So I would love to know:

- 1) What's your biggest challenge right now when it comes to living the healthy and high performance life you want?
- 2) Why do you feel you're unable to overcome that challenge?

I really want to hear from you so just hit reply now and let me know what's going on for you.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

James

Rewrite of Email #3: 3 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: Can we really change who we are?

Hi there,

As a "habit scientist" I get this question a lot: Can we really change who we are?

Most of the time the person who asks me this is hoping to make a big change in their lives (or in themselves) but making that change feels really big and overwhelming.

But my answer is always YES!

And that "yes" drives everything I do.

I research and write on the topics of psychology, productivity, and health because I believe this knowledge can not only help you, it can propel you to create new and better habits that will ensure you live your best life possible. If that means changing in a big way, then so be it. If that means just making tiny little changes, day after day, that's a great path too.

We're not fixed. We can learn and grow and develop and become whoever we want to be.

We just have to want it.

And my goal is to help those who do want it create a solid plan to make it happen through the [articles](#) on my blog and through my [live events and classes](#) that I teach throughout the year.

So, in honor of that goal, here are my 5 favorite articles on building new habits so that you can get moving on creating the kind of life YOU want.

1. [How Long Does It Actually Take to Form a New Habit \(backed by science\)](#)
2. [Shoshin: This Zen Concept Will Help You Stop Being a Slave to Old Behaviors and Beliefs](#)
3. [The Chemistry of Building Better Habits](#)
4. [The Repeated Bout Effect: If Nothing Changes, Nothing Is Going to Change](#)
5. [How to Stick With Good Habits Every Day by Using the “Paper Clip Strategy”](#)

Check out those links and if you want more, there are hundreds of articles and dozens of resources waiting for you on my site.

And, of course, if there's something you'd like to know more about and I haven't already shared it on my blog, feel free to reply to this email and let me know. I'd love to hear your ideas.

Talk soon,

James

Rewrite of Email #4: 7 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: Do we have any of these in common?

Hi there,

Every time I crack open a new book, I feel like I'm inviting a new teacher into my life. It's just him (or her) and me hunkering down over hundreds of pages to learn whatever I'm ready to learn in that moment.

I love that feeling and experience so much that a few years ago I made a promise to myself that I was going to read over 30 books a year. ([Check out this article to find out the simple system I use to do it.](#))

Over the years I've taken great pleasure in organizing the titles I've read into categories, browsing my many bookshelves ([which apparently is a smart thing to do](#)), and running my fingers over a favorite old book so I can get magically transported back to the time and place when I first read it.

So today I thought I'd share the best books I've ever read with you. My hope is that not only will we have a few favorites in common, but I'll get to introduce you to a few that will impact you in a positive way just like they did me.

You can find the [entire list of 100 books here](#), all neatly organized by genre and topic.

Once you take a look at the list, I'd love to know, do we have any favorites in common? What book would make it on your top 100 that you think I should read? Reply and let me know so I can put it in my queue.

Talk soon,

James

P.S. Find this list useful? I'd love it if you shared these book recommendations with friends and family using these links:

[Share this reading list on Facebook](#) | [Share on Twitter](#) | [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Or, simply copy and paste this link anywhere: <http://jamesclear.com/best-books>

Rewrite of Email #5: 11 days delay

FROM: James Clear

SUBJECT: Multiply your mental and physical performance by 10x

Good morning,

One of the strategies I've counted on to get exponential results in my life has been to learn from top performers. Through researching their behavior, interviewing them, and studying what they do, I've learned how to narrow my focus and choose the actions that help me reach even my biggest goals more quickly.

That's what I want to help you do.

Every 3 months, I distill the lessons I've learned into a 90-minute seminar that dives deeper into a specific area of habits and performance improvement and I make it available to you.

Thousands of people have taken these seminars and are now achieving levels of success even greater than they hoped for.

You can learn about some of my best-selling classes -- and see what others have said about them -- below.

The Habits Seminar: Build Habits That Stick

If you've ever wanted to build small habits that create big results, this is the seminar for you. You'll learn what's working now, what always works (yes, there is something that ALWAYS works), and what to avoid if you want to stick to good habits. By the end you'll have a concrete plan for transforming inconsistent behaviors into reliable habits.

[Click here to learn more about The Habits Seminar.](#)

The Procrastination Seminar: Shave 10 Hours Off Your Workweek

Does this sound familiar... you wake up with every intention of working on an important task. You're motivated and ready to take action. And then, suddenly, that internal voice starts to speak up and ultimately takes you out of the game? In this seminar you'll learn how to block that inner voice, shave wasted hours off your workweek, finish what you set out to do, and create more time for your health, relationships, and life.

[Click here to learn more about The Procrastination Seminar.](#)

The Willpower Seminar: Master the Secrets of Self-Control

Success and self-control are twisted together tighter than two strands of DNA. And the people who can master self-control and display willpower on a consistent basis are more successful than those who can't. Simple as that. In this seminar you'll learn how to engage your self-control muscle when you need it most so you can achieve your goals and get more of what you want.

[Click here to learn more about The Willpower Seminar.](#)

Pass it On

Know a friend or teammate who could benefit from these high-performance seminars? Use the links below to share with them.

[Share on Facebook](#) | [Share on Twitter](#) | [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Or, simply copy and paste this link anywhere: <http://jamesclear.com/seminars>

Talk soon,

James

P.S. Is there a seminar you wish was on this list but isn't? What would it be about? Hit reply and let me know.