

Guide to getting the perfect testimonial from an Arab Student



A great testimonial can often make the difference between getting an Arab student lead and not getting one. Testimonials help students know that someone similar to them had a great experience with your institution so they think they might have a similar experience too. Testimonials get students to envision themselves going to your school and help to put to rest many of the objections the student may have.

Getting a testimonial from a student comes down to asking the right questions to students that you know had a great time at your school. In many cases you will have to have the confidence to persist to get information from these students but if they have truly had a great experience at your school you deserve to get their feedback about their time at your institution.

There are 3 key parts of a good testimonial - the problem, how the problem was solved, and the result.

Their Before – The Problem



Have the student share about their situation before they came to your school. Have them share what their concerns were before they came to your school. Encourage them to go into detail about where they were academically at that time. This part of the testimonial is important. Many Arabs will immediately make a connection with this part of the testimonial because they will likely be in a similar situation. This connection will compel prospective students to read on to see what happened.

For an English School the first part of the testimonial might look like this:

“Before coming to Acme English School I spoke almost no English and I had failed my English class in my secondary school. I was scared that I was just one of those people who couldn’t learn English well and I was terrified about how this would affect my career opportunities.”

Their During – How the Problem was Solved



Ask the student to share about what your institution did to help them succeed. Ask the student to explain and list the things that your school provided to them to help them find success. This is the how of the story that shows how they went from Their Before or their problem to the result. It’s important here to focus on the things that facilitated their result but not the results themselves.

For the English School example the second part of the testimonial might look like this:

“Acme English School helped me learn English at a pace I could keep up with. The classes were easy to follow and taught by teachers who make it fun to learn. They paired me with an American English tutor who was patient with me and helped me improve my pronunciation. To add to this Acme provided me with an American family to live with during my studies.”

Their After – The Result



The result is the final part of the testimonial that brings the story to a happy ending. Ask the student what their situation is like now. Did they achieve what they were looking to achieve? Did they get a degree? Did they get recruited into their dream job? Have the student explain the result they got, how they feel about it and how they think it will benefit them moving forward.

For the English School example the third part of the testimonial might look like this:

“Now I finished the highest level of English class that Acme offers. I passed the IELTS exam and I’m heading to study Engineering at a top American University. No one comments about my accent anymore.”

How do you get someone to give you such a perfect testimonial without fabricating it?

The answer is for you to put this together in the form of a questionnaire. For some students you may have more success doing this questionnaire as a verbal interview with the student. If you are doing a verbal interview it may be worth recording so you can use it as a video testimonial too. In many situations a video can help build trust more than a written testimonial.

Questions to include in your questionnaire

- What concerns did you have before coming to our school?
- What was your biggest fear before you came to our school?
- How would you describe your knowledge level in the field you studied at our school before you came?
- How confident did you feel about your level of knowledge in that field of study before you came?
- What was your academic situation before coming to our school?
- What did you enjoy most about coming to our school?
- How did we help you reach your goal?
- Can you remember a situation in which you were struggling with something and a staff member helped? Can you share that situation with us?
- Was there a specific aspect of our program you found helpful?
- Was there a particular class activity you liked?
- Was there a specific teacher you really enjoyed learning from? What did they do that helped you learn better?
- What result were you looking to get?
- What result did you get?

Besides getting a great testimonial from your student you may also discover some valuable information to improve your marketing or your program from the answers to these questions.

How you use the questionnaire answers in a testimonial

Once you have the answers to the questions review them, wait a couple of days and then contact the student again and say something like this:

“We loved your answers in our questionnaire so much that we would like to ask your permission to put them together and use them as a testimonial. We know your answers could greatly help students like you make an informed decision about coming to our school.”

Most of the time the student will say “yes.” From there you can start using your new testimonial on landing pages, in your email marketing, and on social media. Don’t assume that because the testimonial appears on one part of your website that every website visitor will see it. Make sure it shows up on pages Arabs will see.

One more important point

Include an image of the student next to the testimonial since images have been shown to increase the believability of a testimonial. If you can make it a video testimonial it will have even more of an impact.

There you have it. Go and get those testimonials!