

Hooks, Killer Salesmanship, The Function of Seduction
and Operation Moneysuck...

"Kick-Ass Copywriting Secrets Of A Marketing Rebel"

*An "insider" shortcut guide to creating sensational ads
that will supercharge your business, your wealth,
and your life... even if you flunked English!*

By John Carlton

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- ✓ Don't have a product to sell yet? See Chapter XIII to zoom from rookie status to marketing expert in a weekend!
- ✓ The competition eating you alive? See Chapter XIV and corner your market within weeks!
- ✓ How to light a fire under your prospect's butt and get him to order right now! Chapter X.
- ✓ Need a "hook" that will force people to read your ads? See Chapter IV.
- ✓ Simple way to double profits overnight - Chapter XII.
- ✓ The amazing "Gun To The Head" secret to quickly creating the most effective advertising in the universe. Chapter II.
- ✓ The "lazy businessman's 3-step shortcut" to your first killer ad! Chapter III.

And a ton more... all inside, all waiting for you...

Acclaim From A Very Elite Fan Club:

"John has created millions in profit for us. We pitted his ads and letters against big-city ad agencies, PR firms, and writers with lots of awards... and John slaughtered them all. He consistently hits 'home runs' for us -- a 20-to-1 return in profit is not unusual. He has saved our butts on several occasions." **Robert Pierce**, president,
Tactical Response Solutions

"John is the all-time champ of hard boiled, get-the-job-done, grab them by the throat and force them to order copy. This is must-have info for your professional library. Don't even think about it -- get your hands on his course and devour it immediately!" **Gary Halbert**,
The Gary Halbert Letter

"John fought hard to get us to mail his sales letter for our new book. He ruffled so many feathers pushing us past our creative 'comfort zone' that he got himself temporarily blacklisted... until, of course, his piece not only knocked off one of our top writers, but also mailed profitably for over 4 years to millions of names." **Sindy Berner**,
Production Marketing Manager, Rodale Books

"Carlton really pisses me off. I collect his ads whenever I can, as professional research on great copy. Trouble is, after reading his stuff, I end up buying what's he's selling. He is one amazing writer. Believe what he tells you." **Jeff Paul**, best-selling author and entrepreneurial guru

"A rare opportunity to learn powerful -- and usually secret - insider marketing information from a brilliant recluse who's written some of the best darn ads I've ever read." **Joe Polish**,
Piranha Marketing newsletter

"The best book on copywriting and making money I've ever read, destined to become the 'How-To bible' of great advertising writers and marketers of the future. Stop everything you're doing right now, and read it immediately." **Scott Haines**, professional copywriter (written for Jay Abraham and Gary Halbert, among others)

"Just John's consulting abilities alone are worth his outrageous fee -- the fact you also get one of the best copywriters alive makes him the biggest bargain in business today. He throws himself into every aspect of a project... so when the ad runs and the phones start ringing, you're prepared to capture every dollar." **Dr. Russell Horine**,
NuLife Clinics

"Killer copywriter, easily the most exciting and effective I've ever dealt with. He's utterly fearless in meeting challenges and creating successful ads in one of the toughest markets in the world. He's earned us a fortune." **Dr. Michael O'Leary**, president, OHP Golf, Inc.

"If you ever get a chance to hang out with a brilliant whacko like Carlton, jump on it. And hope some of his raw talent and marketing savvy rubs off. Until then, grab this course and learn from one of the best." **Stan Dahl**, DIB Consulting (Clients include NATO & Exxon)

"I study Carlton's copy like a 14 year-old boy reads Playboy. Completely dazzled, entranced and full of desire. I've read hundreds of books on marketing and copywriting and make my living with it... so I know how to separate the wheat from the chaff in this business. Every time I think I've hit the nail on the head with my copy, I read one of John's letters and realize how much father I could go. Ouch... it hurts to say that... but it's true." **Michael Jans**, President of Insurance Profit Systems, Inc. and www.zipdrip.com

"Great copywriters are proven because consumers vote with their money. That's why guys like John are so expensive, and so valuable. This is seriously important information for your business. There are only a handful of writers in John's league. I read this book as soon as I got my hands on it." **Ken Glickman**, Boardroom, Inc.

"Most direct marketers know about John Carlton and what he can do. In fact, I have shamelessly ripped off his copy and headlines for years. I'd pay three times what he's asking for this course and still be happy. This info will change your life." **Craig Forte**, Forte Communications, Inc.

"John Carlton is the best-kept marketing secret in America. Learn from the man who writes killer copy that most people only dream about being able to write." **Rex Judd**, "30 Minute Money System"

"John, you actually screwed up my newest marketing campaign... because, after plowing halfway through your course, I now realize I need a more compelling story to sell my product. At least you've shown me how to do it." **Ben Cummings**

"John's not just one of the best copywriters in the country, but he's also one of the best teachers of copywriting. I freely admit to mining his expertise for ideas frequently. One of the best minds in the business." **David Deutsch**, world-class freelancer with controls for Boardroom, Phillips Publishing and other major league mailers

"Awesome stuff, quintessential and well worth the money. I was especially moved by the chapters 'Operation Moneysuck' and 'The Mysterious Force Behind Every Dollar Bill In The Universe'. Refreshingly nitty-gritty focus and style. John, if you ever do a seminar, sign me up." **Lee Mason**, Washington

"What I learned in an afternoon from John allowed me to earn more money than did my entire college education. I can't tell you how dramatically this has changed my life!" **James Curley**, www.ohpdirect.com

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You can reach John Carlton at marketingrebel@aol.com

“Who The Hell Is John Carlton?”

By Mark Landstrom

They call him “the secret weapon”. Secret, because he has so far avoided the harsh limelight of fame, preferring to lay low and let his work do his talking. Weapon, because any marketer lucky enough to hire this brilliant writer will see profits skyrocket.

John Carlton has been a top freelance advertising copywriter for over 21 years now. Many of his ads are legendary among writers and clients. He brings an edginess and street-savvy to ad writing that actually forces you to read every word.

And the big question has always been: “How does he pull off these must-read, insanely-profitable masterpieces?” Well, here is his first "tell all" book. Finally. And he spills all the beans. Every trick and secret and proven tactic... from writing head-turning headlines, to crafting a closing offer you simply cannot refuse.

The Information In This Book Is Worth A Fortune To Anyone Who Uses - Or Needs To Use - Advertising!

The man himself defies easy description. He's had an amazing education in life, including stints as rock and roll lead guitarist, newspaper cartoonist, and deep-sea salmon fisherman. He's been a hitchhiking hippie, a corporate executive spy, and an “observing bohemian” in hot spots like Silicon Valley, Miami Beach and Hollywood.

He's the nicest guy you'll ever meet in business (when he's not busting your balls with his wicked sense of humor). One of the rare ones who is honest to a fault, generous, gracious and yet completely unafraid to express an unpopular opinion. He will fight for what he believes in, and bullies clients into doing what he knows is right. And they love him for it.

But it's John's passion for studying people that permanently raised the ceiling on what it takes to be called “great” in today's mean streets of marketing. Learning what he understands about consumer psychology can put your business on the big-buck fast track.

John has never been far from the epicenter of the direct marketing world. He went from being the high-priced hot shot freelancer that L.A agencies snuck in the back door to write the pieces their own staff couldn't pull off... to working on the entrepreneurial “inside” with world-class marketing gurus like Jay Abraham and established hall-of-fame copywriters like Jim Rutz.

Around 1988, Gary Halbert (“the world's greatest living copywriter”) invited John to handle the “big desk” at his Hollywood offices on Sunset Blvd, and during the ensuing marketing adventures these two men changed the nature of direct response advertising forever.

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John was among the first to write television infomercials, to advertise on the Internet, and to mine the new industry of videotaped information. He says:

“I’ve had fun, brushes with death, helped shy men accumulate fortunes, and watched helplessly as rich corporations came tumbling down from their own idiocy. There’s no better way to learn how the world works than to roll up your sleeves and get filthy with experience like this.

“I’ve been stupid, smart, lucky, well-off, broke, mocked, loved and despised... and I’ve learned something from every damn minute of it. I can identify and relate to every type of customer you’ll ever see. And I can sell to them.”

In his prolific career, John has promoted nearly every product or service used by human beings. This staggering list includes top financial advice newsletters... hugely expensive and exclusive marketing seminars (\$7,000 just to attend)... a conservative ‘better sex guide’ with the largest mailer in the U.S. (his control ruled for over 5 years despite constant attempts by other pro writers to knock it off)... how-to-fight instructional videos from Navy SEAL commandos and highly-skilled streetfighters (a fascinating multi-million-dollar niche market)... golfing advice (his famous “one-legged golfer” ad shocked the country club crowd)... plus reams of letters and ads for retail businesses, self-help products, both entrepreneurial and corporate Web sites, doctors, real estate brokers, diets, precious metals, fund raisers... and “personal” letters that have motivated people to *change their lives forever*.

When John's ads (which often fill three entire pages) run in magazines, the whole “look” of the publication subsequently changes... as other advertisers pump up the size and tone of their own ads to keep pace with John's hard-hitting style of raking in profits. His direct mail letters have long been used all over the world as ‘study guides’ for great copywriting. His rare recorded interviews are eagerly studied by insiders.

In fact, other top writers and marketers have secretly sought out John's advice for years. Now you can tap into this same deep well of expertise.

This book is an astonishing opportunity to learn insider tactics and shortcuts used by only the best copywriters in the business. Here is a man used as a “secret weapon” by multi-million dollar companies... whose fees have caused uninitiated clients to choke. Yet the results his ads pull are so staggering, he is often booked a year in advance, despite never having advertised his services.

You cannot reach John by phone. He will, however, respond to all inquiries via email at: marketingrebel@aol.com. Or through snail mail at: 316 California Ave. #114, Reno NV 89509.

Mark Landstrom is a designer and video producer in San Luis Obispo, California.

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Questions? You can reach John Carlton at marketingrebel@aol.com.

“The Oldest Secrets In Business.”

*Welcome to a fascinating and insanely lucrative world
most people will never realize exists...*

Whatever you desire in life... buckets of money, the awe and respect of people who now doubt you, a crowd of new customers, a new home, a fresh start, the love of your life, almost anything at all... you can attain it with the powerful, simple secrets of master salesmanship.

And when you multiply that salesmanship by using it in your advertising, you can move the world.

In this book, I will teach you everything (almost) I've learned from 20 years as one of the highest-paid and most sought-after "secret weapon" advertising copywriters on the planet. It will take you just a few short hours to read. And it will change your life forever.

If you do not have a product to sell already, I will show you how to create one in a weekend.

If you already have a business, I will show you how to send sales through the roof literally overnight, and crush your competition within a month.

If you suck at selling, I will make you a master salesman by the end of the week.

If you cannot write to save your life, I will help you become a hot, mega-effective copywriter inside of 11 days.

What I am about to reveal to you is the most effective and cash-rich "bag of tricks" any marketer has ever had at his disposal. It's easy enough to prove that these secrets are worth millions... but in truth, they are worth kingdoms of wealth.

Your Only Limit Is The Depth Of Your Greed And Desire.

Frankly, I am baffled why these secrets are still secret to most of the population.

What I share with you here are the advanced salesmanship techniques that have not changed since the beginning of time. Guys in togas were using these basic principles to earn fortunes selling chariots in ancient Rome. You're seeing the same expert techniques at work on late-night infomercials today, and in multi-million dollar mail order campaigns and direct response ads that transform simple entrepreneurs into fabulously wealthy moguls almost overnight.

I call this book "the secrets of a marketing rebel" because I work outside the world of "conventional" advertising and marketing. I deal mostly with entrepreneurs who do not have money to waste. Who need advertising that brings in money they can take to the bank *tomorrow*... not vague public relations brownie points which carry no real monetary value.

As a young freelancer, I was the hot-shot writer ad agencies snuck in the back door to do the writing their own clueless "creatives" could not pull off. I learned not to trust most of these corporative suits, because they were incompetent. They stubbornly ignored the proven tactics of good salesmanship, and blew enormous wads of cash on bizarre arty experiments that any true ad man would have squelched immediately.

These are the same agencies who will insist you need an ad budget of hundreds of thousands of dollars for even the smallest project, and most of it will be spent before you get an inkling of whether you have a success or not on your hands,

That's just criminal, in my mind. I will not work that way.

I have become a rebel among advertisers... because I only get paid the big bucks when my ads make money. I work primarily on commission and royalties - if what I write increases immediate profits, I earn a fat sum in *direct proportion*. But because that sum is a modest percentage of the fortune I create, everybody's happy.

If what I write fails, I don't make the rent.

But I'm not gambling. I only use *proven* (though sometimes unusual) tactics in my ads, and I only take on clients I know I can help. The ads and letters I write are, essentially, fabulously effective salesmen... right there on the printed page. Or on the television set. Or on the Web. Don't let anyone tell you one medium is different from all the rest. It simply ain't so.

The secrets I'm about to reveal to you are the same ones I use on every project. I don't work every day, and I don't work for very long on the days I do work. You don't *need* to put in long, painful hours when you have the short-cut secrets to wealth and happiness.

You Only Need To Apply The Magic.

However, before we go on, **I need you to promise me something.** I'm not kidding around, either. You may think you can skip this promise without consequence... because, of course, I am not there in person to make sure you do it.

But, as you will discover in Chapter XVIII ("The Mysterious Force Behind Every Dollar Bill In The Universe"), there are *worse things* to fear than my wrath.

Here is the promise I want from you: I am about to reveal to you the Keys To Unlimited Wealth. These secrets will rapidly change your life in ways you can only dream about today. And I am asking you, right now, to promise me with every sincere fiber in your heart... that you will only use these new powers in fair, legal and morally ethical ways.

Do it. Say the words out loud. *Make the promise.*

Have you done it? I hope so, I really do. I want to help you attain every little thing your heart desires... but I want you to do it the *right way*. When you sell things ethically, you earn wealth and happiness. When you con people, you care enemies and a life on the run.

Yet, it's just as easy to amass an ethical fortune as it is to earn the bad-blood money of a faker.

Creating excellent products and offering outstanding service allows you to go balls-to-the-wall in your advertising. You can back up every outrageous claim you make. There's no need to look over your shoulder, no need for secrecy or legal maneuvers. Repeat business is a given.

And you'll sleep like a baby every night.

It's all about the ad, the secrets of master salesmanship. It's a rather startling realization that a great ad can sell a *nonexistent* product... while a *bad* ad couldn't sell...

Free Gold!

Throughout the ages, many of the very same tactics and strategies used by legitimate marketing geniuses have also been used by hyper-smart con men and scamsters to ill ends. This has given advertising a very deserved black eye. But it does not dilute the effectiveness of solid salesmanship one bit.

The reason: A great salesman uses the *unchanging psychology of being human*. The secrets to selling anything - good or bad - is to create trust, weave a believable story, justify the expense, and help fulfill a *burning need* in your customer.

That burning need is what cuts through the natural resistance we all have to spending money - especially spending money on something we cannot hold in our hands, which is always the case when you sell by ad or letter.

That burning need overcomes all objections, all doubt, all second-thoughts. The customer doesn't want what you're selling... he needs it. Urgently. Can't wait. Must have it. Stoking that burning need is what separates the great salesman (who becomes wealthy) from the mediocre salesman (who will forever struggle).

Most people in business, when pressed, can get a potential customer to agree that, yes, what you have there is certainly interesting. But they cannot “close the deal”, cannot *fuel the need* enough to have cash exchange hands.

Look. You can show anyone how to hit a golf ball - you just take a club and whack the little dimpled thing. But to play the game of golf well... to make the ball go where you want it to... you need the inside secrets that you will not discover casually, on your own.

It's the same with salesmanship. The advanced, mega-powerful secrets do not appear to you magically, just because you are now in the position of having to sell something. You need a guide.

And that's what I'm here for. To take you by the hand and lead you through the hell of bad marketing and incompetent salesmanship... past the smoking wreckage of failed businesses and ruined dreams... and directly to the sort of ethical wealth and heavenly happiness that will bring you to tears.

And I'll take you there right now. It's a relatively short trip, when you know the secrets.

Let's get moving, all right?

Chapter I
“The Astonishing Wealth-Building Magic
Of Direct Response.”

*Why almost everyone is completely wrong about what makes a good ad...
and why this is a tremendous advantage for anyone
who knows the secrets.*

Most people - and shamefully, most so-called experts in advertising - wouldn't know a good ad if it bit them on the ass. The fact is, there is more incompetence in advertising than any other field except, perhaps, psychology.

Lesson number one, kids: Great advertising - the kind that will change your life and make you rich beyond the dreams of avarice - has more in common with...

**P.T. Barnum And The National Enquirer
Than With Prime Time Television Ads.**

Barnum was the circus man (Barnum & Bailey's “The Greatest Show On Earth”) who made a fortune by never underestimating the allure of sensationalism. A genius at marketing impossible-to-ignore sideshows - the one-homed goat billed as a unicorn... the bearded lady... the human pretzel. He was a man of the people, and knew what punched their buttons. He created such an urgent sense of curiosity that crowds fought to get into his shows.

And did you know that more people read the National Enquirer every week than read Time, Newsweek and the Wall Street Journal all put together? That raunchy little checkout-stand weekly sells out across the land... and yes, even people you know read it.

The hook is the headlines on the cover. The guys who come up with them are among the highest-paid writers in the world. When they hit a nerve, the publication flies off the shelves. (My favorite headlines are “**Preacher Explodes On Pulpit**” and “**Boy Eats Own Head**”.)

Barnum and the writers at the National Enquirer understand human psychology. The unrelenting power of curiosity to pull us in. The sheer pleasure in being shocked and titillated. How to create...

**An Itch
That Has To Be Scratched!**

On the flip side, the vast majority of commercials and ads you come in contact with today are put out by fancy Madison Avenue-type advertising agencies. By aloof and unconnected writers and designers and other “creative” types who know nothing of salesmanship, and who do not understand the psychology of the average man or woman.

Look... I could go on and on about this, because bad advertising makes me crazy. But you don't need to know the gory details of why most advertising sucks - I can shortcut the entire process for you right here:

- ✓ **People do not buy because they like your cutesy slogan.**
- ✓ **People do not buy because you're funny, or clever, or a good artist.**
- ✓ **People do not buy because you brag that you're simply the best in the universe.**
- ✓ **And... people do not buy because you have a truly good product.**

Nope. The marketing graveyard is filled with fabulous products touted by clowns who could not make the sale. There is only one reason people are “sold” by an ad. It's because the ad is actually...

A Master Salesman-In-Print.

A salesman who has a solution to the most pressing problems in your life. Who possesses secrets that will make you richer, or happier, or better looking. Who knows how to tease your "hot buttons" to just the right level of distress... and only then offer you sweet release through the wonders of what he is selling.

Then how, you ask, can all these high falutin' agencies stay in business if they're so clueless about true salesmanship? Well, it's simple, really.

Our culture is awash in advertising. There's so darn much of it, you start to think you understand it. And no one will disagree with your opinion... since everyone "agrees" that ads are there to entertain you. More people watch the Superbowl every year for the splashy ads than watch it for the game. (My girlfriend curls up on the couch with a book, ignoring who's playing and coming to life only when the commercials are on.)

And afterward, major magazines and Websites run polls on which ads people "liked" and which they "disliked".

Well... in 2000 there were several famous ads by dot-com companies that won the popularity poll... but who were belly up, sales-wise, by early spring. People rate ads by how entertained they were by them. And, of course, the only thing that really counts - at least for the business involved...

Is Whether The Ad Sold Product Or Not.

Well, you know what kind of ads sell product? It's those hour-long infomercials on late at night. It's the long-copy ads in the back of magazines with a coupon in the lower right corner. It's the 8-page hard-hitting sales letter that arrives in your mailbox. It's the radio ad that starts off “Do you have dandruff? Here's exciting news...”

What these ads and letters have in common... is that they grab the attention of their target audience... make an irresistible offer... and then ask for action. For a sale. A phone call. They invite you stop by the store, pick up a free sample, order a free report. Contact us today. Send in the coupon. And do it...

Right Now!

They ask for a response from the reader. That's where the term "direct response" comes from.

This request for action is what sets effective, money-making advertising apart from the glut of horrible advertising out there. If the appeal works, people call and order and the ad is a measurable success.

In newspapers, you can start counting money and orders the same day the ad appears. On television, profits can start a few minutes after the ad begins. If the appeal is a bomb, you'll know because the phones aren't ringing. The mailman arrives empty handed. But you'll know.

There's No Guess-Work At All.

Think of two different salesmen walking down a street. One goes door to door, talks with people, makes his pitch and asks for an order. If what he's doing is working, he will have a pocket stuffed with cash and orders. If his pitch is a bomb, he'll know because his pockets are empty.

The other salesman just walks along the sidewalk, hollering at every house he passes. He will never know if what he's saying has any effect at all. He won't be able to tell you if he earned even a single new customer.

This is why the big advertising agencies are scared to death of direct response advertising. They figured out long ago that as long as they never asked for any measurable action in the ads they created, no one could ever accuse their ads of failing. The success of their work, they claim, is in the mystery of "brand awareness", which they try to prove in focus groups.

It Is A Scam.

It's a scandal much worse than those \$800 toilet seats the Pentagon got busted for. The culture of big city ad agencies is incestuous - writers who do not know how to sell teach the new writers the "art" of corporate advertising. Be funny. Entertain. Use lots of expensive special effects, and spend a lot of time finding the right music. Make ads that

amuse, and maybe people will say your product is cool. Come up with clever slogans. If a pun is involved, so much the better.

At the end of the fiscal year, if sales spike at all, you're a hero. If they tank, well... the great game among big-spending companies is to fire your ad agency regularly and get courted by the other agencies until you find one you like.

Of course, since the head of the company doing the hiring understands advertising no better than anyone else - like the tone-deaf trying to judge the complexity of a sax solo - the winning agency is irrelevant. More funny, shouting, obnoxious ads that do not sell are created.

And no one can ever tell if they work.

Oh, damn. I told you I wasn't going to go on and on about the idiocy of most advertising, didn't I. And here I am, going on and on. Shame on me.

But I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't make sure you get the point. If you are already a convert, and realize in your heart (or from experience) that world-class salesmanship involves actually asking for action, then you're done with this section.

If you're still unconvinced that so much advertising you see - created at such great expense - could be so bad, right under everyone's nose... let me offer one more argument. I call it...

The Function Of Seduction.

This little secret has put over a million bucks in my pocket over the years, so pay attention.

We are, all of us, selfish little creatures. This is neither a good thing nor a bad thing. It simply is something the smart salesman understands.

If I try to sell you something, you will resist. It's natural. Imagine the fate of the man who could not say "no" to a sales request. He would be bankrupt by noon. It's not in your best interest to buy everything you come across.

If I try to sell you something, you will resist. However, if I get your *attention*...

... if I offer you something that *feeds a hunger* deep inside you... or *solves a perplexing problem* that haunts your days...

... if I describe a deal where you *risk nothing*, and yet stand to gain a great deal...

... if I sympathize with your resistance, understand your qualms and doubts, and *answer every one of your questions* honestly...

...if I clearly show you how you can become richer, happier, healthier, all in the *fastest and easiest* manner possible...

...and if you believe and trust me, and are certain the risks are miniscule and the reward mind-blowing... then your resistance may weaken. You may give it a try, especially if I've made it clear you can change your mind later.

You just might decide, all on your own, to see what all the fuss is about.

That's seduction, friend. Most ads out there say, in effect, “Hey, I've entertained you, so won't you go find my product and buy it? People will think you're cool, I swear it.” They preen and brag and show off, and expect you to fall down at their feet. And go do some footwork to find the product. (Many a failed business owner has been shocked - shocked - to discover that people will not hunt for his product, no matter how good it is.)

The great salesman knows better. He knows people are rightfully skeptical. And busy. And utterly unconcerned with what you want. They are far too involved in their own lives and needs.

But they can be convinced, when the facts are explained, when the risk is taken away, when their deepest, most selfish desires have been tickled and nurtured and seduced. When...

It Suddenly Makes Sense To Be Convinced.

Your customers are just like you, and you are just like them. You don't respond to boasting, self-righteous or silly clowns who make you feel like a sucker. Neither will your customers.

If you're going to ask for someone's money... or their vote... or their hand in marriage...

You Must Appeal To Their Selfish Desires!

You must be a *salesman*.

One final thought: Rejoice in the fact that most people haven't got a clue about what makes good advertising. This puts you in rare company when you finally do understand the secrets. Let the rest of the world go about their foolish ways. You're about to be very busy keeping track of your new wealth.

Chapter II

“Gun To The Head Copywriting.”

10 hyper-effective secrets of a copywriter who was forced to create successful ads... or starve.

I became a freelance copywriter after years of stumbling around blindly and largely being a clueless wanderer.

I've held some of most horrible jobs in the world, made a few sullen stabs at various inappropriate careers. (I'll tell you sometime about my years as a color-blind graphic artist in Silicon Valley, or logging 13 seasick hours a day on a leaky little boat trying to find salmon schools in icy Pacific storms.) Botched up enough relationships to fuel my own soap opera, and lived in more places than I can clearly remember. Frittered away one bloodless opportunity after another. Just couldn't get settled in a normal life.

I tell you this to illustrate a point. It doesn't matter where you are now in life. It really doesn't. What matters is...

Where You Want To Be.

Why? Because... once you discover the secrets of attaining goals - something no school on the planet teaches - it's a short step to the realization you can do almost anything you want to do. Be whoever you want to be. Give wings to your ambition.

You can do this.

I did not get into copywriting because I was invited. I am not a born salesman. I come from a working class family who used their hands and their backs to earn a living.

I had never even *met* a real freelancer before I became one.

Nope. I became a freelancer out of sheer desperation. The business world kept spitting me out. I was a bad employee, always challenging authority and bristling at the restraints of the 9-to-5 culture. I loathe wearing ties. And I often do my best work late at night, long after the normal workday has ended. The rules and bureaucracy and conformity of corporate life felt like a straight jacket.

When I finally went solo, in my early thirties, I had pretty much painted myself into a corner. I'd burned bridges. I couldn't stomach another day of slaving away...

To Make Someone Else Rich.

It was “make it or break it” time for ol’ Johnny C.

Here is the state I entered my freelance career : I had enough savings for one more month's rent... a last tank full of gas in my rattletrap car... a beat-to-shit Olivetti electric typewriter (with a sticky "t" key)... and a lead on some books that might help me. (I've listed them for you at the end of this chapter.)

All in all, my situation gave me a very unique feeling. As if someone were holding a gun to my head. I *had* to succeed as an advertising writer... because I had nowhere else to go.

Well... without quite understanding it at the time... I had stumbled upon the mind-set that is...

The Secret To Creating The Best Advertising In The World!

That feeling of working without a net didn't make me panic. Instead, I felt eerily calm. I didn't have a lot of decisions to grieve over. It was pretty simple: I had to create successful ads, or starve.

As it turned out, most of my first jobs (gotten through the L.A. Times classified section) were for desperate business owners who were in the same boat. My ads had to bring in money, or they were looking at the poorhouse, too.

I call the mind-set I was in "gun to your head writing", and I use it to this day to keep myself in line. Let me tell you how you think, when you have no choice but to create advertising that works:

- You do not experiment.** Instead, you rely on *proven* methods that have already worked in similar situations.
- You do not get "creative" with your words.** When you cannot risk losing a potential customer because you have offended, confused or alienated her, you choose your words very carefully.
- You make your message as clear as humanly possible.** You do not use metaphors or puns, or rely on the reader to finish your thought for you. *You* complete every thought.
- And... you stick to proven salesmanship.** You seek to meet your reader's needs (not yours)... you cover all objections to the sale... you hold interest, and tease desire... and you make it easy for her to order.

And, when you're done, you go back and make *sure* you've done it right. Then you check it again, making sure your phone number is correct, making sure the phone line is working, making sure every detail has been covered.

You're writing an ad. You're not creating great literature. The response you want from your reader is not "Gee, that's a great ad", but...

“Hey! I WANT This!”

How do you adopt this “gun to your head” philosophy? You take to heart – and use, every time - these simple strategies:

- 1. Don't toy with your own life.** Ask yourself: Would I use this word... this sentence... this paragraph... *if my life depended on the success of this ad?* If you doubt the sales-worthiness of what you've just written, toss it and start again. Never gamble that the reader will “figure out what you mean”. Be clear. Be sincere. Make your case.
- 2. Every statement must pass the "So What" test.** Anytime your reader says to himself, “So what?”, you've lost him. People will NOT be bored or confused while reading advertising. Be absolutely brutal with yourself. People will read lots and lots of copy about subjects they are interested in... but they will shrug and move on to something else the *second* you lose their interest.
- 3. Get in bed with your customer.** One of the dumbest things a marketer can do is to go after a customer he doesn't respect. Or feels superior to.

This is nonsense, and will lead you straight to bankruptcy. Your NUMBER ONE job as a marketer is to get in synch with your customer's innermost desires. You should read what he reads. Watch the same television shows, listen to the same music, eat at the same restaurants. You cannot understand her dreams and worries unless you feel comfortable moving in her world.

And you can't do that sitting in a cozy office on the ninth floor.

Become a student of human nature. Get out there and talk to mechanics, 7-11 clerks, secretaries, retired jet pilots, new home owners, day care workers. If you're selling a diet, and you've never had a weight problem, you better find out quick what goes on in the head of someone who does. You won't win them over by making jokes. Have you ever watched a Richard Simmons infomercial? Large women collapse into his arms, sobbing with joy at finally finding someone who...

Understands Them!

Every human on the planet has the same basic menu of needs and desires. I hear over and over again from business owners that “my customers are different.” They are not different. They're human beings. They're buying what you offer because it feeds an important need deep inside them.

That said, you cannot often guess what will most motivate a customer base. Not unless you truly understand them. Remember this:

It's A Mess To Guess!

I have friends who attend Alcoholics Anonymous. You want to understand how *deep* a need can go, talk to an AA veteran. A drunk will sacrifice job, family, friends and self-respect for another beer, even when it makes him physically sick to continue drinking. The power of desire can trump survival.

Think of what *you* have risked to get what you wanted. Was there a Lucretia McEvil in your past, who you pursued with breathless lust despite death threats from her father? Was there a car, or a job, or an adventure that you would literally do *anything* to have? Get in touch with your own passions. Passion is the driving force of the world.

4. It's all about HER needs. And his, of course. Your customer may think you're a swell guy, salt of the earth and a real role model. But you'll never get him to *buy* unless you appeal to his selfish needs.

He couldn't care less if it's your Grand Opening... unless he can get something for nothing. She yawns when you announce a new product... unless you specifically show her how it will increase her appeal to the opposite sex. And no one cares at all that you just hit a huge milestone in your business... unless you're hosting the party of the year to celebrate, and they're getting one of a handful of invitations that people are willing to kill for.

“Selfish” is not a bad word in marketing. It is simply the realization that no matter how important you think your *needs* are... the other guy disagrees. It is *his* needs that rank number one.

I understand what moves a man, and you can move him. Here's the list of basic needs I work from, with examples of how to use them :

- ✓ **Greed:** Too much is never enough for most folks. Everyone can point to someone else who's richer, healthier, sexier and more respected. And yes, every one of us would very much like to have it all. Right now. In fact, make it a double. "Here's a simple, idiot-proof way to quadruple your income over the next 45 days... without working an extra hour!"
- ✓ **A better deal:** One of the hottest appeals I ever stumbled on was the phrase "and you can have it for half of what everyone else has to pay". Never underestimate the lure of a *genuine* bargain... and the opportunity to lord that bargain over your neighbor and buddies.
- ✓ **Sex, love, and intimacy:** Americans crave, fear, hate and desire sex, often all at the same time. This conflict keeps it right at the top of most people's list, burning a hole in their cerebral cortex. (I've heard that most men spend up to half of every waking hour in some sort of sexual thought or twinge. I have no idea what they're wasting the other half-hour on.) It's a primary drive, right up there with food and shelter. “New herbal drink safely boosts your sex drive through the roof, while releasing a natural pheromone that makes you irresistible to the opposite sex.”

- ✓ **Health:** It's well known among smart marketers that most people will not spend a nickel to *prevent* illness... but will empty their bank accounts to be *healed* once something goes sour. You can't sell a young man on living forever, but you can make a fortune offering an oldster another shot at feeling like a teenager again. "Atlanta housewife discovers amazing cure for arthritis while picking peaches from her backyard tree."
- ✓ **Self-improvement:** Most people absolutely despise where they're at right now in life. They're tired, overwhelmed, depressed and unfulfilled. Show them how to make it all better, and they will flock to you. "How to instantly jumpstart the quality of your social life... simply by tweaking a tiny aspect of your personality."
- ✓ **Fear:** It's been shown that you can't sell toothpaste by making people afraid of cavities. It's the blazing white smile that attracts. Mostly, you want to help your prospect see a pleasing picture of the good life you can offer, not the nasty hell that awaits if they refuse. But *fear of losing out* is still very strong in all of us. Just attach that fear to a happy ending: "New risk-free way to lock-in the value of your portfolio during the coming market crash... and how to earn a fortune picking up stock bargains for pennies on the dollar while everyone else scrambles to survive."
- ✓ **Respect:** No one gets the respect they truly feel they deserve. We're all misunderstood, and damn pissed off about it, too. Can you offer a way to make people take notice of him when he enters a room? "How to quickly win the respect and trust of powerful people."
- ✓ **Pleasure:** Have you ever watched the face of a child engaged in a favorite game? Well, adults often lose the ability to abandon themselves in pure enjoyment, but they never lose the *craving* for that kind of bliss. "I've never laughed so hard in my life' - secrets of the happiest people in the world."

A very important copy point: The most powerful word you can use in any sales pitch is...

“You.”

It's music to the ears of your reader. She doesn't care what *you* think, what *you* need, or what *you* find interesting. She cares - and cares very deeply - about what *she* thinks, and needs, and finds interesting.

Use the word “you” in almost every sentence- You're talking to a human being.

5. Have sympathy for his natural skepticism. No matter how good your product is, no matter how honest you are, or how great the deal actually is... your customer will not roll over and play dead just because you asked nice. They don't believe you. They don't believe the deal. They are constantly hit on by advertising - on the radio, in the newspaper, on television... heck, there are plans to launch low-orbiting satellites that will cruise overhead flashing ads *all night long*. No one can afford to believe you. Use that

disbelief. Confront it: “Does this seem too good to be true? I sure thought so myself when I first discovered it. But what convinced me was...”

6. Find a parade and get in front of it. Never try to create demand. Instead, feed an *existing hunger*. People already know (unconsciously) what they want, and they reveal it every day by paying for it. If you need to educate anyone as to why they need your product, you've already lost. Your job is to convince them you can help them do what they *already* have a mind to do, a better way.

7. Romance the hell out of them. I don't care if you're Elmer Fudd in real life... when you're trying to connect with paying customers, you're now the dashing, irrepressible Don Juan Of Selling. Seduce smoothly... and never be a bragging, obnoxious jerk. Your job is to *ignite the passion* in your reader's heart.

Passion is the single common denominator that ties us all together. We all want it... we gravitate to it and revere those who have it. We *respond* to it. We want it *back* when we've lost it. It's the best natural high anyone has ever experienced. Be passionate about what you sell. If you cannot work up a lather, find something that *does* excite you.

8. Steal, spy and swipe. Do you have competition who are doing much better than you are right now? For God's sake, find out *why*. If they're appearing again and again in certain magazines, then YOU start putting ads there. Find out what lists they're mailing over and over again. Place an order with the competition, and see how they handle customers on the phone. Copy their sales techniques, if they're better than yours. If they're blazing a trail to wealth and success, stay in their wheel tracks. When you see them appear in a new media, and then they don't *repeat* that appearance... you've just saved yourself the trouble of testing those waters. Watch `em like a hawk.

Examine their products, the way they're shipped to you, how quickly they arrive. Keep track of how often they contact you for other sales. Chart their “battle tactics” for getting and keeping a satisfied customer.

Start a “swipe file” of great ads from competitors and non-competitors who have good ideas.

Don't ever be shy about using everything (legal) at your disposal to win. If there's room in your market for the two of you to both win big, then fine. If there's only room for one, make sure you're the last one standing. Never pretend you're alone in your market, unless you really are. And when you find an opening...

Go Out And Eat Their Lunch.

9. Make your copy a “greased slide”. The greatest ads ever written are just like a greased slide. The reader gets on at the beginning, and is rushed at a giddy pace straight

through every page, until he arrives at the close, breathless and so excited that he *can't wait* to get his money out and buy your product.

That means you don't go off on any tangents that interrupt the slide. Every point you make must be an **emotionally logical step** in the exact direction you want your reader to go - and that direction is always the same. You want action. You want the sale. You want to fill every one her needs, counter every one of her objections, hit every one of her "hot buttons".

10. Study great advertising. Finally, here's the list of books I've had in my professional library for over twenty years. I'm always looking, always hoping to find new and better ones... but I am always astonished at the wisdom and the skills available in these few books:

Tested Advertising Methods, by John Caples

Scientific Advertising/My Life In Advertising, by Claude Hopkins

How To Write A Great Advertisement, by Victor Schwaab

Maximum Money In Minimum Time, by Gary Halbert

The Lazy Man's Way To Riches, by Joe Karbo

Think And Grow Rich, by Napoleon Hill

I used to give out information on where to find these books, but since some of them go in and out of print on a regular basis, I refer you to the Web. Amazon.com can track down pretty much every title that has ever been published.

And for God's sake, don't be put off by the fact that some of these books are ancient. Claude Hopkins wrote his two books (published together as one) in 1924, yet almost every point he makes is still w timely today as it was then. Remember - the basic skills of great copywriting are pure salesmanship. And salesmanship hasn't changed since the dawn of man.

Chapter III

“The Amazing ‘Lazy Businessman's 3-Step Shortcut’ To Your First World-Class Ad.”

*How to quickly turn proven salesmanship into white-hot sales copy,
even if you flunked remedial English.*

If you already have a business or product, and you know how to sweep a customer off his feet in face-to-face selling... then you are just a few hours away from creating perhaps the most effective advertising your business will ever have.

I'm proud to admit I stole this technique from the great Gary Halbert. Gary is a genius marketer, and if you're going to filch ideas, make sure you steal from the best.

The idea is exquisitely simple, and a snap to explain:

1. It is easier to turn an illiterate master salesman into a top copywriter... than it is to turn an English Literature Ph.D. into a *salesman*. Sales ability trumps writing ability every single time.
2. If you can close *one* customer in person, you possess the key to selling *thousands* of other customers at the very same time. And...
3. The way to multiply your efforts is to simply "bottle" your proven sales pitch and translate it into a written ad.

Advertising is just “salesmanship multiplied” by applying it to print. The pitch you use to sell someone standing in front of you is almost identical to the pitch you will use in ads that reach huge numbers of people.

A great salesman meeting customers one at a time is severely limited in the number of sales he will be able to make each day. But a great ad will work 24/7 for you...

Selling More People In A Day Than You Could Meet Personally In A Year!

Here's how the technique works: First, record your pitch on tape. You, or whoever is the best salesman in your business. Record the pitch as it happens with actual customers, where it happens. On the phone, on the showroom floor, over lunch. Radio Shack can set you up for thirty bucks with the right equipment. (All you need is a small recorder, tapes, and an extra cord to catch conversations on your phone.)

You'll probably have to record the pitch several times. At first, you'll be self-conscious about being “on stage”. After a few hesitant starts, however, you'll forget about being taped and go into cruise control with your pitch.

That tape is *solid gold*, my friend.

The second step is to have the tape transcribed. Have someone type it up, word for word. Edit it, taking out all the um's and aaah's and stuttering. Take out irrelevant chatting (“would you like some coffee?”) and places where you repeat yourself. Smooth out each sentence where you stumble around saying “it's like, well, it's like, I mean, let me put it this way...”.

Take out everything the customer says unless he is asking a question. Use his questions to overcome objections: “But isn't it too expensive? That's a common question. Here's the answer:”.

Now arrange each sentence in a logical order. Often, when you sell face-to-face, you skip around and don't necessarily present your pitch in the best order. Here's your chance to create the **perfect sales pitch**. “Here's why you'll love owning this product...” “Here's what it will do for you...” “Here's why most people buy two...” Badda boom, badda bing.

The third, and final step, is to make your perfect pitch look like...

A Letter.

You start off with “Dear Bob Jones”, introduce yourself (“My name is Bucko Smith”) and begin making your case (“Can I help you find the perfect widget for your needs?”).

Don't worry about the length of your letter. The average sales letter I write is around 8 pages long. I once wrote a 23-page letter to *bodybuilders* about a new supplement. (It mailed successfully for years.) I'll give you plenty of tips later on how to guarantee your letter gets read.

But right now, you're simply translating your pitch onto paper.

Now, yes, you must make allowances for the fact your customer is not sitting across from you. You cannot read his eyes, you cannot see how well or poorly he is dressed, and you cannot ask him set-up questions.

Just make your best pitch to what appeals to the **broadest section** of your customer base. Assume you are talking to the *average buyer* - explain how you can fill *the average person's* needs, and meet the most *common* objections.

After you've made your pitch, make sure you have a paragraph that explains clearly **how to order**. Put in your phone number, what to tell whoever answers, what credit cards you take, where to send checks and money orders (and who to make them out to). Include a detachable coupon where he can write down all pertinent shipping

information (if he's mailing payment in), plus a stamped envelope with your address on it. If you need more help, you'll find it in Chapter XII ("Close The Deal").

Sign your name at the end, and you're pretty much done. Mail this letter to prospects in a plain white envelope with a first class stamp. (See Chapter VIII: "Get It Read.")

Think about what you've just accomplished, in only a few short hours. You have taken a proven sales pitch and "bottled" it. You have translated it to the written page, and you can mail it to as many potential customers as you like. They will have in their hands the transcription of your *best* effort.

It's Like Cloning Yourself A Hundred Thousand Times.

Now, be smart about this. Maybe you don't want to make the sale in the letter – if that's the case, then your "close" is to invite the customer to call you. Give your number, tell them when to call and who to ask for. Or tell them you'll call Friday around two.

You're a salesman. Use your savvy to make the letter do a job that leads to a sale.

Two final thoughts: This tape will also be the *best training tool* for newbie salespeople you ever have. It allows you to clone yourself as a mentor.

There is also another cool sales tactic you can use with the tape. Just dupe it and send it out with a cover letter to hot prospects: "Hi. I've enclosed a cassette tape of an interesting conversation I just had with someone very much like you..." Of course, you'll have to get the permission of the person you recorded. But don't experiment with sending out tapes until you've sent out your transcribed letter first.

In the next chapters, you're going to learn all the details of increasing the effectiveness of an ad. Everything in my "**Million Dollar Bag Of Tricks**". Each simple little step you take leads you closer to creating the most effective advertising you could ever have.

And see? So far, it's just as painless and easy as I promised.

Chapter IV

“How To Find The Head-Turning Hook That Reels `Em In.”

*Be the one thing your prospect reads today that
gets his adrenaline pumping.*

Before you put a single word down on paper for your ad, you want to do some serious sleuthing behind the scenes.

I call it being a sales detective. What you're looking for is the “hook” for your message - that unique (and usually human-oriented) piece of the sales story that arouses *burning curiosity*, and drags the reader into your copy like a landed Rainbow trout. A great hook - especially in your headline...

Will FORCE People To Read Your Ad.

It's the key to writing a big winner. Some of my best ads contained hooks that are now legendary, part of the mythology of direct response advertising. When you find a good one, you'll know it... because the phones will ring for *years*.

Here's how to do it: First, as I said, you gotta get into a Bogart-like “gumshoe” frame of mind.

You're going on a search for a detail of the product or business you're writing about... that *no one else has paid any attention to*. Gather about you all the sales literature, service manuals, and other written materials you can find. Read them to get a “feel” for the product.

You won't find your hook here, however. *No one's written about the hook yet.*

No, the only reason to read all that stuff is to...

Know How To Walk The Walk And Talk The Talk.

You want to be completely conversant in the details of the product, the jargon, the features, the numbers, everything. Because... you're now going fishing for the *human* connection in all of this. The eye-popping piece of the story that will jar even the most distracted reader into full attention.

Think of it as a little game of “connect the dots”.

Because you're now going to interview everyone you can reach who has “insider” knowledge of the product. The guys who manufacture it, sell it... and especially the guys who *created* it in the first place. The people who do it every day, who breathe, sleep and eat the lifestyle. (If you're the sole person behind your product, you still want to follow these steps. You'll have to literally “interview yourself”. Because as close as you are to your business... you still haven't found your own hook yet.)

Got your suspects lined up? Good. Now, you're going to pump them for information, following these few simple rules:

1. You're searching for *human interest* tidbits - small yet fascinating pieces of information - that are **unusual** (such as an accidental discovery by someone)... **provocative** (perhaps some smuggled or stolen information)... **titillating** (such as gossip-worthy rumors)... or **intriguing** (like an eccentric habit or trait). Go buy a few issues of *The National Enquirer* for inspiration. Imagine you're going to write a sensational cover headline about your product for the next issue.
2. Do not expect the people you talk with to come up with these tidbits of sensational information. Don't ask them to. Just talk to them about their jobs. Ask for *their own personal stories* about the product. Their favorite funny or outrageous rumor on the job. Don't let them fall into any rehearsed “party line” conversation - you want to talk to them as if you'd just met in a bar, and thought everything they said was the most fascinating story you've ever heard. Everyone loves to talk about what they do, and everyone they know is sick of listening to them. Be the most attentive ear they've ever had. Get `em to spill the beans.
3. You'll find your hook at the very moment you sit up and say “Wait a minute. Backup. You did *what?*” Or...

“You've Got To Be Kidding Me!”

Let me give you an example. Many years ago, I was interviewing a slightly crazed golf instructor who had just completed a training video. He swore he could teach anyone how to hit the ball straight and incredibly far. He certainly had some great success stories to brag about.

But there was no *hook*. So far, it was just another instructional video. Ho hum.

And then, half an hour into the conversation, I asked him where the inspiration for his new swing came from. He said, “Oh, back a few years, I saw this one-legged man hit a dead-solid perfect drive, and I realized that a two-legged golfer could benefit from the adjusted balancing he did...”

“Wait a minute,” I said. “You got your swing from a *one-legged golfer*? Are you kidding me?”

He was not. Immediately, I knew I had my hook. Here's the headline I wrote:

**Amazing Secret Discovered By One-Legged Golfer
Adds 50 Yards To Your Drives, Eliminates Hooks And
Slices... And Can Slash Up To 10 Stokes From Your Game
Almost Overnight!**

This ad has run successfully for over 8 years. As you can imagine, golfers tend to be a fairly conservative bunch... and my clients were a little nervous about this hook. Would your average dignified golfer really *read* such an outrageous ad?

Are you kidding?

Yes, even humorless, serious golfers feel compelled to read this ad. *Because* it's an outrageous-sounding story... and also because the hook is loaded with *personal benefits* the reader can use.

However, there's a flip side to using this kind of sensationalism. You have to honestly and sincerely, *fulfill on the promise* in your headline. The reader now has a burning curiosity brewing, and he wants it quenched. So, your hook must have...

A Legitimate Payoff.

Here's how I explained the one-legged golfer hook in that ad. This paragraph is in the middle of page 2:

Milt actually felt sorry for the one-legged man who was teeing up for his first shot... *until he saw him drive the ball 320 yards dead center down the fairway, while maintaining a smooth grace even his two-legged companions couldn't manage!* Imagine how this one-legged man must have looked standing up to the ball, swinging back and following through. Milt was sure the poor guy should have fallen over.

But he *didn't*. In fact, his balance was absolutely impeccable... and in a flash of insight, Milt saw the truth:

**Thin One-Legged Man Actually
Had An Advantage Over Normal Golfers!**

And then I go into the balance secrets of the “triple coil swing”, which relies on loading your body with naturally-coiled tension and a lot of other neat stuff. Stuff no one would have read about if the hook hadn't worked so well bringing them into the ad.

This ad still pulls like crazy, even after 8 years. And it made “Milt” - a fairly whacked-out, irascible and difficult man -- very famous.

The best hooks are almost *always* overlooked by the average writer. When you're too close to a subject or business, you take for granted many things that would cause outsiders to gasp. “Milt” honestly didn't think the story about the one-legged golfer was all that unusual - it was *old news* to him, and he never stepped back to take a longer view of the possible appeal.

People, however, are *never* bored by unusual stories. The skinny kid who discovered a fast way to pack on muscle. The business owner who turned disaster into riches. The ancient doctor who stumbled on a way to add ten super-healthy years to your life.

These types of stories are startling in the news they deliver... with an *ironic twist* to them. The weak dominate. The failure succeeds. The old recapture youth.

A good hook is even more important if you're selling something *dry*. Say, if you're a tax attorney... or a carpet cleaner... or an auto parts supplier. Where's the romance in these businesses?

Well... that's the whole point. People may need tax help, but tend to avoid the issue because they think it's boring and tedious. You're not going to get them whooping and dancing for joy with an ad that says “I'll Help You Do Your Taxes Better”. However... you just might get the phones ringing with ad that starts out...

Tax-Slashing Secrets Of A College Drop-Out Who Scares The IRS To Death!

Okay, so maybe the tax expert dropped out for only a semester and then finished his education on his own... but the fact that he routinely gets the IRS to drop audits of his clients is a story that needs telling.

Carpet cleaning is dull, dull, dull. Right? Well... how about:

Local Carpet Cleaner Guarantees To Stop Your Allergies... Or He Will Clean Every Rug In Your House For FREE!

This is an example of a “unique sales position”. There's nothing intriguing about the guy cleaning the carpets... but the *story behind* his outrageous guarantee is actually pretty darned sensational. It sets him apart from every other carpet cleaner in town - makes him “unique”. If you need carpets cleaned, you're going to consider this offer.

On to auto parts:

**Wife Of Auto Parts Store Owner
Swears Under Oath She Did Not
Use Sex To Get These Great Deals
From Suppliers!**

The greatest joy a copywriter can find is a client willing to come clean in their advertising... even if it's a little embarrassing. Perhaps the lady in this story once dated the head supplier of windshield wipers for the West coast. But that's *not* why they're getting such great discounts - rather, they've simply slashed their profit percentage. And all the savings go to the customer.

Grab your reader's attention... and then immediately *bring your point home* with benefits he can use. There is no subject or personality in the world that doesn't have *some* kind of twist that will interest people. You'll find it if you look.

Big-time *warning*, however: The *wrong way* to use a sensational hook is to *fool* the reader. That's a no-no. There's a notorious little ad trick that pops up in newspapers every few years... though it never runs for long. The headline is:

SEX!

And then the copy reads: "Now that I've got your undivided attention, I want to tell you about a great opportunity in life insurance..."

And the reader shakes his head and moves along. Sex *will* sell product - but only if there is a relevant tie-in. (By the way, did you know that "sex" is the number one word put into Internet search engines? You may want to tuck that piece of info away somewhere.)

Here's a headline I wrote for a book that was, essentially, just a bunch of interviews with people about what they liked and didn't like sexually:

**The Astonishing Sex Secrets Of The
Most Satisfied... Most Knowledgeable...
And Most Respected Lovers In The World!**

The client - Rodale Press, one of the largest (and most conservative) mailers on the planet - fought me tooth and nail over that headline. Finally, they relented and agreed to "test" it.

And it mailed steadily (and *very* profitably) for **five long years**, despite repeated attempts by some of the best writers in the country to beat it.

The hook comes from the use of the words “sex secrets”, combined with “satisfied”, “knowledgeable”, and “respected”. Well-chosen words that make it clear this isn't just a sleazy rant from some sex-maniac bozo... but a more in-depth (yet still titillating) story about everyone's favorite subject that promises know-how, satisfaction and a little fun.

Another example: Here's a headline I wrote for Phillips Publishing, the financial newsletter giant out of Maryland...

Why Does This Man Have One Of The Most Dazzlini Records On Wall Street?

Mysterious Arizona "Human Computer" Humiliates Wall Street "Experts" For 21st Consecutive Year!

Buried in the research material was a little quote from Money Magazine, referring to this mutual fund wizard as a “human computer”, because he has a warp-speed brain that thrives on complex math. In a typical quarter, he will crunch the numbers of over 14,000 different companies offering stock...

In His Head!

That's a pretty intriguing story. That is a *hook*.

And I'll talk more about “power words” in Chapter IX... but for now, focus on how the word “humiliates” in the above headline increases the *tension* of the reader's curiosity. Who doesn't want to read about the man who can humiliate the puffed-up suits on Wall Street?

Now, your hook can be a “grabber” - a relevant gimmick. You don't need a headline if you have a *dollar bill* stapled to the top of your letter. But you've still got to tie it into your story.

Here's how I explained - near the bottom of page one in a letter selling a self-defense course - why I'd attached a *nickel* to the top of the first page:

In less than a second, he suddenly realized he was about to be jumped by three experienced streetfighters... and if he didn't do something right *NOW*...

**His Life Wasn't Worth Much More
Than That Nickel In His Pocket!**

Want to guess how well that letter has done?

Well, here it is six years later... and it's *still* the biggest-pulling promotion in the self-defense industry. This one little letter has been worth a seven-figure fortune to my clients, in a small and very stingy market.

The trick is to weave a plausible, yet *sensational* story. The one-legged golfer ad is an example of a hook that is *almost* unbelievable. Almost, because I explained it satisfactorily in the copy.

It all makes sense, eventually.

There is a legitimate payoff.

One of the reasons to use “almost unbelievable” hooks is to set your business apart from everyone else's. There was a store owner in New York who called himself “Crazy Eddie”. In his television spots, he would take a sledgehammer and smash stereos, threatening to destroy the entire store if you didn't come down and buy something at his “insanely low prices”.

And I grew up in Cucamonga, California, watching a car dealer routinely bring out a brand new sedan during his TV commercial, talk it up as a “steal” at \$2,300... and then kick out the windshield, toss the sticker price, and offer it for \$150 to the first person to come down and grab the deal.

You can use craziness like that, if you *share in your reader's skepticism*, and turn the story around to...

**“Who Cares If He's A Little Nuts.
Look At The Bargain He's Offering!”**

Here's an example of another million-dollar-pulling golf ad I wrote that is more believable, yet still outrageous:

**How Does An Out-Of-Shape 55 Year-Old Golfer,
Crippled By Arthritis & 71 Lbs. Overweight, Still
Consistently Humiliate PGA Pros In
Head-To-Head Matches By Hitting Every Tee Shot
Farther And Straighter Down The Fairway?**

This 2-page ad still runs regularly in Golf Digest and other golf magazines, years after it's introduction. Without a single word change. It just pulls and pulls... because it *ignites the curiosity* of every golfer who reads it.

The idea, when using the hook in your headline, is to tell a short, outrageous story... that is so *achingly incomplete*, you wouldn't be human if you weren't dying to find out what it was about. And then, in your body copy, weave the story. Complete the hook.

Remember this:

- ✓ **Most folks do not get to meet interesting people...**
- ✓ **Or go to interesting places...**
- ✓ **Or do interesting things.** I think it was Thoreau who said “most men lead lives of *quiet desperation*.”

And that's your opening. Your ad is a chance for the reader to get out of his daily rut for a few moments... to be titillated, shocked, startled, and metaphorically...

Pinched On The Ass!

Your competition for his attention in the newspaper is a lot of stories about death and taxes. Your competition on television is a lame sit-corn or another Cubs blowout. Your competition in that handful of mail is bills and really, really *boring* junk mail.

All this is a great opportunity. You be the guy who stands up and says...

“Hey! Here's A Story That'll Get Your Blood Pumping!”

Two last thoughts: First, remember to not dwell on the negative side of any story. Instead, accentuate the positive. *Paint pleasing pictures* of the benefits of your product. Success, happiness, beauty. Don't belabor the “before”, highlight the “after”.

And second, don't pass up the chance to be the *first to tell the story* behind your product... even if there are a thousand competitors who can say the *same thing*. The great Claude Hopkins took Schlitz beer from number five in St. Louis to number one in the country -- by telling the story of pure brewing techniques... of special agricultural science to grow superior hops and barley and malt... of how the tanks were scrubbed clean three times daily, and on and on.

Now, none of this was unique to Schlitz. In fact, *every other brewer used the identical techniques*. But only Schlitz *told* people about it. They told their story, and it fascinated the population and induced even die-hard tea-totalers to try this pure, nurtured by- science beer. When the other breweries finally caught on, it only sounded like “me, too, hey, we do this, too” whining. Schlitz didn't relinquish that number one spot for a generation.

Chapter V
**“The More You Tell,
The More You Sell.”**

Your ad is your salesman. Don't gag him by limiting his words.

The one unquestioned “truth” most big ad agencies buy into is... people will *not* read a lot of copy in an advertisement.

They believe this with the fervor of a Kamikaze pilot. That's why they come up with - and base entire campaigns on - cute slogans, meaningless slivers of copy, and incoherent jingles.

On the other hand... the one *proven* truth that all direct marketers know from *experience* is...

**Customers Love Long Copy
When It's Targeted To Their Passions.**

I once wrote a 23-page letter (*twenty-three!*) to bodybuilders, which mailed profitably for several years. It was all about a hot new supplement that helped you recover faster from brutal workouts, skip the soreness other guys suffered, and enjoy a measurable surge in testosterone that would create powerful new muscle faster than you ever dreamed possible.

Included were five pages crammed with detailed analysis of ingredients with unpronounceable names. Two pages of charts. No photos at all. It was page after page of dense, detailed copy.

And bodybuilders ate it up, because it was all about *them*. Every sentence connected with their passion for their sport. Challenged some notions they had about weight training while supporting others which seemed like revelations. And every page read like a...

**“Can't Put It Down”
Detective Story!**

I've written dozens of three and four-page *magazine* ads. And I'm talking about ads that run in major publications, like Golf Digest, Muscle and Fitness, and Men's Journal. One or two small photos, at most, and the rest of the pages thick with copy.

These “monster sized” ads often work so well... they actually *change the way the magazine looks*. After other smart marketers see my ads appearing time and again, and rightly figure out these super-long pieces are raking it in, they follow suite. It usually takes about 18 months... but suddenly the magazine is rife with long copy ads.

I've written ads that fill entire pages of newspapers. That's the equivalent of 4 pages of manuscript copy, single spaced.

The *average* direct mail letter I write is at least 8 pages long, with several other pages of accompanying material. I've penned magalogs that took 30 pages of manuscript to fill.

In fact, the 3x5 *postcards* I've written contain twice the copy you would find in an average ad agency-created advertisement.

Why do I write such long ads?

Because That's What Works!

Salespeople who work face-to-face with customers know “the more you tell, the more you sell.” They wouldn't dream of sitting across from a prospect and trying to win them over with cutesy slogans, or, God forbid, by *singing* to them.

No. A great salesman knows - to make the sale - he must present *all* the benefits of his product, in ways that directly affect the selfish desires and needs of his customers. He must meet an entire menu of objections, with clear, honest and believable answers that satisfy completely.

No one wants to be an “easy” sell. It's not in Our nature. We need to be persuaded. And that takes some dedicated talking.

Well, guess what?

Your Ad Is Your Door-To-Door Salesman!

Your letter or print ad is literally going door to door at thousands of residences. And that little ad is completely alone. There's no back-up. No second chances to clarify anything.

You wouldn't send a salesman out there dressed like a *clown*, would you? Have him approach potential customers, do something silly, and then run off singing an inane slogan? Would you?

Of course you wouldn't.

Your ad is your salesman. Your customers won't know about the handcrafted details, the rare ingredients, the Swedish design, the way women will look at them when they use your product...

Unless You TELL Them!

They didn't ask for your presence in their lives. They didn't invite you in. You barged into their awareness completely unannounced.

So, if you have something to say, *say it*. And don't handcuff yourself by setting limits on the number of words you use.

Remember: The more you tell, the more you sell.

There is one “catch” to this, of course. Your customer will NOT be bored, and will NOT struggle to finish your thoughts. He will NOT “make the connection” of your vague metaphors.

He will NOT do your pitch for you.

However... if you share his passion... and focus your copy on things that excite him... and meet his needs, and counter his objections... and feed his own interests...

He Will Read Every Friggin' Word You Write!

Have you ever sat around talking with a car nut? He will prattle endlessly and with palpable passion about overhead cam shafts, Hearst 5-speed trannies, and why the only '62 Chevy Impala worth owning is the muscle car with the beefy 326 cubic inch engine, not the one with the anemic 283.

Or a musician. He'll *swoon* over talk about a rhythm section in the pocket, single-coil lipstick pickups, tube screamer stomp boxes and the ethereal tone of a tweed Fender Twin. Did you know that the great bluesman Stevie Ray Vaughn filled the recording studio with Twin Reverb amps, and left them on for *days* until the tubes were brittle with heat... just so he could get the exact tone he wanted for blues guitar? That is dedication, man.

That is also a great example of **targeted detail**. I lost all the non-guitar enthusiasts way back there... but I “*got*” all the musicians. If that was my intended audience, I won. I've now got their undivided attention. And who cares if you lose the part of the audience you *don't* want?

Don't waste a moment trying to appease anyone who doesn't share your passion. Instead, concentrate on selling your soul-mates.

How do you write long copy that stays in the “pocket” of your intended customer's passion? You use...

“Reason Why” Copy.

“Reason Why” copy simply means that you *explain* everything you say... using good, catchy, believable reasons that convince the reader.

Great copy explains itself as it goes along. With a folksy swagger that the reader can trust, because “it’s just us car nuts talking, man”. Forget about all that stilted prose you see in most ads: “When one feels the temptation to engage in libations, one chooses a superior Scotch...”

Horseshit. Write like you talk. And talk like you would if you were sitting face-to-face with your reader. Just yakking away about your shared passions.

And, oh, by the way... you have something here he might find *very* interesting.

In order to sell, you must romance. Seduce. Use a little *foreplay*, for God's sake. Show that you can be trusted, that you know what you're talking about, that what you have to offer *really* is a fabulous deal.

And you can't do that while talking like you...

Have A Stick Up Your Ass.

Have you ever bought anything from a salesperson you really liked? You felt a small bond with him, agreed with his worldview, felt he really was on your side and honestly wanted to see you happy?

It's a funny thing. Often, the best salesperson on the staff is NOT the guy with perfectly coifed hair, the sharp dresser with the handsome profile and deep baritone voice.

No. Often, the best salesperson is the schlepmy little mutt who always looks like he slept in his clothes, always seems to be having a bad hair day, tends to mumble a bit.

What's his secret? **Personality**. The guy understands his fellow humans..., and actually *cares* about them. He's a little odd, sure, but he's loveable. And he knows what he's talking about.

That's how you want to write. Put some goddamn *personality* into your words, Bucko. Let the reader know there's another human being on the other side of your letter. Someone with hopes, fears, desires and needs...

Just Like His!

Romance him like you would a lover. Be that guy other people love to hang around... because you've been places, seen things, discovered some really juicy and exciting secrets. Secrets you are here to *share*.

Treat your reader the way you want to be treated. (That's the Golden Rule, isn't it?) If you were gonna consider buying a product like this... wouldn't you want to know what was in it? If it really performed as advertised? If it *really was* a good deal? If this thing could actually satisfy your passion?

It takes a lot of copy to cover those bases.

And be *honest*. This is a master's level sales secret. Be completely honest about your product. Reveal a flaw or two. There's never been a perfect product manufactured in the history of man. Everything has something wrong with it. And everyone knows it.

When you admit the limits of your product, you gain credit for being honest.

You're a straight talkin' guy. You're someone who can be trusted to tell the truth.

The thing is... by revealing a flaw or two... you shine a brighter light on the *positive* benefits of your product. Normally, people won't believe anything you say.

They take all boasting with a big grain of salt. They...

Assume You're Going To Stretch The Truth.

So astonish him. Be different. When you're honest, and you prove it... you are no longer in the same category as all other advertisers. (Those lying bastards.) Nope. You're a straight shooter. You tell it like it is.

You're one of us, man.

A few last points: First, *never talk down to your customers*, as if you are the teacher and they are the pitifully inadequate students. Readers will not be put down. They will not be lectured. Or bored.

Instead, use *yourself* as the bad example: "I used to be that cocky guy who thought he would never get sick. And I don't have to tell you what a shock it is to wake up one day and realize you have arthritis. Yes, you and I share this crippling disease..."

Second: Consider the *personality* you put into your writing your "secret weapon" against competitors... especially if your product is pretty much *identical* to everyone else's. Personality is how you set yourself apart. Given the choice of dealing with a soulless corporation, or a passionate but slightly eccentric guy... all other things being equal... you will win the sale.

Lastly: Your sales pitch must be *complete*. You need the same detailed persuasiveness to sell a \$19 widget as you do to sell a \$199 gold-plated widget.

In fact, experienced marketers know that it sometimes takes MORE persuasion to a customer to part with twenty bucks than it does to part with a hundred dollars. It's human nature. We tend to sweat the pennies, and be oddly casual about the dollars.

The lesson: Don't scrimp on your sales pitch. Cover all the bases, every time.

Chapter VI

“Get It Read.”

The simple tactics of making sure your message survives her natural aversion to advertising.

People are numb from being bombarded with too much advertising.

And the sheer volume of ads is *increasing* daily. Did you know there are now, on average, an extra eight-to-twelve minutes of advertising per hour on television than just a few years ago? Reruns of I Love Lucy, Happy Days and Get Smart have to be cut and reedited to make room. You can't watch a movie now without little icons and messages popping up all over the screen. New hip magazines have more advertising than content. The whole world has become a huge billboard.

So the question for the savvy marketer is: How do you cut through the noise and get noticed?

And the answer is: Don't *try* to get noticed. Just simply...

Get Read.

The following ingenious techniques use the “don't resist” principles of martial arts. You can use the energy of the riot to cut straight through it.

Let's take the example of mailing a sales letter to a customer. In order to make the sale, you have to get your letter read. In order to get it read, you have to survive the first thing most people do when they bring their mail inside. Which is to...

Toss All The Junk.

Get into the head of your customer. Stop thinking about your need to make the sale. Instead, think about *his* need to reduce the bullshit in his life.

People sort their mail while standing over a wastepaper basket. And everything that looks like an ad gets tossed. You probably do this yourself.

Most businesses cover their mailings with “teaser copy” on the outside envelope which they think creates a burning curiosity... but which actually offers a *short-hand tip-off* for the customer to toss their letter without opening it.

Here's the conversation going on in his head: “Hmm, here's the phone bill. Bank statement. What's this? Time magazine, 35% off? Ugh, I don't want Time. Toss that. Huh? I don't need a new MasterCard, either. Bye...”

If you've slathered copy on your envelope that gives away your pitch, you've just wasted all the effort you put into your actual letter. 'Cuz it ain't gonna get read.

What mail does he *not* immediately throw away? There are three little piles left: 1) Bills and letters he recognizes - like the letter from his lawyer, or the monthly bank statement. 2) Suspicious-looking mail in unidentified window envelopes he doesn't dare throw away without checking out. And 3) Mail that looks *personal*.

He's still standing over the waste basket. And he's on a hair-trigger alert with each suspicious-looking envelope. The first sign it's an ad, and *bop!*

Into The Abyss.

So what do you do? It's simple. You make your letter look as much like personal mail as you can. Here are the guidelines:

1. Use plain white standard envelopes or plain manila 6x9 and 9x12 envelopes. Think about the kind of envelope your Aunt Rachel or your college buddy would use.
2. Have the address typed (or lasered so it looks like type) directly onto the letter. *Never* use a pre-printed label. That's a sure tip-off of a mass mailing.
3. Do not tip your hand with teaser copy on the envelope, like "Need your carpets steam-cleaned?" and "Hot new money-making opportunity inside!" You can, however, use stamps like a big red "Urgent" or "Personal and Confidential".
4. If you're not Aunt Rachel, do not put your name or the name of your business up in the left corner, no matter how groovy your logo is. Just type the street number, city, state and zip code. Don't use a P.O. Box, either. That's another tip-off of junk mail.
5. Finally, use a real, live First Class stamp. Just like normal people do. No machine indicia, no evidence that you've got a Pitney-Bowes postage meter.

Do you see what you've accomplished here? Instead of trying to scream louder than the other guy, or being part of the problem of "junk mail"... you've *slipped past* the outer defenses. Your potential customer *has* to open your envelope...

To See Who Sent This Mysterious Letter To Him!

So you get a shot at making your pitch. But it's a brief shot, and if you don't immediately reach out and grab your reader by the lapels, you're going in the trash.

Therefore...

1. If you use a headline, it must be one that instantly catches his attention. You have your foot in the door, and he's inclined to slam it shut on you. The very first words he sees must appeal to a deep, selfish desire he has.

2. The quickest way to get anyone's attention is to **use their name**. Even in the middle of a riot, you will respond to someone calling out your name. So use it. My clients report a 30% increase in response to letters just by personalizing the salutation. So instead of reading “Dear Friend”, Bob Jones reads “Dear Bob Jones.”
3. And, to avoid the “oh, yuck” reaction of having a mess of reply coupons, return envelopes and brochures fall into his lap... put everything but your sales letter into a separate, sealed envelope. Write “Please do not open until you have read my letter” on it_ This way, he has your sales letter in one hand, with all that compelling copy creating a burning curiosity... and in the other hand, he has the nuts and bolts of ordering and closing the deal, safely out of view until he's been “primed” to see it.

Almost every successful letter I've written has been mailed in this fashion, or close to it. If you had a gun to your head, and had to make your mailing a success, this is how you should mail your letter, too.

The First Class stamp is important for several reasons. First of all, it sets your letter apart from all that junk mail that mails bulk rate Third Class. You use a real stamp because *not* using a stamp means you're using a confusing machine indicia that could be *mistaken* for Third Class. And you've just wasted all that extra money.

If you *must* mail Third Class, use a Third Class stamp. At a glance, many bulk rate stamps look eerily similar to First Class stamps. Especially now that there are so many different kinds of stamps being printed every blessed day.

But mailing First Class is important for business reasons, also. Bulk rate mail will not be forwarded, and will not be returned to you if it is undeliverable. Think about that gun to your head again - wouldn't you like to *know* that your letter has...

The *Best* Chance Possible To Make It To Your Prospect?

There's more: You'll know when customers have disappeared - which they will do at a rate of about 15% a year - because your letters will come back to you as “undeliverable.” (We call these “nixies”.) This way, you can keep your list free of those profit-sucking names whose mail would otherwise vanish down a dark hole.

Your mail will also be delivered faster - a couple of days versus a couple of weeks. Do you really have the patience to wait *weeks* to see if your letter is a success?

And... you will avoid the miserable fate of much bulk rate mail. Practically every month there is a new story about some postal worker *tossing huge bales of “junk mail” into a dumpster*. Hey, it's hot outside, and that junk is heavy. Besides, who will know? It's Third Class mail - nixies are not returned, it's never forwarded, impossible to track.

So, are we clear on this? If you're mailing a sales letter out, take the simple steps above to make sure it is (a) delivered, and (b) opened. This is your best shot at getting your letter read.

That said... there is another mailing tactic you need to know about. I call it...

Full Frontal Nudity!

Relax. I'm talking about postcards. If your message is clear and short and precise... say, you're alerting previous customers of a fire sale or delivery of a limited supply of product you know they want (because they've ordered a ton of it before, and are pissed off they couldn't get any more)... then you can mail a simple postcard with your message on it. Just lay out your headline and your copy, right there in front of God and everybody.

Don't worry about using small type, either. People are used to reading copy as small as 6 and 7 point on postcards. If you have a message they want to read, they'll squint.

And while I haven't done it yet, I have friends who are mailing enormous postcards - literally 8 inches by 10 inches flat, not folded. Check with your postmaster about what size you can safely mail. Use a stiff stock. And mail First Class.

We're not done yet. Next up is how to get your ad read in a newspaper or magazine. It's very simple, actually. You just...

Make Your Ad Look Like A Real News Story!

The biggest mistake most advertisers make is to cleverly design their ads to *look* like ads. And people read publications for the articles. (Well, unless you're reading Playboy, I suppose.) They *skip right over* the ads. It's all background clutter, the necessary evil of having cheap newspapers and glossy magazines subsidized by ad revenue.

Well, you aren't in business to fund someone else's publication. You're in there to get read, and to make a sale. So you don't *want* to be part of the background clutter. You want to be just like the articles, and get read.

So, *look* like an article.

Forget about fancy graphics, wrap-around copy, huge photos, or even color. These are attributes of ads that don't get read. You want to look just the other articles in the publication. So you:

- ✓ Use the same typeface and size of type as the surrounding articles.
- ✓ Lay out your copy in the same format - same size columns, same rules and design elements.
- ✓ And make your headline and subheads look just like all the other headlines and subheads... right down to whether they capitalize every word or not, or use a period.

What you've just done is move out of the pack of other ads, all of which get at most a disinterested glance. And you are now among the very articles that the reader has purchased the publication to read.

(**Note:** Most publications will bristle a bit if you copy their patented typography. That's okay. Most use some combination of customized versions of Times Roman for body copy and Helvetica for headlines. Just use the standard versions - as I have in this book -- and you'll look pretty darn close to theirs anyway. **Also:** Most will insist on running a slug that says "Advertisement" above your ad. That's okay, too. Readers tend to skip right by it... as long as your headline is *exciting their passions*.)

This admittedly sneaky technique works especially well when your product is totally in synch with the publication - say, an ad for a dog product in a magazine about dogs. But it also works in general publications. Especially when you've got a...

Great Hook.

That's Chapter IV, of course.

Two final thoughts: A great way to get your message read, by the way, is to make your ad up as a full-page newspaper ad... print it on newsprint... have the printer cut it with a ragged edge, so it looks like it was ripped out of a newspaper... and then mail it in an envelope. This is called a "tear sheet mailing*'. To increase the idea that a friend has just ripped this ad out and mailed it to you, you can attach a Post-It note to the page: "Hi - knew you'd love to see this. J."

Use just the initial "J.", because almost everyone knows someone with a name that begins with that letter. To increase response, personalize the note: "Hi Bob. Check this out. J."

Finally, if you absolutely must get your message to your potential customer... and it's a high-ticket product (say, \$199 or higher)... and you have a qualified list to mail to... and that ol' gun is pointed at your head...

Use Federal Express.

No one, in the history of our civilization, has ever *not* opened a Federal Express package addressed to them. Yes, it is expensive. But if you know, from experience, that

you will sell a certain percentage of qualified customers who read your message... and from that sales percentage, you can easily fit the cost of mailing this way... do it.

For example: Say you're selling a high-ticket item... like a yacht for \$800,000, and you have a list of 1,000 people who are very interested in buying a yacht. What do you care if you shell out \$8,000 in Federal Express charges to reach them? You KNOW it will get read. If you have what they want, and you make your pitch compelling... and you need to get this yacht off your hands... the extra cost is irrelevant.

In fact, I would consider stapling a hundred dollar bill to the top of every letter. Just to make sure the reader knew I was *serious*.

I'll show you more ways to use that kind of “grabber” technique later.

Chapter VII

“Killer Headlines.”

How to write a headline that stops your intended audience cold.

Most of your letters... and *all* of your newspaper and magazine ads... will have a headline.

If you do what most lazy writers do, you'll slap one together at the last minute, after you've written everything else.

And this will *murder* your ad.

Flip through the nearest magazine. Look at the ads. You'll see a few with headlines that seem clear enough. Some may even induce you to read the body copy.

But most of them will just float right by your eyes, like seagulls on the horizon.

Your headline is the single most important piece of copy you will write. Savvy copywriters often spend...

90% Of Their Time Crafting *Just The Headline!*

Why? Because your headline must do two jobs, and do them *quickly*. You have less than a full second of the reader's scattered attention. And your headline must:

1. **Catch the full attention of your intended audience...** and...
2. **Bring them *into* the ad**, as if you have reached out of the page and grabbed them by the lapels.

Imagine you're standing at the edge of a crowd rushing by. Say, at a train station. Everybody's late, distracted, irritated.

And you want to sell them a book about building Web sites that actually earn money. Your prospects include owners of businesses trying to make it on the Web, geeks trying to build them, entrepreneurs always on the lookout for information just like you have, and dreamers who think they have a good idea to upload.

So, there you are. And there's the crowd, rushing by, ignoring you. How you get the attention of the people you want to talk to?

Easy. You just yell...

**“Hey, Bob McDaniels!
Over here!”**

You think I'm messing around with you, don't you? Well, I'm not. I'm telling you what to imagine here... and I've just made the owner of a software company you recognized walk by on the way to his train.

And you just got his attention.

Using a person's **name** in your headline is the *strongest appeal* your sales letter could ever have, too. So... if you have the name of your prospect...

Use It!

My clients have found that personalizing letters can increase response by as much as 30%. Even if the personalization only occurs in the salutation (“Dear Bob McDaniels:”).

Now, yes, you won't always be able to use personalization. You can't use it in newspaper or magazine ads. And sometimes the economics of your situation dictates that you must skip the personalization.

When that's the case...

Use “Trigger Words” That Instantly Identify Your Intended Reader!

Let's go back to the chaos of the train station. You don't know anyone's name. So how do you identify that part of the streaming crowd who might be interested in your computer-related book?

You yell...

“Attention, WEB SITE OWNERS! Here's A Free Report That Will Show You How To Quadruple Profits Overnight!”

That sort of cuts to the quick, doesn't it?

Anyone within earshot who needs that information will scurry over to you and grab their free report. If you can get them to sit down and talk, you can begin your sales pitch for your book. If not, they'll read all about it in the special report.

Trigger words are the *next best thing* to the sound of your own name. They are shorthand, and very direct, descriptions of the very thing you are interested in. If you're a rabid bowler, you'll perk up to the words “Hey, Bowlers!”

If you're hot to find a new house, you'll respond to the trigger words “house hunting” and “real estate secrets your broker is hiding from you”.

If your business is hemorrhaging money, you'll likely respond to the words “cash flow secrets”, “instant flood of new customers” and “Chapter Eleven”.

If you suspect your spouse is cheating on you, you might respond to the words “divorce” and “how to screw your husband or wife out of custody”.

Readers *depend* on headlines to cut through the clutter and nonsense... and alert them to the articles (and ads) *they really want to focus on*. The magazine they're reading has 268 pages of copy in it, and most of it is advertising with no bearing on their lives whatsoever.

Their morning newspaper is full of horror, bad news, the sports pages, and damn, they moved Dear Abby again. (By the way, did you know the *comics* are the most-read part of the newspaper?)

And when the mailman arrives, there's a fresh stack of bills, flyers and catalogs all screaming for attention.

So, knowing this...

Why Would You Dare HIDE Your Message Behind A Goofy Headline?

Well, if you're smart, you won't. Even though that is exactly what MOST advertisers do.

Here's a little test: Have someone open a magazine - any magazine at all – and read *aloud* only the headlines of the first twelve ads he sees. Try to guess what product is being touted.

Heck... try to guess what part of the business world they're in. You'll see car ads with headlines that talk about jet airliners... credit card company ads that talk about backpacking... and cellular phone manufacturers that talk about living in Paris.

I just picked up recent copies of Maxim, the New Yorker, and Playboy. (Shows you where my interests lie.) Here's a full page ad showing a crumpled napkin with the word “coffee” scribbled on it, the word “50 cents” crossed out, and “\$4.95” written under it. They're selling Johnny Walker scotch. No trace of a bottle or label to be found. If you can't read the 5-point line of copy at the bottom, you'd never figure out who paid for the ad.

Here's a full-page photo of a guy asleep, lying sideways with a blanket and pillow. The headline is “It's true, you can sleep your way to the top.” Lots of empty

space. In small copy at the bottom, you learn this is an ad for British Airways. Apparently they now offer flat beds in business class. Very clever way to NOT alert your potential customers.

And here's a full page grainy outdoor shot, with a pony-tailed dude looking out over a darkening valley. Headline: "Let someone else climb the corporate ladder." Care to guess what the product is?

Chewing tobacco.

One more. Back cover ad, the most expensive real estate in the magazine. Fuzzy, light-colored background you can't make out. Here's the copy: "Pate. Pillows. Are GEESE great or what?"

I am not making this up. It's an ad for *Hyatt hotels*.

These ads are not written by salesmen. And they are not written with the customer in mind.

Nope. They are written to please other dumb-ass corporate copywriters and designers and - worst of all - the client. Most copywriters think if they get the client to like the ad, they've been successful.

Horseshit. In fact, I've discovered that, frequently, it's the Kiss Of Death if the client likes the ad. I don't *want* the client to like the ad. I hope it even makes him a little *uncomfortable*. I'm not getting paid to stroke his ego. I'm out to...

Make The Damn Sale!

Your reader hasn't got the time -- or the inclination -- to stare at your ad and try to figure out what the hell you're trying to say. He won't do it. Readers scan even the *important* stuff in what they read. (I almost threw away a recent bill from the cable company they'd cleverly disguised as a solicitation on first glance.)

And readers absolutely *fly by* the junk mail and obvious advertisements they see.

It's your job to stop them like Wile E. Coyote running into a brick wall the Roadrunner painted to look like the sky. *Wham!*

And you do that by using trigger words that tap into their passion. Your headline must deliver either:

1. **News** that affects your prospects directly... ("How To Use The New Laws To Lower Your Property Taxes By Half.")...
2. A **spectacular benefit** that jars them out of their stupor... ("New Herbal Pill Instantly Makes You Look 10 Years Younger!")... or...

3. Arouse such **burning curiosity** that they cannot continue with their lives until they've read your message. (“Why Does This Hacker Smile Every Time You Do Business On-Line?”)

Now go back and try inserting your prospect's name in each of those three example headlines. “Why Does This Hacker Smile Every Time Bob Smith Does Business On-Line?” You think Bob Smith is going to skip past that?

It doesn't matter what *anybody else* thinks about your ad. You shouldn't care if NO ONE outside your target audience even glances at your ad (and this includes the client and other copywriters). You're not *after* them. You're after your...

Prime Targets!

This may crimp your “creativity”... but it will sure *increase sales*. Have eyes ONLY for your potential customer, and know that you will *never* be dull when you're addressing what is important to him:

New cancer cure discovered by French scientist!

Can you use an extra \$1,000 a month, without having to work for it?

Read this before you sell your car!

A Short Message For Single People *Only*.

Attention, Butterfly Collectors!

Do You Have Athlete's Foot... Or Something *Worse*?

Have you got the idea? Here's a few more examples:

Don't risk “burn out” before you discover how quickly these secrets can change your life!

**Who Else Wants To Learn The Secrets Of
Earning An Extra \$96,485 As A Chiropractor This Year...
While Working Just 24-Hours A Week (Or Less), With
Minimum Stress And Zero Debt!**

I wrote this ad for a chiropractic “coach” who knew his target audience was exhausted, mega-overworked bone-crunchers who knew they weren't making a fraction of what they should be earning. The ad is still running, pulling hundreds of thousands of dollars some four years later.

I directly addressed the *intended audience*, using loaded “trigger words” that were sure to grab them by the throat. All the happy, super-rich and relaxed doctors blew right by the ad. They weren't the target.

And I was *specific* with numbers. Specificity just shines with trustworthiness. But you must back it up. Explain how you got your numbers in the copy. (In this case, we had an accountant verify that this, indeed, was the average increase in client profits.)

See if you have to guess what these final headlines are selling. (Hint: Each one is attached to an ad that is still mailing, still running in magazines, still pulling in buckets of profit.)

“Put me in a tee box with Tiger Woods and I'll outdrive him every time!”

**How A Skinny Little Golf Genius From
California Accidentally Started
Hitting 425-Yard Tee Shots!**

*Force him to make the first move... dance him around like a girl...
and TAKE HIM OUT like a rag doll!*

**Why Are Bigger, Stronger, Taller And Meaner
Multiple Black-Belt Bad Asses Absolutely Terrified
Of Challenging This Mild, Middle-Aged (And Undefeated)
No-Rules Cage Fighter From Arizona?**

And The Reports Are FREE!

**The Amazing “Girl-Attracting” Secrets Of
A Short, Desperate Nerd From Pomona!**

Former original star of “All My Children” reveals...

**How A Famous “Fat Loss” Doctor From San Diego
Discovered A Safe, Simple And Easy Way To Quickly Lose
All The Weight You Want (Without Hunger)... And...
KEEP It Off Forever Without Restrictive Dieting!**

FREE Stock Trading Secrets
Of A Filthy-Rich Wall Street Outlaw!

*The most closely-guarded "specialization muscle-booster secrets "of a world famous
Gonzo Bodybuilder!*

**Get 3 Years Worth Of MONSTER GAINS
In Your Toughest-To-Grow Spots...
In Just 3 Short Months... Guaranteed!**

Now go get `em, tiger.

Chapter VIII

“Tell Me Why You're Telling Me What You're Telling Me.”

*How to use the compelling power of “reason why” copy
to overcome all objections and make the sale.*

After your headline, the most important piece of copy is your opening paragraph. This is where you set the stage for everything else you say.

Imagine that your headline has “gotten you in the door”. Your opening paragraph is then how you get your prospect to “sit down” and settle in for one of the most fascinating rides of his life.

The easiest technique to use to do that - and it's one I employ frequently – is the...

“If... Then” Introduction.

It's very simple. Here's a couple of examples: “If you've always dreamed of a super-effective diet that's so easy, it works automatically even when you *constantly cheat*... then this will be the most exciting letter you ever read.”

“If you'd like to get a brand new Porsche 911, for *half* of what everyone else has to pay (legally)... then you're going to freak over what I have to share with you here.”

“If you'd love to start firing tennis serves at over 110 miles an hour, with the accuracy of a guided missile... then this will be the most life-changing message you have ever read.”

And so on. Even veteran writers sometimes stumble and mumble when trying to write a killer opening paragraph. This technique gets the job done with absolute minimum fuss.

Another technique is to...

Simply State Your Case.

It sounds straightforward enough, but it's pure *genius* in its simplicity: “My name is Dr. O'Malley, and I have just written a book that shows how you can instantly increase the intensity and duration of your orgasms. Here is what I've discovered...”

“I am one of fourteen people who have discovered an easy, legal and no-hassle way to get into Cubs games absolutely free. Here is how you can be number fifteen...”

“With your permission - and with strict precautions for your privacy - I want to send you a copy of a vicious hand-to-hand training video that was smuggled out of the U.S. Navy SEALs elite bootcamp...”

You get the idea.

These techniques are examples of “reason why” copy. We call it that because, literally, you give your reader a *reason* to believe every statement you make.

A specific, plausible and compelling reason.

Using this simple technique guarantees that you do not fall into the trap *most* ad writers fall into. Which is to be unclear and vague. Basically, most ad writers just...

Brag Without Backing It Up.

Huge mistake. Huge. You tell your reader you've got the best product in the universe, and what does he do? He yawns.

But if tell him you have 985,425 current customers worldwide, and outsold your nearest competitor by 46% over the last six years... well, that will perk him up.

Don't even try telling him you made “a million dollars” last year using your fabulous new idea. -Instead, reprint a letter from your accountant verifying your last bank statement, where you deposited \$1,121,347.87. Heck, get a *notary public* to put her stamp on the thing.

Being specific means...

You Know What You're Talking About.

And that's what gives your customer the confidence to buy from you.

You are “credentializing” yourself as a knowledgeable expert... who is about to share everything you know with your customers. You have a reason - and a *damn good one*, too - behind everything you state.

There's a reason why you're writing to him.

There's a reason why your product is something he will definitely want.

There's a reason why it costs what it does.

And there's a reason why he has to act right now, or miss out.

Tell him why you're telling him what you're telling him! Do as a salesman would when speaking face-to-face with a half-sold customer. Give the poor reader...

**A Reason To
Buy From You,
Right Now.**

Explain yourself, Bucko. "I'm writing to you today because I know you are interested in growing roses."

"I got your name from a mutual friend, who said you'd want to know about this amazing opportunity right away."

"You recently responded to an ad we ran in USA Today, with this headline..."

"I am writing to everyone who lives in Sleepy Hollow, because something urgent has come up that directly affects *your* property value..."

And then tell your story, as simply and clearly as you can. One of my favorite ways to do this is by using this phrase to start the second, or at the very latest, the third paragraph:

"Here's What It's All About:"

In fact, that simple phrase can be used, with only slight modifications, throughout your copy. It essentially takes the place of the QUESTION your prospect would most naturally ask you at that point... if she was sitting in front of you. But she's not. So you answer the question that's in her *head*, at every juncture:

"Here's why so many women are using this product:"

"Here is how those Swiss scientists came up with the formula:"

"Here's what this product will do for you:"

"Here is why you don't risk a penny."

And... one of the most important explanations in your pitch...

"Here's How To Order:"

But don't you dare do that until you have loaded your reader down with more excellent reasons to buy than he can fit into his thinking process.

Mark Twain once said: “There are two reasons a man buys anything. The reason he can tell his wife... and the *real* reason.”

Take that to heart. You must satisfy the reluctance in your customer's *soul*... in his *heart*... in his *brain*... in his *bank account*...

**And In The Minds Of His Friends, Lovers,
Neighbors And Spouse.**

Don't just tell him it's a bargain. *Show* him, in a way he can easily repeat to convince his wife.

Don't mumble about excellent engineering. Give him the specs, in a memorable story that will leave his buddies breathless.

Don't be vague about why you're in the business. Tell your story, in a way anyone can identify with.

And *keep* telling your story... but always bring it back to your customer. Tell her why this purchase makes sense. Why it will help her get what she most desires. Why it's exactly what she's been waiting for her entire life.

Do you honestly have inside information, or a hot tip, or a way to deliver a better deal than anyone else can get?

Tell me about it.

Do you have an uncle in the Mafia who, just before going off to San Quentin, revealed to you a perfectly legal way to lower your income tax by investing in Euro dollars?

Or, has the taxman surprised you with a bill you can't pay, and that means you must sell your entire inventory of widgets at fire sale prices?

Or, on a cold drizzling day last March, did a stranger come up to you on the golf course and reveal a simple adjustment to your swing that caused you to suddenly start launching 300-yard howitzer shots off every tee?

Okay. That sounds good. But why should I believe you? Tell me. Is it because you're a respected oral surgeon in Des Moines, with a reputation like gold?

Or, is your business well-known on the West Coast, with a 25-year track record of honesty and breaking new ground on exciting stuff?

Or, are you just a regular Schmoie who stumbled onto a good thing, and decided to share your good fortune with a few lucky souls... but you insist on treating every

customer the way you wish *you* were treated - and seldom are - by being outrageously generous and trusting and taking on *all* the risk yourself?

Okay. Starting to sound pretty tempting. But how can I be sure this will work as advertised? *Tell* me: “Here's a short list of satisfied customers, including the Los Angeles Chief of Police, the Duke of Buckingham, and six well-known businessmen in your home town.”

Keep pouring it on. “Here's why so many professionals and savvy people already are customers.”

“Here's why we've decided on this price, and why it's a great deal.”

“Here's why you can feel confident you aren't risking a penny.”

“Here's how fast you can expect to get exciting results, and here are examples of those results.”

“Here's how to order, and here's when to expect your stuff to arrive.”

Here's the story.

Here's what it's all about.

One last thought: Always stay one step ahead of your reader. Remember... he *expects* you to exaggerate and brag and be fast and loose with the facts. That's what every other advertiser has done since the day he learned to read.

So... don't lie. Be brutally honest. Just keep imaging your reader shaking his head, saying “Yeah, right.” And then immediately confront that thought: “I'll bet you think I'm pulling your leg, right? Hey, I thought this sounded ‘too good to be true’, too. Here's what convinced me otherwise:”

Never forget that he doesn't really want to believe you. He's been taken for a sucker countless times before. He's *never* really gotten a fair shake from an advertiser.

So be the first businessman in his life to treat him... like *you* would like to be treated yourself. Be honest. Offer a good deal, with plenty of opportunity to change his mind. Make the deal legitimately “fool-proof”. And give him lots and lots of reasons to...

**Convince *Himself*
This Is A Fabulous Deal.**

That's the way great salesmen do it.

Chapter IX

“The Simple Wizardry Of Capturing Your Reader's Imagination.”

*How to paint pleasing pictures of what your product will do
for your customer.*

If there is an “art” to world-class copywriting... it's in finding the *right words* to fill your prospect's head with vivid pictures that sell your product.

And there's actually a scientific way to go about doing this.

First, you make a list of all the “features” of your product. A feature is a detail (the chapter names and subject matter of your book)... a measurement or specification (the cubic inches of a car's motor)... or a breakdown of what is delivered (you'll learn 6 ways to sell a house quickly).

Let's say you're selling... an instructional course on how to build a profitable Web site. The features of your product might look like this:

- ✓ Six 30-minute audio cassettes that explain how to build a site... how to find the kinds of products people want on the Web... how to establish a merchant account so you can take credit cards... and how to get placed high on search engines.
- ✓ An hour-long instructional VHS video showing you a successful site and how it navigates.
- ✓ A 24-page workbook.
- ✓ And... an easy-to-use software package of Internet tools.

That's the bare-bones list of features. That's also as far as most writers go in presenting their product to potential customers.

Stopping here is like a waiter refusing to tell a restaurant customer anything about the Chefs Surprise. “It's a pasta dish. What else do you need to know?”

Well, for starters... will I like it? Is it *spicy*? Is it a lot of food?

Is It Any Good?

I'm full of questions. And I want them *answered*, so I can be sure what I get fits my needs.

So, your next step is to take each of your features... and attach a “benefit” to it. A benefit, in copywriting lingo, is basically...

What This Stuff Will Do For The Human Being Using It.

Let's go back to the example. Why have you put six 30-minute audio cassettes in the package? Because... this allows you to listen to the tutorial while you're driving in your car, or laying in bed at night. They're in 30-minute segments because we've found that's the best way to “absorb” the material, in half-hour chunks. And we decided on cassettes because most cars have cassette players. You can order CD's for a few bucks extra if that's what you want.

The key word in all this is...

“Because.”

Imagine your customer in the same position as the diner in the restaurant. She wants to know every friggin' detail of what you've got. And more importantly, she wants to know how these details are going to affect *her*.

One of the 6 cassettes explains how to build a site. Why? Because, there are a ton of “experts” out there telling people how to do it *wrong*. Most Web sites are a disaster, and it can bankrupt you to attempt to learn from mistakes. We've already made all the mistakes... and we've discovered how to be successful. We can short-cut your learning curve by half.

Another tape shows you how to get a merchant account. Why? Because 99% of your sales will be from credit cards, and you can't accept them unless you have an account. These accounts are normally hard to get... but we know a quick way to get around all the usual red tape. You can be up and running literally overnight.

You see what I'm doing here? I'm...

Answering The Questions In Her Mind!

Some of those questions aren't even well-formed thoughts... because many of your customers won't even know exactly what to ask. So you ask *for* her. And give the answer that gets her nodding in agreement. “Yeah. That sounds good.”

Why an hour-long VHS video? Because it allows you see not only how your site should look, but how your customers will use it. It's like being in the same room with an expert instructor right at your side, helping you “get” this information in the fastest and easiest way possible. Again, we used VHS because that's what most people have. You can order the DVD for a few bucks extra.

Explain, explain, explain. But never do this dryly. Instead...

Tickle His Senses.

You want to force-feed the benefits of your products straight into his brain. You do this by relating all your dry facts and figures back to *what they will do for him*. In ways he can...

- ✓ *See...* (Your new site will take shape before your eyes, and be fully-functional in under two hours)...
- ✓ *Feel...* (Just imagine the thrill of going to bed a week from today, knowing you've just deposited another \$20,000 in your personal bank account)...
- ✓ *Taste...* (Put a bottle of champagne on ice and get revved up for some lobster, because you're going to be celebrating in just a few days)...
- ✓ *Smell...* (The first thing I did was buy a beach house ; I love to suck up the cool, invigorating salt air, and only the rich get to do that)...
- ✓ *And get physically excited about.* (Say goodbye to slaving away for the `Man' - every time you sit down at your computer from here on out, you're working for YOU!)

You want to...

Paint Pleasing Pictures In Your Customer's Mind!

How? With *action* verbs.

Most writers rely on adjectives to put some description in their copy. Good copy goes light on adjectives. And heavy on action verbs.

Forgot your English 1A? That's okay - I was home sick the day they discussed this stuff, too. Here's a simple refresher course for you.

Example A: Trying to get your point across using bloated adjectives.

"She was a mean, cruel and heartless lady, whose long, flowing ruby-colored locks danced around her flawless, porcelain-like face as she told her teary-eyed, sobbing beau that their torrid love affair was over."

Example B: Using a couple of well-chosen verbs to say the same thing:

"The red-headed bitch ripped his heart out and stomped on it."

Adjectives are just fluff and air. Like tossing flowers out of your ad to get your prospect's attention.

Action verbs are like snarling bulldogs. Who race out of your ad, grab the reader and drag him back in, kicking and screaming.

Don't say "You'll really enjoy this product." Say "You will swoon over this product." The widget doesn't "work well". It "*kicks ass*". Your new idea isn't "interesting." It's "a shock to the status quo." People aren't "happy" with results. They're "stunned and sobbing with joy."

Become a student of action verbs. Keep a notepad handy, and write down the ones that reach out and grab you whenever you come across them. Suckered. Dwarfed. Outraged. Squirm. Crush. Humiliate. Botch. Murder. Crave. Squeeze. Obliterate. Steal. Conquer. Repel. Stagger. Dig. Scream. Lug. Hurl. Scare. Stumble. Force-feed. Cook. Rumble. Shock.

You want your ad to sound just like you talk... if you could *edit* what you say, and have a little extra time to search for the...

Perfect Attention-Arresting Word.

So keep a thesaurus and dictionary handy. Mine arc dog-eared and beat-to-shit from constant handling. When you find yourself using boring, limp verbs like "want" or "has" too much, use the thesaurus to find a better replacement. Like "crave" and "possess". Or "lust after" and "stolen". So instead of "I have a product you want", you get "I possess a product you will lust after".

Or, even more daring, "I stole this strategy from a filthy rich investment advisor... and any sane man desiring to double his own wealth would kill to learn this simple information."

Pick up a copy of "**The Elements Of Style**", by Strunk and White. It's only a few dozen pages long, but it delivers the best "short cut" education on writing with clarity and power I've ever read.

Also, while you're at the bookstore, pick up a copy of "**American Slang**", by Robert Chapman. A good knowledge of effective slang is what separates the Ivory Tower writers from the guys like me who operate in the real world. The trenches are where fortunes are won or lost depending on your...

Street Savvy.

Slang is especially important for specific markets. Knowing the lingo of the passionate customer is critical to bonding with him. Die-hard golfers don't call it a "sand trap" - it's always a "bunker". The "pocket" to a bowler is that sweet spot between the one and three pins. A musician with a "big ear" hears everything going on, and does his best to make the entire band sound good.

Just stay current. The lingo changes with each generation. For a long time, “bad” meant “good” among skateboarders. Now “sick” means “good”. And telling a musician he’s “the shit” is the highest compliment you can pay him. At least it was last time I checked.

You never want to tip your hand that you’re an outsider, by getting the slang *wrong*.

Also, **use clichés**. Your 9th grade English teacher will faint if she finds out, but your audience will be right there with you. “Sick as a dog.” “Butter wouldn’t melt in this girl’s mouth.” “Sober as a judge.” “So simple, a baby can do it.” “That dog will hunt.”

Remember, you’re *painting pictures* in your prospect’s mind.

So *don’t* use generalities. They sound like bragging, and no one believes a bragger. You’re not “the best in the universe.” But you *have* been rated number one for the last four years running by the Chamber of Commerce.

Do your homework, and get specific. Your product doesn’t last longer than anyone else’s... it lasts *3-1/2 times longer* than the most popular brand. This video is 129 minutes long... and the first twelve minutes will shock you, while the middle 22 minutes will have you shouting with joy. This recipe was created by chemists in Barcelona after 16 years of trial and error - and the 119-page secret formula is kept in a locked safe, in a locked room, in a secure, unmarked building with 24/7 armed guards just outside of West Tulsa.

Use **Power Words** that carry an emotional wallop. Cured. Astonish. Freak out. Killer. Miracle. Suffocate. Cold-cock. Liar. Bribe. Lure. Rocked. Infested. Bandit. Abandon. Slaughter. Tickle. Inflame. Coax. Tease. Blast. Ridicule. Slay. Boost. Implode. Danger. Wealth. Ecstasy. Heaven.

Be colorful, but don’t offend. Don’t swear, unless you’re *sure* your audience appreciates that kind of “honest” speech. Don’t tell offensive jokes. Don’t pick on anyone (unless you’re skewering Democrats in a fund-raising letter to Republicans). If you must have a scape goat... use yourself.

And don’t trash the competition. You’ll only sound like a jealous rival, and your reader will discount all you say. Instead, *invite* your reader to try the competitor’s stuff, and compare. Give him a great story about your product, and let him know you *want* people to judge it side by side with everything else out there. That’s how confident you are.

That kind of “benign cockiness” engenders trust and confidence. Much better than getting into a potty-mouthed shouting match with your competition.

Finally, the “meat” of your ad... the place where you get down and dirty and really turn up the heat on your reader's passion... will be in the section you list all your features, along with your newly-attached benefits.

The best way to present this information is by using...

“Bullets”.

Just as I've illustrated below, bullets are compact, descriptive statements of a single detail. They occur in your ad at the point where you say: “Here's what this product will do for you:”. The “bullet” is the typography mark in the margin... in this case, I've used check marks. (The most common mark is a little round dot... which looks like a bullet hole. Thus, the term “bullets”.) Some writers list these descriptive statements using letters (A. B. C. and so on) or numbers (1. 2. 3. and on). Doesn't matter which method you use, as long as you are clear and consistent.

So pay attention here. Each bullet is constructed using what I call the...

“One-Two Punch.”

This means, I give a benefit... and then add *another* benefit (often in parentheses) that really brings it home. An image that *explodes* in the customer's mind. A jab to soften him up... and then a vicious uppercut to make the memory a lasting one.

You will also notice that most of my bullets are...

Blind!

That means you get a clear picture of the benefit you'll receive... but you have no idea whatsoever what the exact secret I'm talking about is. In many of my ads, I mix these types of “blind” bullets with a few “give-aways” - bullets that actually *give* the entire secret away. Like this:

- ✓ Cure warts with a clove of garlic (nature's most potent infection fighter)! Just crush the clove into a paste and spread it on the wart morning and night. In 3 days, it will be gone!

And the next bullet will be teasingly *blind*:

- ✓ A simple tea made from a common flower in your garden can boost your memory power literally overnight!

There is psychology at work here. On the one hand, I want to let the reader know I really do know what I'm talking about. And by offering concrete, *useable* information

once in a while, I increase the value of what I'm keeping *secret*. "Gee," he'll say, "If this is what he's giving away, the other stuff must be even more fabulous!"

You can never tell *which* little tidbit or secret will flip your reader into becoming a customer. So load your copy up with every benefit you can find. I have written letters with eight pages of nothing but bullets. Each one designed to ignite the reader's curiosity to the boiling point.

Finally, here are a few sample bullets, taken from various ads I've written. Notice the one-two punch... the use of action verbs, power words and slang... and the unrelenting focus on the *benefits to the reader*. See if you can't adapt them to your own product:

From golf promotions:

- ✓ How to control the RPMs of your ball's spin with pinpoint accuracy! (So instantly accurate, you'll be able to practice with your 8-iron in your living room... *and never hit a lamp or knock a picture off the wall!*)
- ✓ How to eliminate "skulled" shots that roll too far! (This trick alone will shave a *dozen strokes* off your next round.)
- ✓ The simple little tip that automatically insures your clubhead is ALWAYS in the perfect position upon impact with the ball. (Ernie Els has this down - it's the reason he's known as probably the most *accurate* golfer in the pro game!)
- ✓ The correct way to use your legs as you swing... which instantly "nails down" your accuracy. *No more slicing and hooking, ever!* (Just think how much fun you'll have hitting 18 out of 18 fairways in regulation.)

From a financial mailing:

- ✓ 56 juicy tax deductions most people never use... that the wealthy *feast on* to legally keep staggering amounts of money from the IRS!
- ✓ Simple investment tweak allows you to save the same amount of cash, earn the same return... yet receive *3 times the cash payout* on retirement!
- ✓ Force your IRA to accumulate a MILLION DOLLARS (even if your earnings only keep even with the S&P 500)! Just 10 short years of \$2,000 contributions (done the right way) turn into a fat **\$1.26 million on retirement!** Top financial consultants *insist* their clients take advantage of this sizzling IRA reward.
- ✓ Eye-opening advice from professional burglars on making your home theft-proof. Every one of your neighbors may get hit, but the crooks will pass *you* by.

- ✓ 10 quirky tax rules that are “**ambushes**” for unwary taxpayers! Example #1: 50% penalty if you take IRA distribution too *late*! Example #2: 20% of your IRA will be borrowed by the IRS for a year (at 0% interest to you) if you botch the transfer from your company plan to yours! 8 more that will curl your hair are on page 52.
- ✓ Earn \$1,500 a day in your pajamas working from home! Little-known valuable service means big bucks. Your own hours. No boss. Businesses are *desperate* for people to do this.
- ✓ Huge blunder parents make with their kids' college financing! Your good intentions can get students *bumped* from school!

From self-defense letters:

- ✓ New (and simple) exercises that actually **install animal quickness and viciousness directly into your muscles and nerves**... leaving it locked there until you need to spring it loose! (Go from calm to frightening in a split second, whenever you choose... or whenever you're *threatened*!)
- ✓ How to use the devastating `pop up' push taken from the way tigers hunt in the wild... so effective, a 90 pound teenager can use it send a Sumo wrestler tumbling!
- ✓ Leverage secrets that *multiply* every pound of your weight ten times, giving you “Godzilla” advantages against even a much-heavier opponent!
- ✓ How to immediately pump **40% more raw power** into every blow you deliver! (Tom has taught 78-year-old grandmothers to knock out grown men with a *single* punch!)
- ✓ How to quickly make a strong opponent *weak*! (You'll see his “will to fight” rush out of him like a punctured balloon, while he exhausts himself with frustration and rage... turning him into a nice soft punching bag for you, no matter *how* big and pissed-off he was to start.)

From an ad for a “better sex” book:

- ✓ How to guarantee your partner an “over-the-top” orgasm... *every time you make love*!
- ✓ Amazing trick that **instantly eliminates “performance anxiety”** in men! (Used for centuries by the most daring and successful lovers in the world.)
- ✓ The 7 most effective ways to seduce the woman of your dreams - compiled by a rare study of women themselves! (Plus... the **SINGLE** most important thing you

can do to win her love forever... and the *worst sin* you could ever commit – an unforgivable act that can *destroy* your love life!)

- ✓ How to replenish (and manage) a steady new flood of fresh, youthful testosterone... allowing you to finally experience more frequent, more intense, and more *pleasurable* orgasms!
- ✓ What women *desperately* want from men (but will never come out and tell you)! Explains what she craves from you (and probably isn't getting)... and why the erotic rewards of correcting this “sexual standoff” will *take your breath away!*
- ✓ Astonishing “success patterns” that actually give physically unattractive men a *huge romantic advantage with women* over the good-looking “hunk”!

From a bodybuilding promotion:

- ✓ How to *shock* your muscles into growing faster than they “intuitively” want to! (So you'll blast right through plateaus like they were paper walls!)
- ✓ How to give your most difficult body parts NO OTHER CHOICE but to grow... and grow fast! (Techniques that took me 21 years to perfect.)

From a letter for a health book:

- ✓ Little-known herbal supplement has “100% success rate” for clearing up bladder infections! (And, nope, it's NOT cranberry juice.)
- ✓ New all-natural way to increase serotonin (the brain chemical that fights depression) works just like Prozac... *minus the drowsiness and brain-fog!*
- ✓ Doctors are now using this hot new herbal compound to slow the memory loss of Alzheimer's *more effectively* than expensive, dangerous prescription drugs!
- ✓ Inexpensive “sex booster” herb works as well as Viagra (*without* the nasty side-effects most men report)!

One last thing: I almost forgot to mention anything about *testimonials*. A testimonial is a quote from someone who has used your product with great results. And she's there to tell you about it.

Testimonials (“testies”) go way back in sales history. If you could produce, in person, someone the local townsfolk knew... who would *vouch* for you... you could sell them anything. Testies give another human voice to your sales message.

Testies are the **written version of someone vouching for you**. But don't just copy down any old long, rambling quote you get. In fact, don't let people write their own testier - you help them with it, so the quote is succinct and to the point.

I seldom use a testie over two sentences long. One sentence is better. So the essence of what the person is trying to say must be expressed in **short, crystal-clear thoughts**. I also try to find a different testie for each major benefit of the product.

For example... if your product is easy to assemble, simple to use, and saves money, here is how the testies should go, approximately:

"It was a snap to put together. Took 30 minutes, and I stopped to get the mail in the middle." Bob Jones, Redondo Beach, CA

"It's so easy to use, my 9 year-old son figured it out!" Suzie Que, Long Island, NY

"I saved over \$100 in the first week alone." Sherman Farquar, New Orleans, LA

Use real people - don't make anything up. Use their real names, if they'll agree. Seeing a quote from "Bob Jones, Redondo Beach, CA" carries a lot more weight than "B.J., California", which sounds made-up. In my experience, they will not normally be tracked down by nosy potential customers eager to hear the rest of their testimony.

Where do you *get* testimonials? Well, if you truly have a great product, some people will call or write to let you know they're happy. When they do, get their name, and ask if you can use their testimonial in a future ad. Most will be pleased to do so. Write down their statement... clean it up so it's short and clear... send it back to them to sign off on... and then *use* it.

If no one's volunteering, *ask* for testies. That's allowed. When you fulfill on your product, include a short letter that says "If you're happy with this, I'd love to hear from you. Just scribble your comments here and mail it back in the postage-paid envelope."

If you're on your first promotion, and hardly anyone's tried your product... go out and get some face-to-face local input. Let your neighbors, the businesses on the next floor, the guys at work, and anyone else you can flag down try your product. Get their reactions. If they're favorable, you've got testies.

The power of testimonials is that...

**You Let Other People
Do Your Bragging For You!**

So *you're* not insisting you're so great... all these *other* people are. If your reader is rightly skeptical about your product... let him see what other people are saying. People just like him.

It's a potent sales tool. I've included as many as two pages of testimonials in a letter, when they were good and supported the pitch. The more outrageous your promises in the ads, the more you can benefit from real comments from real people who agree with you.

Chapter X
“How To Close The Deal.”
Don't forget to get paid.

One of the most devastating errors in advertising is to neglect *asking for an order*. It's astonishing how many businesses weave a brilliant story about their product... seduce the customer to the point of raw lust... and then never attempt to *close* the deal.

That kind of idiocy will guarantee you're always the bridesmaid, never the bride.

The exchange of money is the whole point of good advertising. You're not in business to take up office space. You're in it to make a bundle.

The art of the sale is the art of closing the deal. Asking for an order, taking down credit card information and charging the account. cashing the check or money order. Counting up the moolah when the day is over.

Everything else is just *foreplay*.

My colleague Jeff Paul - a master marketer and world-class entrepreneur out of Chicago - got his start selling insurance face-to-face. He's a natural-born salesman, too. On his first gig, he gave the rehearsed pitch, and then stunned his trainer by asking the customer to “go get your checkbook.” That wasn't in the training manual.

But it's *gutsy* selling. The response Jeff got was exactly what he wanted – the prospect retrieved their checkbook, and became a customer. Right then and there. No more hemming and hawing. Time to get on the bus.

In a sales letter or ad, you won't be there to make the customer “go get his checkbook”. You have to convince him, in print, that his *most critical duty right now* is to pick up a phone, or mail in a check. You must catch him in full “lust-mode”, and lead him to the Promised Land without hesitation.

All good salesmen know there is NO grace period once the prospect has been convinced to buy. If you let him put your ad down and “go think about it”, you've lost.

You must get him to act...

Right Friggin'
NOW!

That's why good sales letters and ads have strategically placed “go get `em” statements like “act now”... “don't delay another second”... and “you must hurry.”

When infomercials run on television, the orders start coming in over the phones a few minutes into the broadcast... peak at every “blue screen” spot... and then die out almost entirely as soon as the infomercial is over. The “shelf life” of a magazine ad is about a month (or a week for the weeklies), followed by a long thin tail of straggle-in orders. People read old magazines at the doctor's office, on vacation, or just keep them around a long time.

Newspaper ads won't pull much after the day they run. And first-class direct mail letters will pull for around a week after delivery. (If you mail on Friday - which you should, so you give your recipients a full Monday-to-Friday window to read your letter -- you'll start getting orders Monday... see a spike on Wednesday... and by Friday the calls will thin out dramatically. The mail will arrive in bulk the following Monday, with a smaller amount Tuesday, and the majority on Wednesday.)

Note: Many of my clients report an almost 50-50 split of phone calls to mailed-in responses with direct mail letters. That's approximately the split you'll get of credit card orders to checks and money orders, too. Magazine response will vary according to the target audience, but not too much.

But you'll find your *own* response rates very quickly. Just be aware that a lot of people will not use a credit card - because they don't have one, or because they're maxed out. And your check-to-money order ratio could be almost even. Don't ever discriminate against someone who wants to pay without a credit card. *Always* offer the option of mailing in payment, either by personal check or money order.

They're trying to give you money, after all. And it can *double* profits.

But we've gotten a bit ahead of ourselves here. First you gotta close the deal.

Here's how to do that: In your copy... after you've made your pitch, countered all objections, given mouth-watering descriptions of all benefits... you must:

- 1. Create an offer no sane person could refuse...**
- 2. Erase all trace of risk on the part of your customer...**
- 3. Light a fire under his ass... and...**
- 4. Make it as simple as possible for him to give you money.**

Let's tackle these points in order.

The Offer. If you've been paying attention to previous chapters, you've created a package around your product that is worth - in information, in goodies, in advantages - much more than you're asking in price.

It's easy to sell lumps of gold at below market value. (Though I can't imagine why you'd want to do that.) What's bullion at right now? Three hundred-something dollars an ounce, I believe. Make that gold into a *coin*, and you can charge a few

hundred dollars more. Create a presentation of that coin, in a hermetically-sealed display case, with lots of official documentation, a video on how the coin was manufactured, and a book full of relevant information... and you can charge...

A Thousand Dollars.

It's the same with any product you're selling. Add value, add information, add bulk to the package... and your asking price can go through the roof. I've seen modest little books be repackaged as four-volume "training manuals", accompanied by numerous audio cassettes of the author mumbling through the manuscript, plus a scattering of thin special reports enlarging on points already made in the manuals. And it all sells quite briskly at twenty times the amount anybody ever got for the book alone.

How do you know how to price your product? Well... you must receive enough money to cover all your costs of manufacturing, processing, storage, offices, payroll and advertising. Plus enough *profit* to stay in business. There used to be nice, tidy "rules of thumb" about pricing. Most of my clients simply cannot survive without marking up at least 8-to-10 times actual cost. But- as you'll see here -it's all relative.

Everyone is worried sick over scaring off customers by high prices, or not charging enough to maximize profits. Most businesses look for a mythical "sweet spot" where all their customers will feel they got a bargain, but the profits roll in thick and heavy.

The truth is...

Real Salesmanship Has No Regard For Price.

The bottom line is this: How much is the information or service you're selling *WORTH* to a hungry, passionate customer?

You probably cannot sell ice to Eskimos. But you *can* sell water in a desert. At a high price, too. Probably, no one would pay much to hear your life's story. But plenty of people would pay a small fortune to see the secret diaries of someone famous, infamous or notorious. (Say, the last days of Princess Di, in her own words. Or John Kennedy, Jr.)

Pricing matters, and it matters a *lot*. I cannot give you a rule to go by. You must "feel out" your potential customer base. You've gotten into their heads through research... now it's time to get into their wallets, too.

How much is the *competition* charging? Your **SRDS** (Standard Rate And Data Service -- see Chapter XIII for more, or go to www.srds.com) will provide a lot of good information. Each list reveals the price of the products purchased by people on the list... and the number of times they bought (frequency). So if you're mailing to existing lists,

you always have a good idea of what the prospects were willing to pay for a similar product.

But what about your **original ads** that pull in fresh customers from cold mailings, newspapers, magazines or broadcast media? How do you go from not knowing what to charge... to finding the “right” price?

Well, the best way is to **test**. Try an ad with a price that seems too high... and then try one with a price that seems a notch too low. Compare response rates and total profit taken in. If you can sell a thousand widgets at a buck each... but with a little extra packaging, you can sell the same widget to ten people at \$200 each, you will likely decide to go with the bigger money-maker. (1,000 x \$1 = \$1,000... 10 x \$200 = \$2,000.) Unless you're prepared to make even more money on the **back-end**, in which case you'd want to get more *total* customers rather than more total dollars on the first sale. (See Chapter XII.)

This isn't as confusing as it sounds. You know your market. It's something you enjoy, a passion and intense interest you share with lots of people. Place yourself in the shoes of your prospect.

What's Your Product Worth?

The economics of direct response dictates that you must price your product higher than a retail establishment. A hyper-efficient operation may allow you to cut the profit even thinner, so you can low-ball prices and still make your fortune. A sloppy organization means you need more margin to survive.

The best way to do it: Provide enough **honest value** in your product or service to...

Justify A Decently-Outrageous Price You Can Live With.

There's a little salesman's saying: “It's not the deal you got that counts... but the deal you *think* you got.”

This doesn't give you license to go out and start gouging and screwing people on price. That will tank your business in a hurry.

No. This is much more subtle. Most people simply are not able to estimate the worth of their own product. Of anything, really. Let me give you an example: I bought a nice, well-used guitar in 1970 for \$150. That \$150 was all the money I had in the world. I had to close my eyes when the salesman took the cash from my hand. It was by far the largest purchase I'd made in my young life to that point.

The guitar was a good, dependable, journeyman's axe. No one knew it at the time, but it was destined to become a classic. I still have it -- a '64 pre-CBS Fender Stratocaster with a rosewood fretboard and Pacific blue metalflake finish. Aficionados now know it as the type of guitar favored by such greats as Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton. I've been offered \$11,000 for it, cash on the spot.

Yet it's the same “experienced” guitar I bought for \$150 and lugged around fifteen cities and three colleges, playing in small bands and among friends. If I didn't *know* what it was worth on the open market, I would consider it just an old guitar worth a few hundred.

What makes it so friggin' valuable? The *story* behind it. The myth, the aura, the way it's held up for all these years. The perceived quality. Stratocasters made just two years later aren't worth a distant fraction of this one.

Well... that's a long-winded way to explain worth, but I hope you understand the lesson behind it. Things are worth...

What They're Worth!

The *market* will let you know when you're overpriced. Your *bottom line* will let you know when you're underpriced. Just keep asking yourself: What is this information or service worth to a motivated customer? I've seen single hour-long instructional videos fly out of the warehouse at \$99 a pop... and I've seen 3-video packages on the same subject struggle at \$39. The difference wasn't necessarily the actual instruction that took place.

No. It was the *story* I could tell in the ad. It was the value in the customer's mind of what he was getting. Famous and notorious and outrageous talents will outsell the bland and boring by a ton every time. Your local high school puts on Hamlet for \$5. On Broadway, with Matt Damon as the Dangerous Dane, tickets sell out at \$500. Same play.

Become a student of your market. Find out what they pay for similar products and services. Don't be afraid to position yourself as the *most* expensive available... as long as you back it up with value, and explain yourself with an intriguing story.

Now... - remember also Mark Twain's right-on quote: “A man has two reasons for buying anything. The reason he tells his wife... and the *real* reason.”

Great salesmen know to...

**“Pitch With Logic,
Sell On Emotion.”**

So make sure you create your offer with plenty of good, *logical* reasons your buyer can use to justify his purchase. Imagine him explaining himself to his wife... his neighbors... or his buddies. While they're looking at him with a suspicious frown, what can he say to re-sell himself?

Well... how about:

1. **This truly is a opportunity of a lifetime.** You can't find this anywhere else at any price. It's cutting edge information that had to be smuggled out of elite circles, who are outraged that "regular" people now possess it. But you can only buy it if you are lucky enough to have a connection. The price is irrelevant, anyway - I'll make it back ten times over the first time I use the thing. It's an investment. It's less than dinner for two at the local steakhouse. And, anyway, it's completely guaranteed, or I get my money back.
2. **I got it for less than anyone else.** It was a fire sale. They had to liquidate, because of tax problems. The factory isn't making them anymore at this high quality - the next issue will be inferior. I skipped the middleman. They gave me an incredible deal because I'm on a special list.
3. **They're not giving this information out anymore** - they got so rich, they're all retiring. It cost \$7,000 to attend that seminar live... and I got the tapes for just \$499. Look who else has one just like this - see, very famous and respected people.

And so on. They bought from you because they were in a *fever of desire*. You teased their curiosity, tickled their greed gland, stroked their ego. And also because...

You Shouldered All The Risk!

He wants it, he's dying for it, he'd pull out his wallet if only... if only ... if *only* he could squash all these little doubts about buying something he can't see.

Well, guess what? He can relax. Because *you* are taking all the risk. Not him. You. He orders, gets the product... and if he's not happy, he can simply return it and get his money back. And he has a very long time to decide, so he won't feel rushed. He has all the time in the world... and not a single penny at risk.

You don't guarantee your product with your good will and promises, either. Nope. You guarantee your product with *cold, hard cash*. Here's a sample guarantee paragraph:

But you don't risk a penny. Because you're covered by our famous...

**6 Month 100% Money-Back
No Risk Guarantee!**

Order the product, and give it your own personal "test run". Take a full 6 months, and use it as your own. If you aren't completely thrilled with the results... for any reason or for no reason at all... simply return it, in any condition... and we'll rush you a complete refund of every penny. No questions asked. No hassle. No delay.

And... you can KEEP the special report, as my gift just for giving this product a try.

Create a guarantee that really does eliminate all risk. Let him pay *after* he receives the product, so *you* have to trust *him* (and he doesn't have to worry about being "taken"). Let him write a check post-dated one month ahead. Or offer not to charge his credit card for 31 days, so he has plenty of time to give your product a "trial run" without pressure. Offer double his money back if not ecstatic. And you'll rush his refund by return mail the moment you learn he's unhappy.

Insist that he return it for a refund if he's unhappy. He doesn't even have to give a reason. His word is good enough. That's how *you* wish other businesses would treat you... and that's the *only* way you'll do business with anyone who buys from you. And let him keep a lot of things... just for taking the small step of ordering.

Guarantee, guarantee, guarantee. Don't take it for granted. Make your spectacular and generous guarantee a *main feature* of doing business with you. Put your generosity and fairness to work.

Now...

Light A Fire Under His Butt!

Sure, this is a mega-generous deal, full of bonuses and freebies and prizes... but he can't sit around thinking about it. This is a limited offer that vanishes like smoke in just a few days... and if you snooze, you lose.

Here's some matches and lighter fluid for you:

- ✓ I've been authorized to make this offer for the next 7 days ONLY. After that, the price goes back up forever.
- ✓ There are only 127 sets available... and I expect them to sellout by Friday. And when they're, they're gone. And so is this incredible
- ✓ We're only offering this amazing bargain because of our tax problem. Once we earn enough to pay back our bill, this deal is off the table. My accountant

- figures we'll be okay in about a week. So do not delay.
- ✓ We're starting a national campaign at the higher price in exactly two weeks... and at midnight on the last day of the month, this half-off deal vanishes.
 - ✓ Last time we offered this deal, we sold out in 4B hours. Don't miss out - if you wait even another day, you won't have another chance at this price for a full year.

So act now. Go to the phone, right now, while this letter is burning in your hands. Order without another second's delay. Remember... you don't risk a penny. And you *get so much*, it's almost unbelievable.

We're almost done. You've made the offer... erased all risk..., and virtually dragged him to the phone.

Now, It's Time To Take His Payment.

You must make it so easy and *painless* to order, the entire process is over in a blink. Make sure you have enough phone lines, so he doesn't get a busy signal. Do NOT rely on him having the will to call back. Tell him *what to say* when he calls: "Just call 1-800-000-0000, and tell Mandy (or Sue, whoever picks up) you want the `Full Bore Package with the advanced hoopla thingamajig". You can use your credit card. Or, if you prefer to pay by check or money order (payable to XYZ, Inc.)... simply fill out the enclosed Order Card and mail it in the postage-paid green reply envelope."

I don't have to tell you to make sure your phone line is up and running, do I? And that Mandy and Sue are completely trained to upsell and nurture this new customer like the golden boy he is.

As for your order card... well, plow through your junk mail until you find one that's so easy to navigate and fill out, it's what *you'd* want to see if you were the customer. Copy it. It can be very simple, with just a few lines. Like this:

Use This Card To Order By Mail!
For Fastest Service, Call 1-800-000-0000
And Use Your Credit Card.

Just fill out this card and mail in the enclosed postage-paid green reply envelope:

[]**YES!** I want this information, and I want it fast! This is the deal I've been wanting for years. Thanks for being so generous. I understand I have a 3-Month 100% Money Back Guarantee, so I

don't risk a penny at any time. And I can KEEP all the free reports! Here's how I want to pay:

Option One: I want to use my credit card:

VISA MasterCard American Express

Card #: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____

(Signature required for credit card orders only)

Option Two: I want to write a check or money order:

Enclosed is my check or money order -- payable to XYZ, Inc. for \$99, plus \$4 shipping and handling. (Total: \$103)

Here's where to send everything:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

XYZ, Inc. (123 Main St., Los Angeles, CA 99999

Include a BRE - that's Business Reply Envelope - with your letter. Stamped. All he has to do is fill out the Order Card, slip it in the BRE, and drop it in the mail.

- ✓ Do not ask him to mail a *postcard* with any sensitive financial information on it. Give him the privacy of the BRE.
- ✓ Do not forget all the crucial elements of your Order Card... including shipping information, your address and phone number, price details, and a reminder of the guarantee and deal.
- ✓ Do not use a P.O. box as your address. Too fishy. Use a real street address, and even give local landmarks so the place becomes real ("Our office is downtown across from the library").
- ✓ Do not ask for his phone number - this could kill the sale. He'll let you mail things to him, but he doesn't want you to call, for any reason.
- ✓ And... do not miss the opportunity to *reinforce his buying decision* in the "[YES!]" copy, as I've done above.

If you have choices in the deal, make sure they are clearly delineated in the order card. Like:

Great deal: Get a sample bottle for just \$19.

Better deal: Get 4 bottles for just \$10 each.

BEST deal: Get 12 bottles for just \$8 each. Plus all 4 special reports.

Your job here is to make the deal easy to understand... and easy to complete quickly... with *no* important details left out.

In essence...

**Just Keep It
Simple And Efficient.**

That said... don't be afraid to have a large Order Card. Never skimp on *information* because you think you're jamming the card with too much copy. I've created order cards that were two sides of an 8x 10 sheet... because the guarantee was pretty detailed (and ridiculously generous)... there were lots of choices the customer could make (though it was by no means overwhelming - it was simple, and I made sure he already had a pretty good idea what he wanted long before he reached the ordering stage)... and I included more pieces of sales copy. Plus some more testimonials.

Because... sometimes you just have to throw in the kitchen sink to make the deal irresistible.

One final thought: When you're crafting your close, remember what the great Claude Hopkins said. "Never try to hard sell your customer. Instead, offer him the *privilege* of buying from you."

Chapter XI

“Your Starter Menu Of Sample Letter And Ad Themes.”

Eleven world-class examples of successful direct response concepts... plus a Proven Template for your own successful letter!

I want to tell you about “The Seething Guy”. He was a business owner I met just outside Los Angeles many years ago. Had a printing shop I used for small jobs, tucked into a mini-mall on Pacific Coast Highway.

Every time I went by the shop, he was standing on the curb, looking about as pissed off as a man can get without frothing. He was *seething* mad.

One day, I finally asked what the burr was in his saddle. He stopped scowling long enough to point at the busy highway. “Over 100 cars pass every minute,” he hissed. “And day after day, week after week...”

None Of Them Stop And Come In For Printing!

It occurred to me that not too many people who need printing load up their car with materials and then drive around *hunting* for a print shop.

Why wasn't he advertising, I asked innocently. Say, the Yellow Pages?

His face went purple. “Because advertising doesn't work! I tried it! It's a waste of money!” And he went back to glaring at the passing traffic with impotent rage.

Advertising doesn't work. I love it. I actually *hear* this from various businessmen. What they mean is that they paid someone to make up some worthless ad... ran it a few times... had no idea if it worked or not... and gave up. Went back to relying on word-of-mouth and foot traffic.

It's not that *advertising* doesn't work. It's that a *specific* ad might not work. People don't say “Gee, honey, this restaurant just put a big ad in the paper. We better go eat there.” They need to be informed, seduced, *sold*.

Ah, but it can be a long way from admitting you need to advertise... to actually sitting down and creating one that will work.

Therefore, I've dug around in my Bag Of Tricks and come up with a “Starter's Menu” of sample themes for letters and ads. Plus, at the end of this chapter, I've laid out a “fill in the blanks template” you can use to rip through any basic ad or direct mail letter... and be sure you've covered all your bases.

So let's get started. Here's the first concept:

1. Use a Star, a Story, and a Solution. This is one of the oldest - and most profitable - concepts ever used by marketers. Essentially, you have someone take center stage, weave story of woe that is shared by your potential customers, and then offer a solution to their problems. Your “star” can be a celebrity... or just a regular person who went through a harrowing experience, and came out richer/healthier/happier. You can be the star. It's your show.

Your “solution” is your product.

Here are a few examples I've created to illustrate the idea. See if you can't change the concept just enough to fit your own situation:

Bankrupt Computer Geek Accidentally Discovers A Way To Quickly Earn \$12,000 A Month On The Web ... Right From Your Kitchen Table!

The star: The “geek”, who has gone from obscurity to running ads carrying his amazing story. **The story:** How his company was chewed up by the recent Nasdaq crash, and he wound up on the street, dead broke. You can understand the desperation of being broke, can't you? Of course you can.

The solution: While Web surfing to avoid depression, he stumbles on several easy-to-use online tactics that will automatically position any Web site among the top 5 of every major search engine. That means an instant flood of customers. And guess what? In this new book, you will learn how to build a simple site in an afternoon (even if you're a computer illiterate)... plus, you will learn *exactly* what kinds of simple Web products sell the best. So... if you've ever wanted to earn a ton of money in your own, easy, at-home business... this book can make your dreams come true.

Here's another:

How A Local Plumber Created A Totally Natural Arthritis Cure Now Preferred By Many Doctors!

The star: A middle-aged plumber named Herbert Schmerbert, who needed to support a large family. The story: How arthritis pain - a problem he shares with so many others - threatened to turn him into an ex-plumber.

The solution: An amazing doctor-approved herbal treatment that you, too, can now get through mail order.

One more:

The Astonishing “Miracle” Diet Secret Of A Frustrated Nevada Housewife!

The star: A woman with no fancy education, no access to medical research... just a burning desire to finally get her weight down. The story: How she searched and searched, trying every diet out there with no success (a familiar tale to many women)... and how she finally figured out the secret of losing all the body fat you want, as fast as you want.

The solution: You, too, can now team the same “skinny” secrets.

2. The “I’ll Put My Money Where My Mouth Is” Challenge. If you have a product or service that really does deliver over-the-top, *measurable* results that your customers can see... feel... or count... then you're in a position to use this amazingly-effective technique.

Most inexperienced clients balk when I suggest this route. Yet, not a single one has seen returns increase, or had to suddenly shell out massive amounts of refund cash.

That's because, by risking your own money, you increase your potential customer's faith in the product.

Hold your breath, Bucko. Here's a sample headline:

Is this golfing guru crazy?

“If You Don't Drop 12 Strokes Off Your Next Round With These Secrets... Then I Will Give You DOUBLE Your Money Back!”

Just cannot stomach the idea of refunding twice the amount? I understand. But the truth is, there simply is *not* a drooling horde of rip-off artists out there who will go to the trouble of ordering your product, just to get double their money back. Yes, there are a few. It's a fact of marketing life that - even using every weapon available to lower returns -- you can expect a refund rate of between 7% and 18% on any product you sell via direct response.

But the idea is not to lower your refund rate. Nope. The idea is to...

Increase Your Bottom Line Profit!

And that means more *sales*.

Ask someone to buy your product, without any guarantee of satisfaction at all, and you may get a few sales. Offer a guarantee - a complete refund of every penny if he's not satisfied - and you'll convince many more people to buy. The risk of getting “suckered” is softened up considerably.

But offer a guarantee where you will reach into your own pocket to DOUBLE his money back... and you will flip customers who would never otherwise consider trying your product. You've done more than simply “assume all the risk”. Heck... you've just put your financial health on the line. You've backed your product with cold, hard cash.

And that's a very strong appeal.

Here's an alternative I've found that works almost as well:

**“Try My ‘Health Restoration’ System For 6 Months...
And If You Don't Look And Feel 10 Years Younger...
Then I Will Pay You \$10 For Your Trouble!”**

Can you see how this technique might work for your business?

3. The “Market Test”. This strategy gives you an opportunity to create the urgency that surrounds a *limited release of product*. You're just “testing the waters” of the market, with the absolute best offer you can make... which is the customer's gain.

Here is the copy strategy: We are conducting a market test for exactly 31 days here in Omaha. During this time, you can get 5 of these products for the price of one. And you may keep the extra 4, as our gift just for helping with this market test, even if you later decide to return one for a full refund.

4. “I Need Your Help.” Here's an example of how I used this concept recently. Pretend for a moment your name is Bob Jones:

*From The Desk Of Joe Mahoney
President, MYA, Inc.*

**Bob Jones,
I Desperately Need Your Help!**

Dear Bob,
If you will grant me one simple favor... then I
will let you in on a staggeringly lucrative
breakthrough in making money on the web.

The “favor” is to read a new ad that Joe is nervous about, because it's so outrageous. He wants to get the opinion of some people just like Bob, before he wastes any resources on a nation-wide campaign.

In exchange... Bob can have the product in the ad for a steep discount. The accompanying ad, then, is a blistering story of earning massive bucks, quickly. It is, in fact, the very ad Joe wanted Bob to read in the first place. To add even more realism, the price offered in the printed ad has been circled with a red pen, and a handwritten note put in the margins: *No way are you paying this price! Because you're doing me a favor, you can have it for half this amount!*

5. The “Grabber”. A “grabber” is something attached to your letter that physically demands attention. I've had real estate clients staple little bags of sand to the letter... explaining that this sand comes from the beach near the condos they were selling. Then the letter went into a romantic story of who had walked that beach. (I think they shot some sixties-era beach blanket movies there.)

Almost anything you can think of can be attached to a letter in lieu of a headline. And in your copy, you have the opportunity to say:

Why have I attached a toy Doberman to the top of this letter? It's because I want to tell you about a new security system that acts just like a rabid guard dog...

Reader's Digest has frequently sent out a letter with a penny glued onto it. They mailed it a lot because it *works*. People are stopped cold by the physical presence of a penny sticking to the letter they've just opened.

But why stop at a penny? Why not use...

A Dollar Bill!

Think that gets a little attention? The genius is that, no matter what your product is, you can relate it back to a dollar bill. For example:

Why have I attached a crisp, new \$1 bill to the top of this letter? It's because I have something very important to share with you... and it involves the politicians in Washington, D.C., where they print money...

Or:

I've attached a new \$1 bill to this letter because I want to tell you about a way to save lots and lots of cash when you buy your next house...

I have mailed letters with nickels attached... five dollar bills... lottery tickets (they cost a buck, but you can claim they're potentially worth *millions*)... ancient Roman coins (coin merchants have unearthed millions of ancient "widow's mites" that seem valuable, but can be purchased for just pennies)... and checks made out to the recipient.

Here's another really cool tactic: Attach a very official-looking check to the top of the letter. And it's made out to "Bob Jones' private account #000 at XYZ Company". The concept is, you have written Bob a check worth \$20 when he buys the product you're advertising. He didn't even know he *had* an account with XYZ, but there it is, in writing.

It's a clever way to offer \$20 off... with the twist that:

**The Money's *Already*
In His Account With You!**

Psychology at work here, friend. You offer a customer 25% off and, gee... he's sure heard that ploy before. Why is it 25% off? Is it outdated, or broke, or so poorly made you're dumping it on the market?

But \$20 *already in my account*... well that's something that's *mine*. I *have* twenty dollars to spend with these guys... and all I have to do is call and order.

Jeez, that's *sneaky*.

Another related concept: I've had clients with Web sites send out emails that explain there is \$20 in your "Online E-Account" with the company. Good for the next 7 days only, on anything in the catalog. And look - here's a hot new product you must try.

6. The "Reasonable" Bargain. If you're offering something at a steep discount, you will dramatically increase sales by explaining WHY you're doing it.

In fact, you can create a sensationally-effective campaign by using the *story behind your decision* to lower prices. Here are a few examples:

We've just been slapped with the biggest tax bill I've ever seen in my life. I fired my accountant last night, who swore to me we were getting a tax refund. The lying weasel. Now we're in deep trouble, and the only solution is to let our best customers - that's you -- "raid

our warehouse" for whatever you want... at fire-sale prices.

Or:

I am the biggest idiot alive. I just received a full shipment of 1,200 new videos... and every darn one has an embarrassing misspelling on the label! I can't fix them.. I can't sell them (or I'll get cued and run out of town)... and I can't even blame anyone but me for the problem. My only choice now is to either toss all the videos in the dumpster out back... or offer them to guys like you at half of what they'd normally go for. There's nothing wrong with the videos - it's just the label. If you can live with that, you're in for the bargain of your life...

7. The "Information" Ad. This strategy works great with Yellow Pages ads.

Remember - people don't really care what *your* needs are. They care - and care very deeply - about their *own* needs. This is as it should be.

But you can take advantage of this human trait with your ad. Look at your section in the Yellow Pages. You don't have to tell me - I can safely predict without looking that it's stuffed with ads that offer, at most, meager bits of information anyone can use. There should be at least two that forget to include their own address.

Now, put yourself in the mind of your *customer*. You're looking in the Yellow Pages because you have a problem. Your sink's clogged, you want to rent a car, you need a dentist, you're looking for a new place to eat.

Who you gonna call? The one with: Joe Bob's Plumbing. "We'll fix your pipes." Phone number, address.

Or the quarter-page ad that starts out:

Warning! **Don't call a plumber until you read this:**

Followed by a lot of informative copy concerning the need to make sure your plumber is bonded, will not overcharge, will follow up, etc. And, oh yeah - call Myron, who's been a bonded plumber here in town for 30 years, and who will gladly come over evenings and weekends, unlike most plumbers who only work when you're not home.

How about the restaurant ad that looks more like a newspaper article than a Yellow Page ad, and asks:

Are you starving for a great Italian meal? Pisano's is a family restaurant that has been voted "Best Dining Experience" 12 years running. Huge portions, friendly waiters, a view to die for... and free desert! We'll get you a table even without reservations on most nights, and if you mention this ad your second meal is FREE! We serve Northern Italian food, which means lots of home-cooked pasta and delicate sauces and spicy sausages. The best wine selection in town...

Sorry. I got carried away there. But that's what you want - copy that lets the reader get "*carried away*". This is pretty much how I actually described a local restaurant to someone I know who also loves Italian food. I didn't just say "You should eat there." I told her WHY she should eat there.

People looking for something want *information*. Get into your potential customer's head and feed his desires.

8. The Endorsed Mailing. This technique allows you to "piggyback" on the reputation of someone else. Say you sell instructional books on woodworking. There's another business that sells woodworking tools. You are not direct competitors of each other. But your client lists share the *same passion*.

Combine your efforts. Mail an ad selling your books to the other business's list... with a simple cover letter from that business's owner saying "I know this guy. He's got very good instructional books. Check it out."

He, essentially, "endorses" your product to his customers. Split the profits. You've just tapped into a ready-made source of new sales, without having to run expensive ads or mailing letters to lists that don't know you from Adam.

You get the nice introduction... his customers feel they can trust you, since you have his blessing... and half your sales job has already been done. Plus... you get to *keep* very new customer as your own. (To make the deal as fair as possible, you may want to split with your endorser your *next* sale with the new customer, too. Suspicious business owners are understandably wary of having their customer lists raided with lowball offers that suck up all the best buyers. So don't be shy about making the deal over-the-top fair.)

9. The Straight Pitch. Often... when you have a truly great product at a good price... and you know the audience reading your ad is hungry... all you need to do is make your pitch. No gimmicks. No excuses. No long stories:

Dear Fellow Rabid Beatles Fan,
With your permission, I want to send you an
advance copy of a newly-discovered portfolio of

photos of the Fab Four from 1965. And guess what? If you call right now...

**I Will Send A Copy To You Free
For The Next Month!**

There are no strings attached, and you are not obliged to buy anything at any time - though I'm betting you'll want to own it after you've seen it. This is simply a great deal, from one fan to another...

10. The Power of the word “Free.” The above copy incorporates one of the most effective words in sales:

“FREE!”

There's always something you can include free in your offer. Create a small special report that reveals the secrets of using your product to its fullest potential. Make a cassette audio tape, an interview with someone your customer would love to listen to. Add an hour of free phone consultation to your deal.

“Free” is a powerful concept. But don't overuse it. Giving your product away free - say, by offering free samples - can cheapen the value. People then do not think of it in terms of having to pay for it.

So use “free” in regards to items *related* to your product. One of the most ingenious ways to do this is with...

An Ethical Bribe!

Go ahead and create the most killer special report you can write. If you clean carpets, write a report on how people can clean up a thousand different stains and spills themselves, using only ordinary kitchen ingredients. If you're selling a video series on how to play the guitar, write a long report on how to get gigs at local nightclubs. Include so much information that the report actually...

**Has *More* Perceived Value
Than Your Product!**

And then offer the report. *Free*. As a “bribe”, just for giving your product a trial run. You try my product, I'll give you this hot report. To keep. It'll blow your socks off.

And... it will reinforce the *trust* your customer has in you. Anyone who would give away such valuable information must be worth dealing with.

Using a free offer is also the most effective way of collecting leads. If you're 2-stepping - meaning, you use advertising to collect names of people interested in your line

of business - then offer something of tremendous perceived value. For free. All they have to do is call or write.

The second step is to fulfill on your offer. And include your sales pitch.

Hint: When collecting *leads*, you sometimes want to *qualify* your potential customer a bit. Allowing him to call a toll-free number to get his free report or free sample means you'll wind up with a lot of “mooches” - people who like free stuff, but never pay for anything. Simple fix: Use a *toll* number. A normal local call that will cost 35 cents or so. This eliminates the cheapskates.

To qualify your lead even more, ask for a *token shipping and handling cost*. Even asking for \$1.50 will weed out those people who want your info, but aren't “hot” enough to spend even spare change to get it.

Now... it's time for the last concept in this menu. I call it the...

**“Piss Everyone Off...
And Then Apologize” Strategy!**

I must admit, I discovered this tactic by accident. You see, one of the ways I help clients is with “Lipstick On The Collar” advice. In my world, a good salesman should be able to talk his way out of coming home with lipstick all over his shirt. This applies to business when you've screwed up somehow with your customers... and you need to *fix* things.

I almost always use a letter to do the fixing.

Anyway, I'd just talked this client into mailing a letter with a personalized headline that read (assuming you were Bob Smith):

**Bob Smith And Family
Brutally Assaulted By Local Gang!**

The product was a self-defense course taught by a guy who trains SWAT cops--- and who insists that it is a man's *duty* to protect his family by learning this nasty form of hand-to-hand combat. The copy invited the reader to imagine seeing this headline in the local paper. As a way of “bringing home” the cold facts that it could happen to you... unless you took some precautions.

Well, we learned two things. The personalized headline caused a lot of guys to perk up and read the ad. And order the product. But it *also* caused a lot of other guys to spit up their coffee and rush to the phone to...

**Tell My Client
To Go To Hell!**

Turns out, many men do not enjoy even *imagining* such a bad thing happening. Oops. The mail campaign was immediately stopped.

However, as orders kept piling up, it became evident that many *more* men had been spurred to action by the headline than had been pissed off at it. This created a dilemma. Lots of orders, lots of money... and lots of people wanting to be taken off the customer list forever.

I knew immediately what to do. We sent a letter to everyone who *didn't* buy – all those guys who had called to yell at us, plus everyone else, assuming for every guy who took the trouble to contact us, there were four others *too mad* to call. And in this letter...

We Groveled And Apologized Profusely.

We wished we had thought things out before sending them that letter. We were sorry that many men were offended. We understood if you wanted to never hear from us again.

However... if we *could* make amends... we would do anything to make it up to you. In fact... we would let you have the product behind the offending ad... for less than *half* of what everyone else paid.

And so on.

Well, guess what? My client pulled more *orders* from the “we're sorry” follow up letter than from the original promotion! The entire campaign was just a staggering success. But they never did it again. It was just too hair-raising an experience.

The lesson: **It is usually better to act and ask forgiveness... than to ask for permission beforehand.**

And you can take that to the bank.

As promised: Finally, here is the basic letter template I promised to show you. Minus the personalization, you can also use this model for your editorial-looking newspaper ads.

I've already discussed each of these points in detail in other chapters... but if you're really hot to trot, you can use this template right now to write a good sales letter that covers all your bases.

Here's the template:

Top of the page: A short, pithy “superscript” headline that offers a tease, like:

What do 20 million happy customers know that you don't vet?

Or...

Best of all, you can see it FREE!

Main headline: Here is your clarion call to your target audience. Personalize it if you can. At the very least, describe who your audience is, and what you have for them:

Don't Even Think About Buying A House In Seattle Before You Read This!

Or...

Would You Like To Learn How To Make Your Web Site Outrageously Profitable?

Salutation: Personalize it if you can. Otherwise, just use “Dear Friend”. Don't get too cute, unless you're sure your audience gets the joke. I've used “Dear Golf Nut”, but I would never use “Dear Stock Market Sucker”.

Opening paragraph: Tell me who you are, and why you're writing to me. Like...

My name is Dr. O'Malley. I'm a new dentist in town, and I am looking for new patients.

Or...

I have just written a book on how to train Dalmations so well, you can walk them without a leash. I have been told you own a Dalmation, so you must know what an outrageous promise this is...

Now tell your story: I call this the “here's what this is all about” part of the letter. It's where you start your pitch in earnest. *Explain* yourself, Bucko.

Bullets: Tell your reader what you have... and then list all the advantages of the product. Just make a list in your letter: “Here's what you get:”. We call these little items “bullets” because each statement has a little “icon” on the left, as a way to set it apart, like this:

- ✓ It has six gears instead of just five... which means you can go even faster, without risking red-lining your RPMs!
- ✓ It's been designed to withstand 4 g's of pressure... so you get a smooth, calm ride even at 110 mph!
- ✓ Each of the four colors used have been scientifically tested to insure maximum attention from the opposite sex!

Now state your offer: Tell the reader what the price is, what all they get, and what the guarantee is. Be generous: You'll refund every penny if he's not ecstatic. It's easy to order, too. Just call Mary at my office. You can use your credit card. The number is....

Close the deal: Reinforce the major benefit of your product. Remind the reader that supplies are limited, or there is a strict deadline to this low price. Be a salesman.

Code your ad for tracking: You want to “key code” your ad, so each time a customer calls or sends in an order form with payment, you can immediately tell *which* ad he is responding to. Easiest: Give a *department number*, both after the phone number (1 702-555-5555, Dept. I 1-15) and your mailing address (123 Main St., Dept. 11-15). Or, use a different name to ask for: “Mary” is for the letter you sent in December. “JoAnne” is for the newspaper ad in January, etc. Use “Attn: Mary” in your mailing address.

Add a “P.S.” after you've signed off: The P.S. of a letter often gets more readership than the middle pages. So use it to make your case again, briefly. Best: List several *glowing testimonials* from real people. Let them do your bragging for you.

Include an order form... so the customer can mail a check or money order if he doesn't have a credit card.

And that's your basic template. It's rough, but it's the basic form that most direct mail letters follow - more or less. The thing is, many of my clients express absolute *shock* when I casually rattle off the elements of a good sales letter - it all seems so obvious to me, but it's a revelation to them.

Yet, it really is this simple.

Chapter XII

“Where The Real Money Is.”

Why your back end will be the most profitable part of any sale.

Never base your business on having just *one* product or service. To maximize your income, you always need a *back end*.

What’s a back end? It’s marketer slang for...

Something Else To Sell.

You can double, triple, even quadruple the amount of each sale you make simply by offering another “must-have” product or service during the course of taking an order. McDonald’s, believe it or not, actually *doubled* worldwide profits just by having their employees say: “Would you like fries with that?”

Look. It is going to cost you a certain amount of money to sell a customer the first time. List rental, printing costs for your letter, ad space in the newspaper, maintaining a toll-free phone service... everything that goes into the effort.

Well, here’s a revelation: At the moment your new customer consents to try your product... it will cost you exactly ZERO more dollars to ask: “Would you like to buy two rather than just one?”

Or, would he like to buy something *else* related to your product. If you sell widgets at \$39 each, why not offer - while he’s on the phone - a special tool for \$19 that guarantees each widget will last twice as long as expected.

Or...even better... a special advanced course on expert use of widgets, with 12 video tapes, a workbook and 6 hours of private consultation with a world-famous widget master. All for just \$599. Payable in six monthly installments.

Unless you *ask*...

You Have No Idea How Eager He Is To Buy More From You.

To see how the pro’s back-end, order something from a good infomercial on television. I’m a rock and roll fan, and one night I ordered the Time/Life video series of music acts on the old Ed Sullivan Show. The original package was \$99, I believe, and I wanted it bad.

On the phone, just after taking my credit card information, the operator asked me if I wanted *another* video series they’d made, with rock acts from other television shows.

It was another \$69 or so. I bought that one, too. Then they asked if I wanted to try some new long distance service, and I declined. So we ended up the call, and I had spent over \$180, with shipping and handling, instead of the \$99 I thought I was going to pay when I dialed the number.

And I was *happy*.

It's quite possible they would have just kept tossing out fresh offers until I declined. If I'd taken the long distance deal, they would have asked me if I wanted something else. A set of luggage, maybe. Why not? I was on the phone, and...

All They Had To Do Was Ask.

Now, if I had been in charge of that campaign, I would have kept all the items offered more closely related. A rock and roll rare photo book. Hard to find music CDs. More videos. A newsletter on rock and roll memorabilia.

The technical term for that kind of pitch is "upselling". You boost the total sale up by offering additional items.

You should *always* have something to upsell. If you're selling a book called "How To Grow World-Class Roses In Just Half An Hour A Week", you could create another book or special report on how to have a lush lawn with the same minimum time expenditure.

Or a video on how to beat ruse diseases without fancy chemicals.

Or a manual on how to get into flower shows.

Or *whatever makes sense* as something else to sell a passionate customer...

Who Already Has His Wallet Out.

The thing is, there is *always* something else you can offer. The two magic words in book publishing, for example, are:

"Volume Two!"

You know those Chicken Soup For The Soul books? I was a featured speaker at a recent seminar co-sponsored by Mark Victor Hansen, the author of that series. They didn't just do Volume Two. They went on to create some *two dozen* other variations on the book. Demand seems insatiable. Chicken Soup for the Writer's Soul... for the Teacher's Soul... for the Dog Lover's Soul. It just goes on and on.

And last time I checked, these books still took up about a *third* of the prime retail space at every airport newsstand, and still seemed like permanent residents of the New York Times Bestseller List.

If they had been rookie marketers, they probably would never have considered writing the *second* book. Most people don't. And yet, once you know the secret of back ending, it's just a no-brainer.

In fact, most businesses don't even keep track of their customers. They treat every buyer as a new face... even if they're buying for the seventh time! This is insanity. (But *common* insanity. Even the great Joe Karbo - author of *The Lazy Man's Way To Riches* and a master marketer - initially *threw away* customer's names after sending out his product. Thousands and thousands of names, never to be contacted again.)

Remember this: The hottest and most enthusiastic customers you will ever have... are the customers you've *just convinced* to buy from you.

A happy, satisfied customer is worth much, much *more* than what you collect from that first sale. That's something bad business owners never realize.

Here's what I tell clients to do with every customer:

1. **Keep a customer list, loaded with as much information as you can gather.** Find a software program that will keep track of what he bought, when, for how much, and from what ad. This is not rocket science. Marketers kept this information on 3x5 cards before computers. Get this list recorded any way you can. It's solid gold.
2. **Create a "pipeline strategy" of back end products and services.** Through new mailings, each fresh customer is offered first a high-ticket back end product. If he buys that, too, he goes onto your "Hot List" of best customers. Create more products that feed his passion, and keep pushing up the value and cost until you reach the point where he finally says "I can't afford that".
3. **If he doesn't buy your high ticket back end, then offer an *alternative back end at a lower cost*.** This puts him on your "Low-End Hot List". Keep offering him high ticket items, and if he passes, offer him a lower-priced alternative version. (For example: If you sell a course with cassettes, videos and books for \$199... just offer the videos for \$69.)

If he doesn't buy any of your back end products, he's still a worthwhile name. My clients typically mail every active name on their list once every 3 weeks. Any less than 3 weeks apart, and you risk burning out your list. Waiting any longer between mailings does not necessarily increase response rates.

Have a plan for dealing with customers who buy your initial product, but then seem to fade away. There's no real science to this, but I advise clients to mail a non-responding customer at least seven or eight times. Keep increasing the opportunities for him to buy something else. Offer steep discounts. Fire sales. *Any* plausible excuse for lowering prices and turning up the heat.

Don't stop until you've offered a great product... at such a low price... that he would have to be dead or completely uninterested not to respond.

Then mail him one more time. Ask him - nicely but with full intention of getting a real answer -- why he's ignoring your letters. Play the...

Aggrieved And Jilted Lover.

Explain that you will do anything to win him back. Pick any product at 75% off. Buy one, get three free. Order our entire library of materials, and keep all but one if dissatisfied. Try like hell to get him to raise his hand again and say "Yeah, I'm still interested."

If it's still dead silence, the name goes into the "old list" file. Don't toss it. Once or twice a year, mail your hottest, most successful letter to him.

Why are we spending so much energy on past customers?

It's the old "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" thing. A customer is someone who has listened to your pitch... been convinced enough to try your product... and went to the trouble of making the toll-free call, or mailing in his payment.

He has raised his hand, and said "Yeah, I want what you got." You've already convinced him to trust you. You have his confidence. He's a *proven buyer*.

For God's sake, he's...

Opened His Wallet For You!

Many marketers will *lose money* to bring in a paying customer... because they know they have fifteen other things they can sell at *full profit* to anyone who has shown an interest in the product line.

If you've been in business for even a few years, just take any customer's name from your files and see what he's bought over the course of that time. It's called the 'aggregate lifetime net worth' of a customer. If he's bought three \$30 products over the life of your business, he's been worth \$90 to you.

It's also simple to figure out the *average potential net worth* of a new customer. Take the total number of paying customers you have... divide it into the total sales... and you have your average net worth of a customer. You should view each new customer as being potentially worth that amount.

For example: You have 10,000 current customers. They bought \$5,000,000 worth of product from you to date. Therefore, the average worth of a customer is 5,000,000 divided by 10,000, or \$500.

Sure, some customers buy more, some buy less. But the *average* amount of money a customer is worth to you is \$500. So why should you freak out if it costs you \$5 in free reports, or \$10 off the top to get someone to buy that *first* product, and become a customer?

Once in your clutches - and once you know how to "mine" your customer list with smart marketing - he's gonna be worth, on average, \$500 to you.

And that's nothing to sneeze at.

Final thoughts: Do *not* try to pull the old "bait and switch" tactic on your customers. That's the despicable technique where one product is offered at a low price... but when the customer tries to buy it, he's told it's really not a good product at all... or they're all sold out... and what he *really* should buy is this other, more expensive thingamajig. That's dirty pool, and customers resent it. Leave that tactic to the losers who can't get a decent front end product together.

Sell your "best foot forward" product first. Then capitalize on your customer's good will (which you've earned) and continuing passion for the same things you love and desire.

Lastly... here are just a few more ideas of back end products:

- ✓ Buy 2 more at 1/2 off...
- ✓ The *advanced* course...
- ✓ The *platinum* advanced edition, which is the same as the advanced course, but lavishly packaged so it looks great on your bookshelf...
- ✓ A monthly newsletter...
- ✓ A daily subscription e-mail service when timeliness matters (like in stock trading)...
- ✓ A seminar...
- ✓ The videos from the *last* seminar...
- ✓ A phone seminar (so you don't have to leave your house)...
- ✓ One hour of consultation with an expert...
- ✓ The tape and transcript of interviews with experts...
- ✓ Cassette tapes of the books... transcripts of the tapes... a book of the video...
- ✓ And on, and on, and on...

Chapter XIII

“How To Find And Feed Your Own Flush, Hungry, Passionate Mob.”

Create a near perfect product over a short weekend!

Full service, that’s my motto. We’re going to dig in and get the rookies who don’t have something to sell yet up and running.

If you already have a product or business, you might be tempted to skip this chapter. I wouldn’t. There’s a lesson here that even the most street-savvy business owner can profit from.

I’ve sponsored, co-produced or been a featured speaker at several dozen marketing seminars all over the country. The majority of these seminars were outrageously expensive - costing upward of \$7,000 and more just to put your butt in a seat as an attendee.

At first, I was surprised to find that each seminar attracted at least one person who had emptied his bank account, refinanced the house, or put off college to attend such events... and who had *no current business or product whatsoever*. While other attendees were looking for ways to multiply profits in an existing enterprise, these product-less rookies were looking for...

A Magic Way To Get Started!

Well, I’m not surprised anymore. You see, learning the secrets of master salesmanship is a smart investment - it’s an amazing set of skills that work like crazy no matter what you do in life. You can use these secrets to sell product, sell ideas... even sell yourself, whether it’s a job interview or a marriage proposal. It’s the key to winning friends, influencing people and scoring huge on the Test Of Life.

But I’m guessing your primary desire is to make independent money. Money can solve a lot of problems that *not* having money creates. And, unless you plan to inherit a fortune or win the lottery, that means...

You’ll Need Something To Sell.

I’m also assuming you don’t have the seed money to go buy a McDonald’s franchise or build a casino in your home town. In fact, I’m going to go out on a limb and assume you’re starting from scratch, just like most of us did. (I didn’t even have a kitchen table to start out on - my little rented ten-by-fifteen foot bedroom was home, storage *and* office for a long time.)

The good news is, you don't need a lot of money to initiate your entrepreneurship. The basic secrets you learn here will more than make up for your lack of office space, staff and bankroll.

So let's get started.

The following technique is understood and employed by many savvy marketers... though, in my experience, it's usually an astonishing revelation to most folks. Still, it's simple to pull off. (Tip: Don't make any decisions until you have completed all four steps. Getting "married" to any idea before you know the numbers is a recipe for disaster.)

The first step is: You do *not* need to find a product to sell first. Nope. That comes later. What you need first is...

An Audience To Sell To.

Missing this initial step is the biggest mistake rookies make. They say things like "Hey, everybody loves my fudge brownies. I should start selling them and make a fortune."

This is backward thinking. Common, but backward.

Forget about any actual product for right now. The first thing you must do is identify a group of people with a high Passion Index and the money to indulge in their passion. Try to imagine a...

Hungry Mob Of Addicts Flush With Cash.

Let me break this image down for you. Hungry: They are not getting enough of what they already want. Mob: A *large* population of people. You're not going to waste time with tiny markets. Addicts: They are not casual about their desires. They are *passionate* about their desires. Flush With Cash: And, they are proven buyers.

Understanding the Passion Index is critical for any business venture. Here's how I like to explain it: At the top of the Index is the junkie, who will hock everything he owns to get what he craves. He is consumed with feeding his desire.

Have you ever met someone who has just been diagnosed with heart trouble? You think he might get a little preoccupied finding a way to fix his problem? Consider the most *urgent needs* of being human. Fat people desperately want to get slim. Broke people want more money. Bald people want hair. Sad people want to get happy.

At the *bottom* of the Index is the nonchalant consumer. Coke, Pepsi, ice tea, tap water... it's all the same to him.

Trying to sell to someone who has little interest in what you have is futile. Going after small or dead-broke market segments is a waste of time. So now and forever, think of potential customers in terms of...

Passion, Population And Purchase Power.

We're not going to attempt to sell fudge brownies to anyone, however. Yes, there are a lot of fudge brownie addicts out there, but setting up a retail outlet is a crap shoot. And we're not going to try selling skis to skiers. The costs and headaches of manufacturing anything are too outrageous to contemplate.

But that doesn't mean you can't still sell *something* to these passionate groups. Let's just be smart about it. The most cost-effective way to tap into any hot market is not by providing *goods* like brownies and skis. It is by providing...

Unique Information.

What if you possessed the most killer brownie recipe in existence? One that was developed by Swiss scientists on a hush-hush billion-dollar grant and rumored to be a pure aphrodisiac to chocoholics. You think you could sell that?

Or, what if you had an inside tip on an undiscovered skiing paradise where there were no punk snowboarders, plenty of uncrowded lifts to powder-covered slopes, a luxurious lodge teeming with pretty girls... and the place was a snap to get to once you had the secret map. Plus, you could spend an entire week there in ski-orgy heaven for under \$400.

You think you could get a skiing enthusiast to pay for that information?

Hmm? You say you don't have any unique tips like that? Don't worry. I'll show you how to find equally intriguing stuff, quickly. Be patient.

Because first, you need to understand Step Number Two: To truly be a success, you must...

Sell Something You Love.

If you don't like to ski, or are allergic to fudge, you will be climbing a steep hill trying to convince your potential customers you honestly understand their desires and passions.

What do you like to do? What gets *your* motor running? Do you love to read books, or tend roses, or sky dive, or work with kids at the YMCA? Make a list. A long list, of every single thing you enjoy. Be specific. Don't write "watching sports". Which sports? Pro hockey? Women's volleyball? X-game dirt bike racing?

The key to happiness - which is the emotion that makes wealth so wonderful – is to be involved in something you truly enjoy. If you hate cats, and start a business teaching cat owners how to speak feline, you're going to be miserable even if you earn a fortune. You're in a great position right now. You aren't wedded to any idea, any product, any future. You're the master of your own destiny. You can choose your path.

So make it something you can feel *passionate* about. It will show in your writing, in your enthusiasm for each day, in your dealings with people. In fact, the more passion you have, the more it will show. It will shine like a searchlight in your eyes, and your heart will sing every time you go to work.

The happy marriage of these first two steps will be consummated in Step Number Three:

**Focus On A Passion You Share
With A Hungry Crowd.**

Now it's time to get busy. And get dressed, because you're going to leave the house. We're going to the library.

Why? Because that's where the free copies of the **SRDS** are. Later on, when money isn't an issue, you will probably want to buy your own SRDS manuals. But right now we're going to check it out for free.

The SRDS is shorthand for the "Standard Rate and Data Service", a company that publishes huge books each month filled with information on over 80,000 media lists and 30,000 direct mailing lists. This is where you'll learn everything you need to know about advertising in and mailing to readers of business and consumer magazines, and daily newspapers. Plus rates and audience figures for broadcast media (radio and TV). And you'll find lists targeted *precisely* to specific markets.

This information is solid gold, when you know how to use it. It's the main tool of professional list brokers. You can subscribe by calling the company directly at 1-800-851-SRDS, or going to their Website, www.srds.com.

So grab the latest SRDS from the reference section, and settle in. The first thing you want to do is look up the populations of people who share your passions. You're doing this to winnow out the subjects that are too small to deal with.

For example... do you salivate at the sight of a mint '66 Shelby Mustang rag top? You'll find both magazines and direct mailing lists aimed at classic car buffs. There is a

Mustang Monthly magazine with almost 80,000 subscribers. Motor Trend magazine - which reaches classic car buffs and other kinds of auto fanatics - has a base readership of nearly a full million names.

However, you can abandon the notion of selling something to beach combers and people who like to collect huge balls of string. The individuals may be fanatical about their endeavors, but there are too few of them.

What else is on your list? Remember... you're hunting for large, passionate groups, flush with cash.

How about golf? Ringo. There are multiple millions of identified golfing enthusiasts in the U.S. alone. And they are *very* willing to put their money where their passion is. (Golf Digest alone has over 1,461,000 subscribers. And there are mailing lists teeming with golfers who have spent beaucoup bucks on instruction, equipment and tour packages.)

So... you've hit paydirt when you've identified a market that is large... shares your passion... and is a proven pool of customers willing to pay for what they want.

Now it's time to create your product. You do this through the magic of Step Number Four:

Quickly Become An Expert.

Believe it or not, this is very easy to do. I don't care how much you do or do not know about your subject right now. By the end of the weekend, you're going to be an expert.

Here's how: The population of any given group is made up of three segments: (1) the few who know everything... (2) the handful who know next to nothing... (3) and the *majority* who know just enough to be dangerous. This last group is always by far the largest. It's also your **target audience**.

Let's stay with golf. (We could do the same breakdown for any other subject you can come up with.) The average golfer in America cannot break 90. Nearly half can't even break 100 unless they experience extraordinary luck. There is a small percentage of golfers with single-digit handicaps, and an even tinier fraction good enough to go pro. On the other end, there are legions of duffers whose scores resemble the summer temperature in the Gobi desert.

The average golfer is by no means an expert. He may have taken a few lessons, subscribes to golf magazines, even watches the Golf Channel on cable regularly. But you know what? He doesn't know every obscure rule of the game. He can't remember if he

should open his stance or close it to hit a ball off the side of a mound. He will whiff at least one tee shot per round. And he can't read a green to save his life.

Hey, you might be this guy. It doesn't matter. Because, you see, what separates a golf expert from a duffer is...

Information!

And where does Mr. Information live? That's right. We're going back to the library. You're going to find the section on golf, and you're going to consume all of it by speed-reading every book.

Whoa, hold on there. You say you don't know how to speed read? That's okay. I shelled out \$399 in 1984 to learn a shortcut way to speed through any stack of books in a fraction of the time it would take to read them the normal way. And, I shall now teach you that shortcut.

Relax. This is going to be painless.

Golf is the example. There are rows of books on the subject. Start anywhere. Just keep track, because you want to handle every single one eventually. Sweep a pile of books into your arms and dump them on a table. Sit down. Open the first book. Read *only* the title, the contents page and the index in the back. Now, because you've picked a subject you have some interest in, you should recognize much of the matter presented in these pages.

We're looking for information that will help the average golfer. More specifically, you're searching for *overlooked* secrets that will *quickly* improve his game.

Here's a tip that will be explained further in Chapter XVI ("The Idiot's Guide To Consumer Psychology") - ask yourself what, exactly, would make the heart of the average golfer flutter with joy? What is his most selfish desire? What would put him in...

Golf Heaven?

If you're a golfer, you will know the answer. The biggest wet-dream of the average duffer... is to be able to hit long, towering, straight tee shots. He wants to feel the ride of *stunning his buddies* by hitting a golf ball so far it disappears in the distance, yet so accurate it resembles a guided missile.

So you have a good idea of what you're looking for in all these books. You can immediately toss the joke books, the fiction books, the photo books on coastal courses. You're after information that will help the *average* golfer hit longer tee shots. When you come across a relevant chapter, read it.

Don't allow yourself to get confused or stumped. If the author isn't clear, move on. Keep plowing. Skim or skip boring and irrelevant sections. And take tons of notes. I like to use 3x5 notepads, one idea per sheet. That way, you can rearrange your notes in any order later on.

Keep plowing through the stack. Keep taking notes about driving from the tee. Take particular note of what is common knowledge, and especially...

What Appears To Be Unique Information Most People Aren't Privy To.

After the first hour-and-a-half of this kind of research, you will know more about tee shots than 90% of all other golfers.

After three hours, you will have absorbed so much "golf talk" that you could sit down and chat with Tiger Woods.

By the time you've finished the last stack of books, you will have a nice pile of notes culled from the best sources on the subject.

Congratulations. You are now an *expert*.

Yes, you are. You don't have to play a great game of golf to be a golf expert. Heck, Bob Costas, the highest-regarded baseball announcer in the business, never played baseball past Little League. The great Howard Cosell never played a single down in his life, yet was a star announcer for Monday Night Football for years. (And the woman who co-authored "The Rules", the bible for women trying to get married, just got *divorced*.)

These people are considered experts because they possess a deep base of *information*. Not because they're skilled at performing the deed. And they're not shy about admitting it.

Besides, you've just seen almost every book on golf ever written. And in doing so, you've stumbled upon one of the **nasty little secrets of our culture** - namely, most books are *horribly written*, and deliver precious little information the reader can use.

The thing is, a person isn't an "expert" because he really knows his stuff. He's an "expert" because he put what he does know into a book. Book. Expert. Write that down, Bucko.

The final step:

Offer A Quick Fix To The Overlooked Corners Of Your Market's Passion.

We're almost done. You have identified your target market. You have become more knowledgeable than the average person. You are focused on what needs to meet.

Now it's time to create your product.

The key to finding the kind of product that will sell in huge amounts is to follow this simple recipe:

- ✓ **Find information that is so overlooked you can legitimately call it "secret".**
- ✓ **Use only information that offers fast results and is easy to use.**
- ✓ **And make sure those results are *almost* too good to be true.**

That means, if you found out how some golfer in the Balkans started hitting tee shots an extra ten yards after lifting weights for three years, while eating nothing but yogurt and sleeping naked in the snow... well, that ain't gonna cut it. Even the most rabid golf nut isn't *that* crazy.

But... if you stumbled across a secret way to hold your hands that Ben Hogan forgot to tell anyone before he died... and using this odd grip can instantly add thirty accurate yards to each drive... well, you've got something there that *every* serious golfer would consider paying to learn.

Write that information up, and you've got a book. It doesn't have to be well written - you've seen how poorly most books are penned. Save your brilliance for the advertising.

Or, you could put everything on videotape. I have several clients who have used a very down-to-earth style called "guerilla video" that is cheap to produce. The key thing to remember is that your product is *information-based*.

It's What You *Reveal* This Is Important... Not The Way It's Presented.

Look at it this way: If Marilyn Monroe in her prime slipped you her phone number, you wouldn't care if it was written in crayon on a stained bar napkin, would you. It's the *information* - the phone number and all that number entails - that is important. On the other hand, a pesky insurance salesman could hand you his number on the most beautifully-designed and expensive gold-plated card ever produced, and its impact would be zero.

So don't worry about presentation. In "guerilla video", you can use a handheld camcorder. You can make your book as basic as possible - photocopied pages in a binder. It simply doesn't matter.

Tell your addicted mob you found an overlooked way to *scratch their itch*, and they will reward you.

A final thought: You can use this research technique to improve your *life*, too. Are you depressed? In debt? Crippled by allergies or a legal problem? There is a massive amount of overlooked, underused and forgotten wisdom about *every detail* of the human experience out there. Read everything you can about your situation or problem.

Plow through the information until you find your answer.

Don't rely passively on an overwhelmed doctor or mega-busy lawyer or *anyone* else to save you. *No one* is as interested in your problems as you are. (Many HMO primary care doctors are now officially restricted to just 10-minute visits with every patient. They are expected to meet with six patients every hour. They *can't* devote very much thought to your situation.)

So be proactive. Movement not only solves many problems, but just the act of doing something to fix what's broken refocuses you on the *solution*. You stop obsessing about the problem. Go to the library, the bookstore... search the Web... get current with the common wisdom, and then look for advice that runs contrary to what "everyone else is saying". Be smart about it. Don't believe everything you read, and don't latch onto the first "miracle cure" you come across. Get the full story. It's out there.

When my mother was diagnosed with cancer, the doctors seemed flustered and uncomfortable with all my questions. The family was devastated and confused. So I went to the bookstore and bought a dozen books on cancer and dealing with hospitals, and I searched the Web. The next time I talked with a physician, I was almost as knowledgeable as he was on current therapies... and I knew a lot *more* than he did about cutting-edge therapies and alternative ways of looking at chemotherapy.

And I'd gotten much of my information straight from the Web pages of the **Harvard School of Medicine**. This wasn't crackpot stuff.

There is no excuse anymore for being in the dark about *any* subject that concerns you. Whether it's about your mortgage payment, which college to attend, the safety record of your car, trading stocks, or how to cure allergies - it's all out there. Every shred of useful information the average "expert" has, *you* can find, too.

Chapter XIV
**“The Marketing Rebel's
Million-Dollar Bag Of Tricks.”**

57 proven sales-boosting secrets straight from the trenches!

You pick up a lot of tactics and ideas in 20 years. Here's a glimpse into the hardworking brain of an adman who has earned his scars:

Position yourself uniquely. Marketers call it your Unique Sales Proposition (or USP). Basically, it's how you answer the question “Why should I deal with you, and not that other guy?” And you answer that you are different in *very specific ways*. You offer 24/7 service, 365 days a year, while the competition only works 9-5 Monday to Friday. Or, you offer a lifetime guarantee, no questions asked... while theirs is guaranteed for only 30 days. Or, you are exclusively contracted with the FBI... or, you're the author of the recognized textbook on the subject... or, whatever *sets you apart* from the others. Think service, measurable quality, price, or unusual credentials the competition can't match.

Blitzkrieg a winner. Keep mailing a hot list, and keep running a hot ad, until results dwindle down to break-even. My clients have found that you can expect about half the orders in each successive mailing (at 3 week intervals). Remove the names of buyers, and add fresh bits of incentive with each new letter. By waiting 3 to 6 months between ads in publications, you can get almost identical results for up to a couple of years.

Never rely on one promotion. Many entrepreneurs are astonished to discover that they really do not have a business... they have an *ad*. One ad, which may work like crazy at first, but will eventually get “tired”. Always have several ads, letters and campaigns going at once. Multiply your chances of success. Don't get surprised by an ad that stops working.

Stay on it like a bulldog after a cat. There is no such thing as failure... just mistakes you have to suffer through to get to the gold. I once wrote 17 consecutive versions of a diet ad, over a period of painful weeks, trying to find the right pitch. The 16th version was the worst of the lot... but the 17th mailed to multiple millions of names (at one point pulling in over \$800,000 a *week*). If I had stopped at version 8, or 12, or 15, I wouldn't have had that kind of success. Keep after it. Everyone fails, sometimes spectacularly and often. But it's only the successes you have that *count* when the day is done.

Chart a “pipeline” for every customer and prospect. Have a system in place that automatically ensures they get sent regular promotions, and get tracked (so you know what they buy, from what campaign, how often, to what pitch). For example: Joe Smith buys a product from you. He gets “letter A” a week later, pitching product #2... the “letter A” again three weeks after that (with the words “Second Notice” stamped in

red)... and “letter A” three weeks again after that (stamped “Final Notice”). If he buys, he gets moved to the next part of the pipeline, and gets “letter B”, pitching product #3, followed by the same letter in three weeks, and so on.

Use a similar “pipeline” for lead generation. Real estate brokers, for example, can't expect to sell everyone who answers their ads. They have to “work the numbers” - knowing that, for every 20 leads that come in their door, they will sell *one*. So they collect “leads” - people who essentially raise their hand and say “Yeah, I'm interested”. Many businesses collect ONLY leads from their ads, and work them with subsequent mailings towards the sale. If you know from experience that you need to pitch 50 potential customers to get one to buy, rejoice as you plow through the non-buying 49... because you're simply moving steadily toward the next sale.

If your project is gonna fail, you want to find out fast and cheap. Mail your best offer to a few thousand of your hottest names. Run in *one* of the most targeted and proven publications in your market. If you can't get your primo prospects interested, you'll never have a more broad-based winner. Don't place ads all over the place, or mail deep into lists, until the ad has proven itself with results.

Let the numbers tell you when to create a new ad. Most business owners get tired of their ad long before their customers do. You see it everyday, and familiarity breeds contempt. But your audience only sees it when you mail or run it. Home run ads are hard to come by. Stay with a winner.

Best advice most businessmen never want to hear: *Dump* a loser project. Walk away. Never get emotionally involved. It's just a product, a means to an end. Chalk it up to experience, learn your lessons, and move on. Savvy marketers *never* put all their eggs in one basket. And they let the numbers - *not* their heart, intuition or spouse - tell them how to proceed.

Fish “deep” in narrow markets, rather than “shallow” in wider markets. Find the densest populations of people who want your product, and hit them with multiple promotions, often. Try direct sales, lead generation, everything that keeps turning prospects into customers. That's “fishing deep.” The opposite is, say, running an ad targeted to bowlers every month in USA Today - a “wide” market of mostly non-bowlers who don't want your product. It's one attempt, spread thin.

Personalizing your mailings can boost response as much as 30%.

“It's just us guys talking.” The best kind of writing is called “I to thou” (or “me to you” in modern parlance). Imagine you're sitting with your prospect, alone in his kitchen, just talking about your common interests. The fact you have something to sell him is not even an issue yet - first, you bond. People tend to trust people who talk like they do, like what they like, dislike what they dislike, etc.

Just putting a big red “Second Notice” stamp on your outgoing envelope and on top of your letter will boost response on second mailings. Putting “final notice” will, too - but be honest. You can even say “final notice at this price”. Then, drop the price a bit.

Use handwriting in the margins of your letter, in a red or blue ink. Real handwriting, too, not that phony typeset stuff. Make it sloppy but readable. Circle the price in the letter, and write in the margin things like “No way! You're getting an extra \$10 off, if you call today!”

More second mailing tricks: Use a cover letter, on smaller letterhead stock, a different color, a different typeface: “Hi. I'm not sure why you didn't order this before (and Lord knows I've tried to sell you on it)... but you sure did the right thing. We're closing out the line, and we have a final batch that we're pricing at half off. This is a one-time offer, though, so you must act fast. All the details are in the enclosed letter...” And then direct them to your original sales letter.

Always explain your reasons. And always use a little personality, even a misspelling or two, lots of cliches, lots of the *human touch*. Make your letter look like it came from a person, not a machine.

Avoid “detail” blunders. Make sure your phones are working, first thing every morning, and then make sure the people answering them are sober and sticking to the proven pitch. Check that the phone number is correct in all printed material about to be published or mailed - *every* marketer has a horror story about a national ad campaign that ran with a wrong phone number. Some poor unrelated schmuck in Santa Fe received thirty thousand mysterious phone calls, and not a single sale was made.

Multiply the number of times ordering information appears in your print ads. If your phone number and address appear only on a mail-in coupon... and it's been torn out... all hope of catching a *second* reader is gone. Put your phone number in the body copy, the P.S., somewhere else. Always be thinking of what could go wrong... and then expect it.

Do what's right for your business, not what pleases the people around you. Don't let lawyers or bean counters or spouses have too much influence in your copy. I've had world-class ads completely emasculated because - without my knowledge - a nervous-nelly lawyer with no sales training at all changed the headline at the last minute.

A great way to “credential” your business is to have a celebrity introduce you in your ad. It matters not a whit whether there is any connection between you and the celeb. I've used soap opera stars to introduce a diet, magazine publishers to introduce a video training series, and local doctors to introduce a totally unrelated business. It's a quirk of human nature that people trust the word of someone who's been on television, or has his photo in a magazine, or a “Dr.” in front of his name.

Create your own Rave Review, and tell the PR agency to take a hike. The best way to establish your business on the local or national stage is to write your own news story (using a third person narrative style), make it up to look like a news story, and run it in a real newspaper. Never wait for a journalist to get excited about your stuff. You're already excited - just tell your story in a newsy format.

TEST! Mail half your letters using one appeal, half with a totally different sales slant. Change the headline and price. Never try to *guess* what the best price, or appeal, of your product is. Find out. You may be astonished to learn just how much people will pay for what you've got... or how much more you can sell at a lower price. The best and most successful marketers are always testing. You can get a statistically significant response (which means you can trust the numbers) from as little as 2,000 letters mailed to any one list.

Create your own competition. Form another company, as soon as you hit it big, which sells a knock-off of your product at a lower price. If you don't, someone else will, and there's a fortune to be made in these "undermarkets". Use a different appeal, a raunchier look, a different name and mailing address. If you're selling solid gold soup urns to high-end households in gated communities, then your knock-off is gold-plated chili bowls to the trailer parks. (And they look just like the real thing!) For every golfer who will pay \$99 for an instructional package that contains a professionally-edited video, workbook and motivational audio cassette from a well-known PGA pro who just won the U.S. Open... there is also a semi-broke duffer willing to risk \$19 on a grainy home movie shot with a handheld camcorder by the drunk who was forced off the K-Mart Pro-Am... as long as the BENEFIT is the same. Part of your market doesn't care what it costs - they just want the damn secret. And part of your market DOES care what it costs - but will respond eagerly when the price is right.

Treat your customer list like gold. Nurture and protect it. Each name is worth cash. Treat it that way.

Longer guarantees do not increase refund rates. In fact, they tend to *lower* the number of returns. I have a client who insisted on a 3-month guarantee period. I pushed it up to 6 months... then a year... and then infinity. The customer can return the product anytime in his lifetime. His *grandkids* can get a refund. We suspect returns go down because, knowing they have all the time in the world, customers tend to forget about the guarantee altogether.

Keep adding to the perceived value of your product, using easy and simple add-ons like special reports or transcripts of interviews with important people. People who are passionate about a subject never tire of hearing about it. Keep adding on information. A book might sell for \$29. That *same* book, with a set of cassette tapes or CDs of the author reading from it (so you can listen in your car) boosts the value of the book to \$99.

Offer a “loaded choice”. When painting vivid pictures for your prospect, help him see the two choices ahead: “In 6 months, you can be in your same old job, feeling the same old frustrations... or... you can be lying on the beach in the Bahamas, knowing your new home business is running on greased grooves, earning you a fortune while you cruise...”

Use a recorded message. Have a machine pick up your phone calls, and you solve two problems: (1) Lots of people would rather *not* speak to a live operator, but will gladly leave their name and number on a machine... and (2) You don't need a staff.

Use a FREE recorded message to bring your ad costs down. Instead of running a huge - and mega-expensive - ad in, say, USA Today... run a small ad referring interested people to your free recorded message. They will listen to 5 minutes and more of your pitch, as long you are fascinating and feed their needs. And, they will leave their ordering information. Or, on 2-step ads, they will leave shipping information, and you can send them a free report which includes your sales letter.

Do your selling on your Web site. Run smaller ads referring people to your Web site, where your longer sales letter is posted. We're almost at the point where you can count on a majority of your audience being “wired” to the Web.

Joe Polish's “wrong fax” technique. Joe is a master marketer who constantly gloms onto new ideas that just leave me shaking my head in admiration. Many businesses have successfully sold product by obtaining fax numbers and mailing their pitches. This ingenious twist uses psychology: Fax your sales pitch *intentionally* to the wrong name. If your name is Pete, and you get a confidential fax addressed to “Sally”... which just happens to contain a breathtaking pitch for a product *you* also want--- you don't *feel* like you've just pitched. You peeked at someone else's fax, and you're getting in on an “insider” deal you wouldn't otherwise have known about. Lucky you.

Send no money. No matter how much you take off your regular price, you cannot beat the appeal of “Send no money now. I'll ship you the widget, on my dime. Take a month to try it. If you want to keep it, I will bill you later. There is no risk.”

Post-dated check. Or, ask for a check *post-dated* to one month from the day they received your pitch. Rush them the product. If they like it, they need do nothing else, and you'll cash the check. If they're unhappy, they simply call and you mail their uncashed check back to them. Only a highly-qualified potential customer will do this. Yet, all the perceived risk on your shoulders, not his.

When selling high-ticket items - over \$99 - you can increase response by offering 3 monthly payments on her credit card to spread out the charges.

Phone seminars. Your phone company can quickly and easily set up a mass conference call, where you can talk to hundreds of people at one time. Only *you* get to talk - your customers cannot interrupt, only listen. This means they can attend your

seminar without leaving home. **Insider tip:** Since there is no interaction on these mass calls, you can actually *pre-record* your speech or lecture. So there's no pressure at all. You don't even have to be in the office while you're wowing the crowd.

Use a monthly newsletter to stay in contact with your customers. The trick is to make it drop-dead interesting. The best newsletters are not fancy ones with lots of graphics... but simple typed letters with a few pages of *fascinating information*. You can include an ad with each issue, but hide it in a separate sealed envelope. The main reason for the newsletter is to *stay bonded* with your customers. Only through that bond will you continue to sell product.

Or, you can send monthly emails filled with good information. Again, if you include a sales pitch, make it a separate file. You do not want your customers sighing “Well, what's he gonna try to sell me today”. Rather, the response you want is: “Hey! An email from those zany guys at Toad, Inc. Let's see what they're up to now.” On both the newsletter and the emails, you can either send them free, or as part of a premium service your customer pays for. How much is the info you have worth?

If you sell *timely information* - say, stock trading tips - you can use daily emails. Have one waiting for them one hour before the market opens every day. It establishes you as the “go to” expert they can trust.

An old door-to-door salesman's tactic is to offer to emboss the product with the customer's name. The *advanced* version is to call and tell your prospect there's one in your office with his name already on it. All he has to do is say the word, and you'll send it. Psychology: People *want* what they feel is “theirs”.

The “Take Away” Caveat: Using the flip side of the above shrink tactic... tell your prospect this product may, indeed, NOT be for him. Not everyone can handle new wealth... or the burdens of suddenly being so much more attractive to the opposite sex... or the demands of so many more customers coming in your door. The more you try to take the offer *away*, the more he will *want* it.

“Keep most of the package, and still get a refund.” The costs of making your product should be absorbed easily in your asking price. Typical direct response mark-up is 3-to-10 times cost. This allows you to offer your prospect to keep much of the package. Say, if you're selling vitamins - tell him to try a full month's supply, and send back the empty bottle if not satisfied for a full refund. Or, send out fifteen special reports with your book, and let him keep all fifteen if he decides to send the book back for a refund.

Fulfill fast... and make a point of it in your sales copy. Only idiot marketers get a prospect all excited and then tell him to expect delivery “in four to six weeks.” That's like pouring cold water on your customer. Ship the *same day* you receive the order. Yes, even before the check clears the bank. None of my clients have ever been seriously burned doing this to their own list.

Send out a “stick letter” that arrives before your product. This letter reinforces the sale by telling him what a great decision he just made, and to expect the product in the next day or two. Then offer him a back end product. Yes, people will buy another product from you even before they get the first one they ordered.

Offer to buy one *for* him, out of your own pocket. This is a much stronger appeal than “get one free”.

Include some extra order coupons in your letter, so your customer can get his friends in on the deal. Or, after he's happy with the product, offer him a free gift to tell a friend about how happy he is. Make sure the friend gets a great deal, so your customer looks good.

Reward your current customers for bringing in friends. Offer free stuff, extra discounts, a subscription extension for every person they turn you on to. In small markets, word-of-mouth will be your most effective sales tool. This includes Internet chat rooms, where your fans can spread the word. (But don't go fishing in chat rooms for customers directly - the “purists” who demand commerce-free chatting will hunt you down with spam and viruses and hacking if you sully their rooms with capitalism. Beware. The only allowable kind of advertising is a passive “hey, I used XYZ for that problem, and it really helped.”)

Never forget to KEY CODE every ad and letter. Make each ad accountable to the numbers. Easiest: Just put a department number in your address, keyed to the mailing or magazine. (Ex: Dept. B5-02 = “B” for Business Week, “5-01” for May 2002.) This way, you can easily which ads worked last year or five years ago, when the ad got tired, number of customers pulled and cash brought in, number of returns, etc... and by attaching the code to each new customer name, you know where he came from.

All photos and graphics must earn their space. If they don't contribute to your sales pitch, take `em out. Never sacrifice sales copy for graphics.

Go to smaller type in your print ads rather than cut critical copy. If you're reaching an audience who is passionate about your product, they will squint.

Tell the whole story, every time. No one's panting to see your latest ad and compare it with the last one. Never assume your customer has memorized a *single thing* about you or your company.

When your market is crowded with competitors: Offer a free gift to new customers, when they order. All other things equal, you'll get the business. Make the gift something of value - so you don't ignite the “oh, yuck” reaction, and get the “hey, cool” one you want -- but do *not* give away what the gift actually is in your ad. Appeal to your customer's curiosity and greed.

Offer a free gift to *old* customers as appreciation, with order. Re-enthuse them about doing business with you. Again, don't give away what the gift is beforehand.

Make your offer different from everyone else. If they're shouting "cheaper", then just come out with a flat profit percent - "We only earn 3% on every deal, which is fair." No tricks. The competition touting cheaper prices, in contrast, will be suspected of lesser quality. Never fight head on. Use a little Zen creativity.

Everything that works in direct response works on the Web. It took me 3 years to convince most of my clients to ditch the fancy graphics, animation and wraparound neon type on their sites... and just use regular blocks of white background with black letters. Make your Web page look exactly like a letter, with blocks of 8-1/2x11 white "pages", page numbers, a brief space, and then another "page". People will scroll down a 14-page continuous letter on the Web... as long as you feed their desires and needs.

Use short Web addresses (like "XYZ.com"). Also make your phone number memorable: 1-800-ITS FREE. Even non-dyslexic people scramble numbers when they're rushing to write them down during a 60-second spot.

Walk a mile in his shoes. If you can truly guess the emotional state of your prospect... do it. Don't guess, however. If you're writing to Democrats after a bad political drubbing, you can guess their feelings. If you're writing to geezers about how bad music on the radio is today (and you've got oldies on tape), share their frustration.

And, lastly... **a little trick for beginning copywriters.** *Drop* the first paragraph (and, sometimes, the entire first page) of copy in your letter. You're probably mumbling. It's the written equivalent of clearing your throat before getting to the point. Be brutal with yourself, take a step back and find the *real* starting point of your pitch, even if it's on page 2. Don't ask the reader to suffer through any warming up copy.

Got A Burning Question For Me?

I'm always looking for new ways to sharpen my skills and help people out. If you have a *single specific problem*, email me at:

marketingrebel@aol.com

...and I will do my best to answer your question. You must be brief, however. There is no marketing problem under the sun that takes more than 2 short paragraphs to explain. So send me your 2-paragraph problem - not a word longer -- and I will give it my best shot.

I also offer my patented “**\$1,000 One-Hour Warp-Speed Phone Consultation**” to people who need more attention. My normal “entrepreneur” rate for copy - to new clients - is a flat \$15,000 per ad against 5% of the gross income my copy generates. And, yeah, that's a steep fee. I earn it because my ads pull.

So, many clients start out with the “\$1,000 One-Hour Warp Speed Phone Consultation”... because I fit *so much* information and advice into that hour, they often don't *need* to hire me directly. I cannot take on more than a couple of full-time clients at a time, anyway. And I'm often booked months (and sometimes *years*) in advance.

To schedule your own hour of consultation, email me at the above handle. We'll find a convenient hour for both of us. You will call me at a secret number, so the call's on your dime. You'll have already sent me your materials, plus a one-page cover sheet answering a few specific questions I'll give you. And you'll send me a check... which I will promptly send *back* to you, uncashed, if -- after fifteen minutes of talking -- you change your mind. At minute sixteen, you're in for the whole ride.

You'll need to *record the call*, because I talk a mile-a-minute and you don't want to waste time having me repeat stuff. And I'm telling you now this will be the most *educational* hour of your life.

Again - any questions, just email me.

Chapter XV

“Operation Moneysuck.”

Your number one job is to bring in the cash.

Here’s a simple concept that will change your life forever.

And I’ll explain it with a short story: Long ago, I was the freelancer that many L.A. ad agencies snuck in the back door to do the writing their own copywriters couldn’t handle. I enjoyed the role. And it paid very well.

It also gave me an opportunity to watch the corporate advertising world in action from the inside. What I observed was horrifying and consistent: The *majority* of everyone’s working hours were spent either in...

Totally Useless Meetings... Or Solving An “Urgent” Crisis!

They were constantly stumbling two steps forward, then falling three steps back, getting nowhere. It took Divine intervention to get a project completed. Heck, entire departments broke down into chaos when the *copier* went on the fritz.

Now fast-forward to one of my first writing sessions with the infamous marketing guru Gary Halbert (who gets little argument when he bills himself as the “greatest living copywriter”). We get settled in his office - it’s early morning - and before we can start moving on any project... two of his secretaries burst in with a litany of bad news. Taxes are due tomorrow. The owner of the main print shop is in the waiting room, looking grim. The computer just crashed. The building’s landlord is on hold, apparently pissed off.

Every fire sounded like something we should take care of right away. I sighed, assuming our “get down to business” session was going to be delayed.

I was wrong. Gary shooed the secretaries away and locked the door. And started writing ads.

“What about all those emergencies?” I asked.

“Screw `em,” he said. “Our job is to *bring in the money.*” And we spent the next six hours doing just that. Writing ads and making phone-calls that brought in the money.

This was **Operation Moneysuck** in full gear. And it’s a simple, two-part lesson all business owners need to take to heart:

1. **Money will take care of problems that *not* having money creates... and...**

2. ***You're the guy who knows how to bring in the money.*** Don't waste time doing something that doesn't produce bucks.

I know businessmen who change the oil in their own car. Clean their own houses. Fix their own computers. Decide what art to put on the office walls.

This is *nuts*. Every hour you put into your *business* will bring you major moolah back in. What are you worth an hour, anyway? \$100 an hour? More? I know that in a good year, every one of *my* productive hours can net me as much as \$5,000.

So why in the world are you doing jobs you can pay someone \$10 or \$20 or even \$50 an hour to do *for* you? You're losing twice - not only are you wasting precious time (which is irreplaceable), you're also *stealing potential cash* from your business.

Look. It's very likely that you are the **ONLY** person in your business with the capabilities and knowledge and skills to bring in new business... and make sure projects get *completed*. This is the **ONLY** way your business prospers. When you don't do these things...

They Don't Get Done!

So... your number one job... and your number *two* job... and your numbers three, four, five and on down jobs... is to bring in the money. Money will solve almost *every* business-related problem you have.

As for everything else that happens, you should either...

1. **Delegate to someone who can handle it** (or learn to handle it)...
2. **Put it off...** or, my favorite...
3. **Ignore it.**

Imagine what it was like during the invasion of Normandy during World War II. Your job is to land on the beach, get past the incoming ordinance, and take out the enemy guns without getting killed. 'Your job is **NOT** to make sure the boat behind you also landed safely... or tend to wounded... or make sure the camera crews are getting good film. Even if those jobs are also important and necessary... that's not what *you're* there for.

What kind of fires are interrupting you? If your car won't start, have someone go rent another one to get through the week. If your copier has melted down, go to Kinko's, for God's sake. Let your secretaries take care of the landlord and the print shop owner. Heck, spend the afternoon writing a killer ad that brings in enough dough for the down payment on your own building, and tell the landlord to stick it. Then *buy out* the printer.

You'll be astonished how many "red alert fires" actually fizzle out all on their own, And... how many "major" disasters can be solved with the higher profits you earn by keeping your nose where it belongs. (Did your precious computer crash? Instead of spending 20 hours trying to fix it, focus those 20 hours on creating *new* business that brings in so much cash you can simply buy a fresh computer and toss the old one for junk.)

If you work alone, use your message machine as your receptionist. I *never* answer the phone when I'm hot on a job. Everybody gets the machine. If I hear the voice of someone I want or need to talk to, I pick up. Very simple.

If you need staff, spend ALL your energy finding *one* person who will treat your business as their own. Someone who can make a friggin' decision, who will follow through, and doesn't need to ask permission for every paper clip purchase. Your own loyal Gal or Man Friday.

Then let that person hire everyone else and run the office. Fix the equipment. Soothe the landlord's feelings. Run the payroll.

My own office is a disaster area. Books and papers piled up everywhere. I haven't seen the top of my desk in a year. The computer screen is smudged, my keyboard smeared with peanut butter.

And I *may* get around to tidying up at some point. But not today. Not tomorrow. Nope. This little disaster area also happens to be some of...

The Most Profitable Square Footage In Town!

Who *cares* if it's messy? That's not important. And don't give me that "but I can't work unless my desk is clean" bullshit. I've written ads in crowded airports, scribbled million-dollar ideas on bar napkins, worked longhand on the back of coffee-stained grocery lists while driving my car on the freeway.

Any excuse you make *not* to work on Operation Moneysuck is just that – an *excuse*. It's worthless.

When I ran an small corporate department in Silicon Valley (one of my ill-fated attempts at a regular job) I developed a "3 memo rule", just to keep from being overwhelmed. The first time I saw any memo, it went straight into the trash.

The second time I saw it come around, I would glance at it... and usually throw that one away, too.

If I ever got it a *third* time, I knew it was important. But most memos died long before a third circuit. And I got a ton more work done than anyone else.

Oh, and the occasional “important meeting” I missed? Nothing ever happened that I couldn’t be briefed on in five minutes by someone who did attend. Meetings are almost always an excuse not to get the *real work* done.

Let me say this again:

**Money Will Solve Problems
That Not Having Money Creates!**

You’re the guy who knows how to bring in the bucks. That’s your job. Nothing else matters. There are many business owners who go *under* every year because of insufficient profits... but, hey, their copier sure ran well.

Don’t be that business.

Final thought: Can’t get through the week without a staff meeting? Fine. Do in a cold room with no chairs. Everybody stands. You’ll be astonished how quickly you can get through an agenda when you’re slightly uncomfortable.

Chapter XVI

“An Idiot’s Guide To Consumer Psychology.”

*A quickie Master’s Level course on
what makes your customer tick.*

There’s been a lot of “merger mania” among U.S. companies lately. Everybody’s playing a macho game of chicken, trying to be the Mr. Universe of the business world.

But what does the pampered CEO of a cookie company know about selling long distance service? Being the Big Dog at one type of company is *zero* guarantee you’ll find similar success in a new area. The business pages are crammed with “what went wrong” stories about bad merger fits. (My favorite is the Japanese company Sony trying to run a Hollywood studio. These poor guys were walking around *stunned* at the massive losses they accrued in just two years of filming bombs. Apparently being an electronics Shogun in Tinsel town isn’t as magical as they thought it would be.)

Ah... but what does the *salesman* who understands the **basic psychology of human beings** know about selling a new product outside of his expertise?

Everything!

The product is actually just an *afterthought*. A great salesman can sell cake mix, new cars, computers or lingerie with the same skills. Financial advice, furniture, love advice, literature... to sell any or all of these things still involves meeting the selfish needs of your customers.

And knowing *what makes them tick*.

These are the secrets of success, my friend. Here is my short course on the consumer mind, in no particular order:

- ❑ **Most people will not pay a nickel to prevent** illness or disaster... but they will empty their bank accounts to *fix* something once it gets broken. No one goes on a diet to avoid getting fat. They suffer diets because they *got* fat.
- ❑ **Avoid asking questions or painting pictures that get a “no” response from your prospect.** You want to get him nodding in agreement with you. So always phrase your statements in a positive way. Not: “If you don’t do this, you’ll get hurt”, but “Do it this way, and you’ll reap grand rewards.”
- ❑ **The fastest - and easiest - way to bond with someone is to find common ground.** Give just a glimpse that you share his passions, and he will welcome you as a blood brother. Therefore, don’t lecture or nag. Show, by example and

“this happened to me” stories. Let him come to the *conclusion* that you’re right - never try to tell him you’re right.

- ❑ **No one in the history of the world has ever won an argument with another human being.** You may shut him up, but you’ll never change his mind by arguing. The only way that will happen... is to present the facts in a fascinating, logical and *passive* manner, and let him “sit” on them for a while. Talk as if, of course, he must be interested in this information. That’s just taken for granted. No in-your-face bullying. You’re just offering an interesting story. He will come around on his own. And he won’t have to admit you were right, because you weren’t arguing - he’ll just suddenly “be in your camp”, having lost nothing in pride, and gained the advantages of your logic.

- ❑ **We all want what we don’t or can’t have.** And we all are somewhat dissatisfied with what we *do* have. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence. That’s why people trade perfectly good cars, houses and spouses in for the latest model.

We also want what someone is trying to *take* away from us... even if we didn’t really appreciate it before. That’s why the “take away” works in ads. A simple paragraph stating “This may not be for you. Not everyone can handle it...” will often spur the prospect to prove he *can* handle it. (See the way Tom Sawyer talks other kids into white-washing the fence for him, by insisting they couldn’t handle the fun involved.)

- ❑ **We all want to feel special.** Damn it, we ARE special... it’s just that everyone else is too stubborn to realize it. So give your customer a reason to crow. Help him imagine the sputtering jealousy of his neighbors and friends when they discover he’s gotten a better deal... a rare product... an “insider’s advantage.”

No one gets the respect they feel entitled to. No one listens to them, no one cares about what they think.

That’s why you DO care, and listen, and offer respect. You can see what others refuse to observe. You’re his best new buddy. Help your prospect *feel* the new respect he will have when he buys your product or service. Having your product means he now has better information... finer equipment... knows influential people... has the secret skills to do the right thing at the right time. This works for bowlers, yacht owners, singles on the dating scene, housewives and horse race junkies. Right across the board.

- ❑ **Most people don’t get to do interesting things...** or meet interesting people... or have any fun or adventure in their lives. Offer them a front row seat in a better life, and they will flock to you.

- ❑ **Most folks have never won anything, either.** Give your customers the opportunity to feel lucky and special.

- ❑ **The decision to buy is emotional.** The *reasons* for buying must be logical, however. Listen to the hawkers on the cable shopping networks justifying another piece of jewelry for their customers: “Yes, this will look *perfect* for that upcoming New Year’s party or Christmas dinner with the boss.”

We don’t buy jewelry because it is pretty. We buy it because, in our minds, it will make *us* look pretty. I started smoking at 18 because I wanted to look like Humphrey Bogart. (I quit ten years later because I wanted to be able to walk two blocks without wheezing, but that’s another story.) I looked like a kid gagging on a Kool, of course. But in my mind’s eye, I was a tough guy in a trench coat and fedora.

Wonder no longer why runway models are slender as twigs, while the women in the audience buying the dresses are full-figured, In their minds, this outfit will give them the *look* of a runway model. Hope springs eternal. Maybe some of that glamour and mystery will rub off.

The *product* is almost never what we are buying. We are buying the aura, the myth, the promises and dreams that hover over it. My clients who sell instructional videos have estimated that as many as 50% of their customers never break the seal on the videos they buy. It’s enough to know the answer to their desires is there on the shelf, waiting patiently for them. Life goes on, and the dreams gather dust once again.

Give him a reason to buy, so he can indulge his emotions with complete justification. Mr. Middle-Aged Crisis talks endlessly about the fine engineering of the shiny red Corvette he just bought... but his real thrill comes while getting appraising looks from the young women he zooms by.

- ❑ **The human mind always rounds off to the lowest number.** \$19.99 is not twenty dollars. She may not feel comfortable spending twenty bucks. But under twenty, well, that’s fine. If you must include shipping and handling costs, do it *after* she’s made the decision to buy. Once you’ve gotten her past her “price resistance”, another couple of necessary bucks will not spoil the deal.
- ❑ I often get trashed for saying this, but it’s the truth: **People are sheep.** We *all* are, so don’t feel smug. But people *often* need the approval of others before making a decision. Even a stranger’s opinion carries massive weight. I remember sitting at a cafe on vacation, realizing that we went there solely on the recommendation of a total stranger who overheard us discussing dinner plans on the hotel elevator. His rave review convinced us. As far as I know, he was the owner, haunting hotels incognito and steering tourists his way.

Blockbuster movies aren’t blockbusters because they’re good. They’re blockbusters because a *lot of people* go to see them. Most of them absolutely suck.

I also remember being in a casino restaurant area during Thanksgiving. Every restaurant was serving turkey. The line for the \$12 buffet was eighty people deep. The

wait for the \$15 low-end steakhouse next door was twenty minutes. But we got seated right away in the nice Italian restaurant ten steps away. How much more did we pay? Another three dollars. Yet the majority of people would rather wait an hour for the (slightly) cheaper buffet. After all, that's where the *line* was.

- ❑ **People can be insanely literal.** Are you old enough to remember when deodorant commercials never mentioned underarms? The models always used their *forearms* to show how smoothly the roll-on glided. How many people do you think walked around with iffy armpits but nice-smelling forearms after seeing those commercials?
- ❑ **It is a myth that your customers are “different”.** Everyone is the same seething mass of base emotions: Greed, fear, love of a bargain, need of respect, desire to be popular and interesting and rich and good-looking (especially thin, with a good head of hair). That said... it is interesting to note that it can be easier to get someone to part with \$200 than \$20. The big decisions just seem to elude rationality - you want that honking Harley, you want to drive it off the showroom floor right friggin' now, and damn the cost. Then you drive 30 miles out of your way to save four cents a gallon on gas.
- ❑ **People love inspirational stories:** “I was down, I found a secret, now I'm rich.” It's very frustrating to live in America, the Golden Land Of Opportunity... and *not* be filthy rich. The rest of the world looks at what we have and drools. We look at what we don't have yet, and get depressed. No matter how content anyone says they are, there's a little hidden dream tucked away deep inside. To be a rock star... governor of the state... keeper of a harem... Hollywood's next big discovery... the novelist everyone wants to read. We all harbor secret fantasies of elaborate lives.
- ❑ Never underestimate the pulling power of saying “**I have something here in my office with your name on it...**” Anonymity sucks. Recognize him as an individual you respect, and you'll be pals for life. (Of course, fame sucks, too... but we all want the opportunity to experience the pain personally.)
- ❑ **Emotions can be complex little buggers.** A shrink once sat me down and patiently explained. that women have something like 137 specific, identifiable emotions. To a woman, feeling loved is much *different* than feeling adored or cherished. And she will be sad in 19 different, very specific ways. Blue is different than wistful. Men, on the other hand, only have about 9 identifiable emotional states that seem different to them. (And no, hungry and horny are not emotions.)

Why is this important to know? Because women control 90% of the buying decisions in the culture - for houses, cars, clothes, you name it. Guy-controlled markets tend to be very rabid - golfers, bowlers, hobbyists, and so on. But he only gets to use totally expendable income on that stuff. She's tying up the rest.

- ❑ **Are you smart?** You may have what I call “IQ-itis”. Let me explain: When I ask fellow Baby Boomers what percentage of our generation they think went to college, the ones who *have* some college under their belt will invariably say “fifty percent”. That’s because most of the people they *hang out with* also have some college under their belts. But the actual figure is... 15%. That’s not graduating with a degree. That’s attending even a few classes at the college level.

This becomes a problem when you don’t realize how *insulated* from the real world you actually are. Many businesses try to talk “fancy” in their promotions, assuming everyone has the same large vocabulary and same world experience and values they do. And they lose a good part of their target audience.

If you’re serious about making a lot of money, you need a wider group of friends. Get into a bowling league. Go have a drink with your plumber. Sit down and actually talk with someone outside your “group”, or under your section of the “brain bell curve”. A really bad case of IQ-itis will *murder* your advertising. You’ll come across as inscrutable (go ahead, look it up), elitist, nr just a garden variety jerk.

And that dog won’t hunt.

Chapter XVII

“When You’re Selling Yourself.”

Meat market, job market, farmers market... it’s all the same.

I mentioned at the very beginning that the secrets of world-class salesmanship will bring even love and happiness into your life. I’m sure many readers just assumed the *money* earned from fabulously-successful ads would take care of that.

Nope. Money can’t buy you love, I’m afraid. And of the millionaires I know, roughly three-quarters are absolutely miserable and unhappy.

So how can salesmanship help you? First of all, if you’re unhappy, go back to the part of Chapter XIII called “become an expert”. You can literally become one of the most *knowledgeable* people in the world on ANY subject... in a weekend.

This is not because things are easy to understand. It is because most people *never* attempt to understand anything...

In Depth.

So... if you’re unhappy because you’re broke, get thee to the library, bookstore and related Web sites... and get hip to making money. Re-read this book. Read the other ones I’ve suggested, and use them as launching pads to find even more books with similar value. Become an *expert* on the secrets of making money.

It’s not rocket science. It’s just a matter of *learning what to do*.

And guess what? It’s the same if you’re unhappy because you think you’re ugly. Women don’t like you. Bosses discriminate against you. People snicker behind your back.

This is ignorance talking. And the way to end this ignorance is to...

Become An Expert On Self-Respect.

How do you do that? Bookstore, library, the Web. Start reading up, Bucko. What you will quickly discover is that *everyone* feels ugly. Julia Roberts thinks she looks like a cow. Robert Redford is so short, he almost never got his first movie role. Brad Pitt has acne scars.

You’ll learn that looks reflect your inner self. If you respect yourself, you’ll look attractive. You’ll stop sabotaging yourself.

Hey - bald guys ignore women who say they *like* the Yul Brenner look. They remember only the remarks of some witch years ago who insisted she could only love a man with long locks.

Name your poison. Too short? Too fat? Too tall? Too skinny? Big nose? Small breasts? Bad eyes? A missing limb?

Congratulations. You're human. And the Catch-22 clause in our wiring is that we are ALL doomed to suffer maladies, scars, and unfortunate physiological eccentricities... but we cannot see past our own embarrassment to realize...

No One Cares!

Two of the richest and most respected real estate gurus in the world... are twin *midgets*. Look around at who your college buddies married. *No one* gets out of their 30s looking drop-dead gorgeous. Danny DeVito is not only an admired actor at 4 foot 11, but he's married to a very talented and sought-after actress. Who is taller than him by a foot. Both Bruce Willis and Sean Connery are bald as babies.

I could go on and on with the pep talk... but that's what your *own research* will do for you. Bring you back to earth. God has NOT got it out for you, dude.

Everybody's got a cross to bear. Gazillionaires sleep alone and lonely every night. Handsome and pretty people cry in their beer over ruined lives. Great singers languish in the chorus, while the tin-ear gets star treatment.

And once you *know* all this... once you're no longer a stranger to human behavior and have the tools to gain confidence and social skills... your whole life will begin to change. You'll also get *healthier*, both inside and out. And that will make you **more attractive**.

Hey - you want a new job? Use your salesman's skills to land one. I sent a resume once (back when I still worked for the Man) with several lottery tickets attached... and a letter titillating them with the potential wealth those tickets held. I wasn't even the best person for the job, but I got it. They remembered me. My cover letter slayed them.

You want a big house on the beach? Set your sights, and go get it. Create a simple business and create the advertising that brings in the money. Find the house you really want, or have it built. Dig deep into your dreams for your goals... but dig deep into *research and business* to make them come true.

It Really Is That Simple.

You want love? Then why in the world are you wandering around expecting it to come up and announce itself? Put your new writing skills to work... and create a...

Killer Personal Ad.

Think about the kind of woman you want. Funny, pretty, independent, no kids, non smoker, educated but not a geek... make a list of what you desire.

Then *get real*. What are the chances of finding such a person haphazardly? Zero. She may not even live in your town. You may run into someone who is funny and sweet at the local coffee shop... but she has four teenage delinquents at home, and is addicted to malt liquor. You can't see the total person by just walking around and searching.

You need to *advertise*.

Write up who you are, and who you're after. Be honest, but use your ability to *spin* faults - if you're short and bald, maybe you're a "hairless Robert Redford". If you're sensitive about not being rich yet, say you're an entrepreneur. (It's true, isn't it?)

If you're overweight, start slimming down... but in the meantime, describe yourself as having a "manly bulk". Start working out if you're out of shape and you feel this hurts your confidence. If you have herpes, be honest about it. Don't give the faults that haunt you power by trying to hide them. Examine yourself, come to grips with the complex human being you are, learn to like and respect yourself... and then run that puppy up the flag pole of the singles world and see who salutes.

Dating is all smoke and mirrors, anyway. If it's going to take seeing forty-seven people to find the one right for you, then it's best to get busy and plow through those not right forty-six as soon as possible.

Write a big ad, a full page, using all your new salesmanship skills. Don't be afraid to employ a little sensationalism to turn heads. This is your life. This is something you really want.

Present yourself as the sweet, lovable, funny guy you are. List the benefits of landing a prize like you. Be honest. People are looking for real human beings. In fact, women actually adore men who are complicated and multi-dimensional, or a bit of a challenge. Don't sell yourself short.

And then let it be known that *you* are after a certain kind of woman. Be specific. *Ask* for what you want, Bucko.

You will get responses. People do read the personals.

And you will get a lot of *inappropriate* responses - people who don't come close to meeting your requirements, but want to give it a shot anyway. You will hear from a lot of people who think they're funny/pretty/sweet, and actually are not.

But... you will also stir up a lot of people who come very, *very* close to being your dream lover. The point is, you will be...

**Fishing From
A Crowded Pool!**

And not hoping Fate steers you down the right street at the exact second Miss Perfect loses a heel. That's Hollywood, not real life.

Become an expert... and sell yourself honestly.

Keys to the universe, my friend.

Chapter XVIII

“The Mysterious Force Behind Every Dollar Bill In The Universe.”

Spooky stuff, man.

When I started out as a freelancer, I read a lot of “self help” books to stay motivated. Three really stood out: “**Think And Grow Rich**” by Napoleon Hill... “**The Lazy Man’s Way To Riches**” by Joe Karbo... and one called “**Money Love**”, which seems to have undeservedly gone out of print.

The one thing all three books had in common was a deep belief in the *metaphysical* aspects of money. This is not religious nonsense. It’s more of an awe in the face of repeating observations.

And damn spooky ones, too.

This is why I keep my karma sparkling clean.

This quasi-spiritual attitude about money centers around the old saying “what goes around, comes around.” That’s a very Westernized and simplified version of karma. “You’ll get what’s coming to you, good or bad.” In business, you reap what you sow. What you put in motion.

And you know what? It’s true, in more ways than we can understand or explain. I don’t believe there are little beings flying around keeping score on our sins and good deeds... but somehow... some *way*... the universe keeps tabs on things.

That’s why I am never surprised when I hear a client I’ve just helped rake in a bundle say “Where was all this money *last year* when I was desperate?” Because the money that you put into motion by creating good business - and getting your head straight about wealth -- also comes around again. And it brings a few new friends along, too. This is how wealth multiplies.

And when wealth begins to multiply... and I see this over and over, year after year... when the money finally *does* start pouring in...

You’ll Wonder Why It Seemed So Hard To Make Before!

People typically have internal “limits” on the amount of money they can earn. I remember when it seemed I would never make more than \$20,000 in a year. When I hit \$24,000 - an average of two grand a month - I thought I’d entered the Big Time. The next year I earned \$36,000, and couldn’t imagine what I would do with it all.

When I first cracked \$100,000, I felt uncomfortable. Was I the kind of guy who earned 100 g's a year? That was more than many of my relatives had made in their *lifetime*. It didn't "fit" my tortured self-image.

And guess what?

The next year, I only earned \$50,000 or so.

Well, that pissed me off. And I realized I really *was* the kind of guy who could earn six figures without breaking a sweat, and like it. I haven't looked back since. I am comfortable around money now, and it seems to like my attitude.

You, too, have an unconscious "comfort level" in your head over money. Would you be happy earning \$1,000 an hour, starting tomorrow? How about \$10,000 an hour? Don't be too sure it wouldn't cause you some pain.

You know, of course, the first thing *most* people do after winning a big state lottery is to...

Blow All The Money!

If your idea of being filthy, stinking rich is to have the car paid for and a few extra thousand in the bank... well, suddenly having a million or *more* will just boggle your mind. It's a shock to who you believe you are and where you belong.

How does the unprepared novice handle sudden wealth? You will quickly learn that - as a millionaire -- you cannot buy just anything you want. *Modest* homes in many desirable places now often sell for a small fortune. Being a mere "millionaire" in a truly fancy neighborhood will get you laughed at. You're no longer sure where you fit.

Sudden wealth can make you squirm if you can't "get your mind around it". Old friends are suspicious they're "not good enough for you" anymore. Relatives want to borrow huge amounts, and never pay it back. Your tax bill is suddenly larger than your net worth was last week.

You don't know if you should move, or quit your job, or start wearing smoking jackets and buy a different Cadillac for every day of the week.

And unconsciously or consciously, you do what you have to do to get *back* into your "comfort zone". Even if it means losing all the money.

Well, here's a tip to avoid that kind of agony. When you first start making big money, *keep quiet about it*. Don't brag, don't show off, don't become a Daddy Big Bucks. Go slow, and enjoy each step in a manner that doesn't jar your soul.

Get used to having more money in your life by getting used to the idea you *earned* it. And that it's there to serve, *you*... not the other way around.

I recently went to someone's house, which they had commissioned a famous architect to build. They'd come into more money than they literally knew what to do with. The house was like a museum, without a trace of human comfort. These people were *lost* in there, homeless in their own home. The interior decorator they'd hired made the place look schlocky and foreign. No one could tell you why any particular painting was hanging on a particular wall. It was just there.

Why did they move from their comfortable older house? Because they suddenly had all this money. And they...

Allowed The Money To Tell Them How To Live!

Don't let that happen to you. A buck is just a buck. It's what that buck *can* – not *must* - do for you that gives it value.

Young copywriters come to me for advice all the time. I have an “open door” policy with them (albeit through email)... and I'll help steer in the right direction anyone who asks. No one helped me when I started out, and the first couple of copywriters I approached for advice told me the job was too difficult to explain, and I'd never be able to do it.

That *really* pissed me off. And I vowed never to turn anyone away who needed a little “start up” advice.

Here's what I tell young copywriters about money: First, don't take more than you *earn*. In direct response, you can charge huge royalties on ads that work well (I usually get 5% of gross)... but you earn every penny of commission you get. If the ad brings in a fortune, then you've *earned* your slice. It feels good. It feels deserved. It “fits”.

Two: Give something back to the world. Immediately. Give to charities, be a generous tipper, pay good salaries to those who work for you. Keep a good part of your money circulating, so it has the chance to come back multiplied.

Three: Spend a little money from each paycheck on yourself. Save some, give some away, pay off bills - and try to live debt-free - but make sure *you* get a nice personal reward, too. Show the money that it does not *own* you. That you are not afraid of it.

This reward should be something you do not “need”. Rather, it should be something almost frivolous. But something that will make you smile whenever you look at it. And say “I *earned* the money to buy that silly little thing.”

That's feeding the happy little corners of your own soul.

Four: As quickly as you can, set aside some "**Screw You**" money. This is enough cash to support you for six months to a year... put someplace where you *cannot get to it easily*. Don't invest it in anything riskier than a bank CD. Don't play around with this money. This is not cash to burn, and it's not savings... it's money to back you up. It's your invisible partner, not to be used unless all other options have snapped shut. Put this money *out* of your conscious mind. If you never touch it the rest of your life, it's done its job.

Just knowing you have this cash stashed away will change your life. You will viscerally become a different person. This back-up cache means you do not *ever* have to take shit from anyone. You are no longer a slave to the system.

And if you do not like the look of a client or job... you can walk away.

This ability to say "screw it, I'm out here" gives you not just total freedom... but a powerful sense of confidence people can *smell* on you. Because you *don't* need his measly fee. And he can shove it if he tries to manipulate you or force you to compromise your principles.

Five: Don't let money run your life. The most common ailment among professionals is bum-out. You make a few bucks, you get on a treadmill where each bigger paycheck becomes the *minimum* you now require for your hot new lifestyle... and suddenly all you're doing is working.

This is common. It really is a treadmill. And your brain turns into slush, and your personal life goes into the dumpster. I will never forget sitting with a client at a little cafe in Miami Beach. He owned 26 auto supply stores... was a hundred pounds overweight... had a wife who despised him and kids he never saw... and while a tropical breeze ruffled the palms, and pretty girls strolled by, and the waves crashed on the white beach... *all* he could talk about was...

Opening His 27th Auto Supply Store!

Jeez. Get a life already. You do not want your tombstone to read "He was born, he worked like a dog, and then he died." Heck, even *dogs* don't work like dogs. Work *for* something, like a happier life... not for work's sake.

My advice: Keep your lifestyle *behind* the curve of your income. Wait until you can buy what you want with cash, so you don't go into debt. (This includes your car.) By all means, up your standard of living, and use your money to grease the skids, of life. But don't fall into the trap of thinking you *have* to change, just because you now have extra money.

And start taking your *retirement* in chunks, now, while you're young enough to enjoy it. I take sabbaticals of three-to-six months almost every year, where I spend time doing exactly as I please. Writing novels. Playing in bands in Virginia City biker bars. Seeing the world. Smelling the damn roses.

And when each little mini-installment of my retirement is over, I'm rested and rarin' to get back in the race.

**That's *Using* Money...
Rather Than Being Used *By* It!**

Also, build in three-day vacations *every* working month. But don't fly off to some distant beach and do nothing (or, worse, go on drinking jags). Make these little vacations an *adventure*. Go somewhere you have to speak a foreign language. Get into a seminar in something completely different than your field of expertise. Learn all about a new city, and then go explore it. Be active. Get your blood flowing and your lust for life cooking.

This will work a different part of your brain, and actually *recharge* the part you normally use. It's a myth that you can "relax" with just a few days of vacation a year, taken all at once, doing nothing. The only way to *truly* relax is to get in a rhythm with life where, *frequently*, you change gears for short periods in completely pleasant and invigorating ways.

You know all those beer commercials with people lounging on the beach, drinking, just staring off into space? That's a nightmare to anyone who is living life to the fullest. Stay engaged in life, and suck up the good stuff with *mucho gusto*.

Six: Lastly, it can be good for the soul to turn down an opportunity once in a while...

**Solely On
Painful Principle.**

This is where the universe gets weird. A few years back, I was on hard times, and I didn't know if it was a long-term downturn or a temporary glitch in my fortune. I arranged to do a job with a man I was introduced to, and we agreed on the fee beforehand. He was to send me, I recall, \$1,000 to start, and \$1,000 upon completion of the job. This was a fraction of my normal fee, which shows you how desperate I believed things had gotten.

But when the first check arrived, it was for only \$500. He'd written a sly note about deciding that I would work better with more of the carrot at the other end. Ha ha ha.

I needed the money. I should have taken the \$500 and swallowed my anger at having the deal changed just because he thought he held all the cards.

But I didn't. Instead, I sent the check back, uncashed... with a note telling him never to contact me again, because I did not wish to do business with such a man as he.

This was not a "ploy" to get more money. It was a **heartfelt matter of principle**, even in the face of dire economic stress. I made sure he understood there was no negotiation. Bullies don't get a second chance.

The *next day*, I received two jobs from a new client who appeared from nowhere. Someone who had spent considerable time and expense tracking me down. This new client immediately paid me \$15,000 up front against commission for the work... and the commission was outrageously generous. If I had accepted the first job - at a humiliating fraction of my normal fee - I might not have been able to handle the new ones. By shutting the jerk out of my life, I made room for some truly good clients, who I am still working with many years later.

Coincidence? Perhaps. The thing is... similar events have happened over and over again. Far too often to ignore.

Stay on principle... keep your karma clean... give something back... and strive to be worth what you earn.

You know, even if I didn't get rewarded in so many mysterious ways, it's still the best path to take.