





P.S.  
Please be sure to contact me  
with any pennies *you* find.  
Thank you.

**T**he bits and pieces of advice that follow were taped to the wall above my desk during my early years in business. For the most part, they are not original thoughts, but rather, thoughts that made sense to me at the time. They still do.

Picked up like lucky pennies found in the vast parking lot of life, I grasped each one as if it were a coveted secret, dropped carelessly – like loose change – by a successful Harvard Business School alumni. I also picked up a lot of foil gum wrappers and a few organic dropping, but I have spared your those.

I **had** to collect this knowledge. I was a fraud. I knew nothing about conducting business. Sure, I knew my craft, but what right did I have to think I could run a business?

Eventually, my wall became a fire hazard and I converted my deteriorating 'wallpaper college' into this booklet.

Forty-six years later, I still reread my little BizWiz. I still look for lucky pennies of business knowledge, too.

What can I say? It works for me.

Hope it helps you too.

Sincerely,

Kevin D. Murray – CPP, CFE, CISM, CDPSE

# Office Law

- “Dare to be different.” (c. 1967 - Robert Lampf)
- Respect your clients.
- If there isn't time to do it right, there's certainly no time to do it over.
- Do a job twice and it's yours.
- Any decision is better than no decision.
- Number One Spelling Law... Never misspell a person's name.
- Never say, “it's good enough.”
- Never use paperclips when filing. Staple it.
- Pay unto Caesar what is Caesar's.
- Don't scare the clients.
- Smile when you answer the phone.
- If we don't have it or do it, help them find the person who does.
- “There is no such word as can't.” (c. 1957 - my father.)
- “There is always a way.” (c. 1979 - David Formichella)
- If someone speaks evil of you, let your life be such that no one will believe him. (Old Irish saying.)

# Field Law

- Solve the client's problem or concerns.
- Follow the wire.
- Don't scare the clients.
- Don't leave question marks.
- Check all phones before leaving.
- Act like an invited guest.
- Never place tools directly on client furniture.
- Pursue all red flags.
- Take all garbage with you.
- Take all your tools with you.
- Don't discuss assignments with outsiders... ever!
- Be clear about cost and payment before arrival.
- No surprises.
- Give the client more than they expect.
- Call **as soon as you know** you are going to be late.
- Think long term.
- Take lots of notes.
- Document the evidence first.
- Never stop moving.

(This list will probably never be complete.)

# 25 Death Traps For Your Company

At the 10th annual Fall Forum held by J.H. Cohn, the accounting firm with headquarters in Roseland, NJ Frederick J. Beste III, the CEO of NEPA Venture Funds in Bethlehem, Pa., outlined 25 death traps for entrepreneurs. The list is based on his experience investing in more than 100 companies.

- 1. 50-50 Partnerships.** Equal partners seems so human-naturally fair. Each can veto the other. But soon the two have different agendas, and the company is in deadlock.
- 2. Three Musketeers.** Three friends split the ownership absolutely equally; they draw identical salaries; they're going to make decisions by consensus. What a recipe for failure! Pick a CEO and treat him like one.
- 3. Over reliance on One or Two Customers.** This is an accident waiting to happen.
- 4. Teams.** A handful of brilliant scientists or engineers disappear into a basement and emerge six months later with an absolutely gee-whiz prototype, but no one on this team has ever commercialized technology before.
- 5. Inadequate Pricing.** Price to the market. Gross margin is your best friend. It can absorb all manner of adversity.
- 6. Insufficient start-up, capital.** History shows that 90% of the time, first-year sales and gross margin do not reach expectations. Don't start a company if you cannot come up with more capital than you think you'll need.
- 7. Failure to Look at the Downside.** Looking at the downside possibilities in advance, monitoring actual performance against budget and developing fallback plans are just about the only effective medicine for having the wrong fundamental assumptions.
- 8. Failure to Look at Industry Norms.** Excessive optimism in a different form. Counting on industry-unrealistic performance has drained many companies of their initial capitalization.
- 9. Lack of focus.** A new venture's most precious resource is talent. Carefully sort through your opportunities before you start. Focus on the marketplace and then pursue the daylights out of the best of them.
- 10. Bringing on the Vulture.** While all money is green, it is not all equal. There really are vulture capitalists out there, and they don't all work for venture capital firms.
- 11. First Class from the Start.** Show me a start-up in fancy space with lots of glass and chrome, all new furniture and equipment, and a management team drawing salaries at least equal to their old ones, and I will show you a prescription for failure.

**12. Inappropriate Distribution Path to Market.** There are dozens of nuances to using sales reps, and for some products (big ticket, high-tech products), sales reps are flat out ineffectual. I have hardly ever seen a business plan that did not highlight how trade-show attendance and trade journal advertising would lead to worryingly high backlog.

**13. Emotional Litigation.** A lawsuit is a machine that you go into as a pig and come out of as a sausage. I have seen too many multi-year, bile-producing, emotionally straining, outrageously distracting lawsuits end up with all parties agreeing to drop all actions out of acute, mutual frustration.

**14. Product Never Ready for Market.** Some scientists and engineers just won't show their baby to the world until it's perfection itself. When you've developed your product to the point where it represents a clearly superior choice, freeze the design and hand it over to the sales force.

**15. Low Barrier to Entry Growth Industry.** Video retailing, oversized chocolate chip cookies and quick-change oil franchises burst onto the scene virtually overnight. In each, there has been a tremendous shake-out of Johnny-come-slightly-latelies. If industry visibility is high and barriers to entry low, the growth rate of supply will exceed the growth rate of demand.

**16. Inadequate Market Research.** A failure to do adequate market research, including getting out into the marketplace and talking to at least a dozen prime customer targets before committing to a product strategy, is asking for trouble.

**17. Failure to Segment Market.** Study the real market, not the imaginary one, and see whether your share goal is realistic.

**18. No Reason for a Customer to Change.** Make a comparison of all the major factors buyers consider when making a purchase decision. If you cannot conclude that any fully informed buyer would be crazy not to seriously consider purchasing your product, then the buyer has no reason to switch to you - and probably won't.

**19. Payback Can't Be Calculated.** If you intend to sell your production the basis of cost savings, make sure that these savings are clearly calculable. A claim of raw-material-scrap reduction can be demonstrated up front; one that promises to reduce employee back injuries probably cannot.

**20. Failure to Admit a Mistake.** Psychologically, one of the most insidious death traps, and it might be titled "We have too much invested in this initiative to walk away from it now."

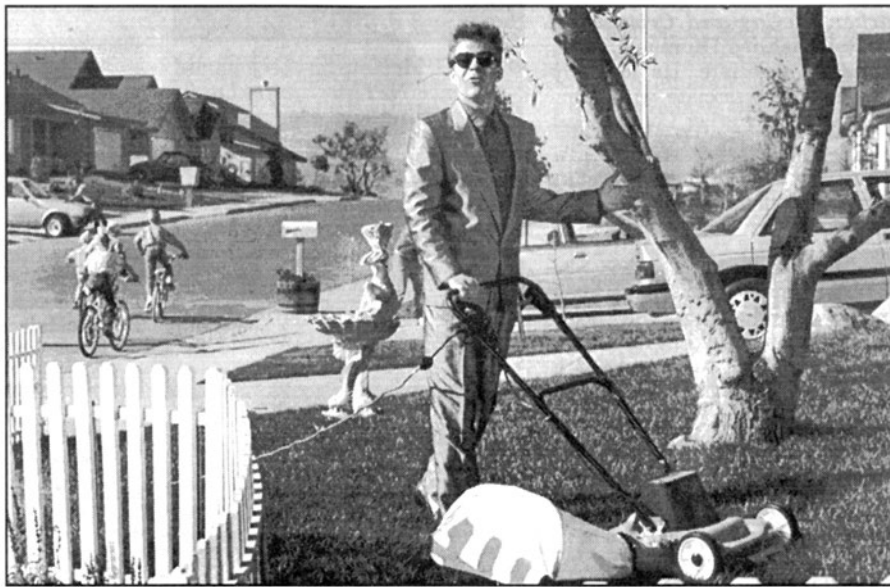
**21. Step Function Growth.** If business ever gets so good that you feel out of control, you probably are. Step back, take an objective look at things and adjust accordingly.

**22. Betting the Ranch.** Great entrepreneurs are not high-risk takers. They are not afraid to take a moderated risk, which is largely within their control, but they would never bet the ranch, whether on an acquisition, new product or anything else.

**23. Ignoring the Handwriting on the Wall.** Holding on to old ways, continuing to rely on original, bedrock assumptions in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary, can take a healthy company down in an amazingly short period of time.

**24. Spiraling costs.** As you expand from garage-quality space to an industrial park, as you finally hire that chief financial officer, as you install the new computer system, as you bring on additional production equipment, your break-even level will creep, maybe even gallop, inexorably higher and higher.

**25. Silliness phase.** While few small companies ever get to the far edge of the silliness phase (company jet), lesser gluttonies can produce the same effect. “I really need my own secretary now that we’re on top of the heap.”



THE 26TH REASON ENTREPRENEURS FAIL: They hire strange people

As you go about building your business, keep this list in mind. It may sound strange, but you can't succeed if you don't avoid failure.

# *Here are nine ideas to help you get ready to aim your message at the right audience and then fire it to them:*

*By "Rocket" Ray Jutkins, President of Rockingham\* Jutkins Marketing, Marina del Rey, CA.*

1. Identify who your best prospects are and talk to them. Usually, your best prospecting results will come if you select your audience in this order:
  - a. your current customers;
  - b. your former customers;
  - c. your chief competitors' customers;
  - d. look-a-likes of your current customers;
  - e. buyers of a product or service in a category similar to yours.
2. Use an effective appeal; make a good offer; and give your prospective audience a reason to listen to your message.
3. Hold your audience – be interesting, informative, useful and maybe even entertaining.
4. Promise all your benefits – let your prospect know what good things will happen by doing business with you.
5. Make your story believable – tell it like it is.
6. Prove that your product or service is the best bargain around. Address it to your audience's needs and provide testimonials and case histories to prove your point.
7. Make it easy get more information, to see a sales person – to buy! Give complete order information, use a toll-free number, provide a business response envelope or card.
8. Give a reason to act now; your offer and benefits must present a reason for your audience to make a move to what you are selling... and to do it now.
9. Then – and this is most important – repeat your complete story all over again. Tell it to those who missed your message the first time 'round.

# Avoiding the 11 Big Business Mistakes

by John R. Graham

Moving out in front of the competition takes incredible skill. Here are 11 mistakes that can damage a company's success.

**Mistake #1. Believing that chaos is creative.** Chaos inhibits thought, negates planning, ruptures relationships, drains energy and destroys morale. Far from being purposeful, chaos takes the eye off goals and objectives.

**Mistake #2. Acting as if systems kill responsiveness.** It's always the last order, the hottest lead, the next sales call, the unhappy customer that gets maximum attention. Attention is focused on this week's quota or this month's numbers. With a systems approach, that all changes. Goals determine activity, and objectives measure results. A system makes being in business next year as important as topping this quarter's sales goal.

**Mistake #3. Relying on gut instincts.** Many businesses are more comfortable trying to guess correctly than attempting to get the facts, accumulate the necessary information and gather the appropriate research, so that informed decisions can be made.

**Mistake #4. Always keeping both eyes on the competition.** Just because the competition is doing it doesn't make it smart, effective or correct. Following the competition like a shadow only indicates a lack of conviction and self-confidence.

**Mistake #5. Thinking that making the sale is all that counts.** Making the sale is the end result of a relationship with the customer, not the beginning.

**Mistake #6. Getting it done is more important than how it gets done.** When it comes to making the right impression, just getting it done isn't enough. How the job looks, a letter's neatness, the visual impact of a presentation or brochure and the professional manner and verbal capabilities of the salesperson are all important.

**Mistake #7. Believing that the quick payoff is better than making an investment.** Those who go into business only to make sales have little or nothing to offer, other than the product they happen to be selling at the moment.

**Mistake #8. Conducting business as if today's sale is more valuable than yesterday's customer.** Some companies are willing to invest heavily in making today's sale, but are unwilling to invest in making certain yesterday's customers remain loyal.

**Mistake #9. Thinking that finding a new venture is the key to the future.** Whatever the appeal for something new and different, it's a powerful magnet that can pull a company away from its primary mission, drain its resources and set it back because of the time required to recover.

**Mistake #10. Falling into the trap of thinking that the sale is made after the presentation.** It's what goes on before the presentation that determines its destiny.

**Mistake #11. Expecting that opening the door is enough to bring in the customers.** The customers will come as long as the company name, the product or the service has positive meaning and value for them.

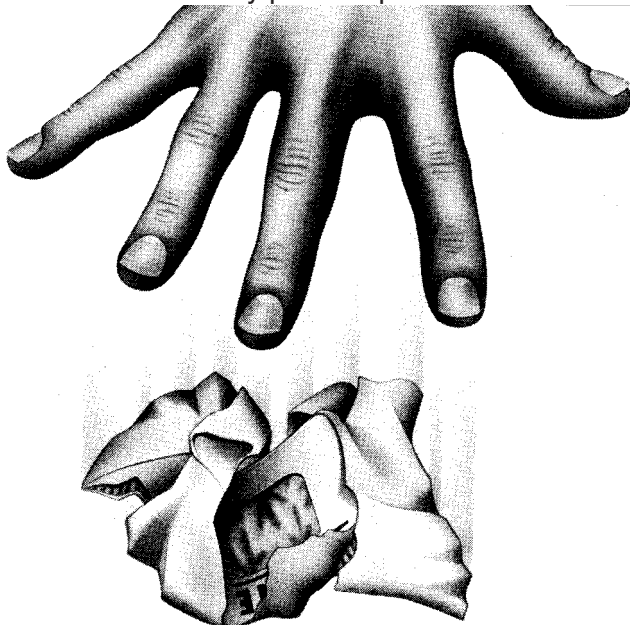
John R. Graham is president and CEO of Graham Communications, Quincy, Massachusetts. Article reprinted in part with permission from the National Office Products Association (NOPA) Office Products Industry Report, Volume 24, No. 23 ©1993.

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# Checklist For A Successful Letter

by T.M. and Marilyn Ross

- ✚ Does the headline attract attention by promising an important benefit?
- ✚ Does it quickly expand on that promised benefit?
- ✚ Have you appealed to the reader's emotions or desires?
- ✚ Have you emphasized the features of your service in terms of the benefits to the consumer?
- ✚ Does your approach hinge on a single key theme?
- ✚ Have you included believable testimonials – here or in the brochure?
- ✚ Do you offer a guarantee?
- ✚ Is your letter well organized and easy to read?
- ✚ Have you clearly asked for the order?
- ✚ Is a catchy post script included? \_\_\_\_\_



Seattle guru Bob Hacker came up with six key copy drivers—the emotional hot buttons that cause people to act: **Fear - Greed - Guilt - Anger - Exclusivity - Salvation**

Axel Andersson added one more copy driver: **Flattery**.

# ***CLEARING UP THE CONFUSION:***

## ***Pricing Based On Costs Or Demands***

I don't know why business people have so much trouble with pricing, but they do. Why, for example, do business owners arrive at a price by figuring out what their product or services cost? Costs aren't why people buy things – value is.

Pricing should be based on demand.

Costs have to do with the way you make and distribute your product. Customers could care less what your costs are, or that you must increase your prices because your costs have increased.

If customers paid prices based on costs, they would be subsidizing inefficiencies. Or, if customers allow an increased cost to be passed along as a price increase, why weren't they being charged the higher price in the first place.

### **LET'S GET THE MATH RIGHT**

Why do business owners think that a product line with a 50% gross margin is better than a product line with a 20% margin? What's 50% of \$10? What's 20% of \$100,000? Which product line would you prefer? Yet I've seen business owners discontinue product lines and close branch offices because they weren't delivering "standard margins."

Nobody ever found or lost a dollar in a percentage.

Cash coming in, cash going out, cash left over – that's my kind of accounting.

Dr. Wm. H. Franklin, Jr. writing in The Atlanta Small Business Monthly, 1858C Independence Square, Dunwoody, GA 30338. Monthly.

# To make ads inviting and easy to read...

There are proven ways to make advertisements more inviting for readers...

- **Use exciting copy in subheads to make key points.** Even short copy can benefit from subheads. To catch the attention of readers who are just scanning the ad, use a larger type size than you use in body copy. Try making some subheads questions – to draw the reader in to look for the answer.
- **Put captions under photographs and illustrations** – they are often the only parts of the ad that are read.
- **Leave plenty of white space:** Between subheads and text, as leading between lines of type, and as margins around the whole ad.
- **Keep paragraphs short.** Consider varying the column widths of paragraphs.
- **Choose a simple typeface,** in a size large enough to be read easily, and use upper- and lower-case letters for copy (all-capital lettering is hard to read). Avoid using reverse type in body copy – it's difficult to read.
- **Indent paragraphs,** and use large-sized initial capitals at the beginning of key paragraphs.
- **Keep the layout simple.** Clean layouts are the most read. Don't try to be too clever. Avoid cluttered areas.

Advertising Trade Secrets, By Joel Martin, Bristol-Hunter Publishing Co., Box 897, Williamsville, NY 14321 \$19.95

# SAM'S RULES

Rule 1. Commit to your business.

Rule 2. Treat your staff as partners.

Rule 3. Motivate with high goals.

Rule 4. Communicate everything you possibly can to others.

Rule 5. Provide well-chosen, well-timed, sincere words of praise.

Rule 6. Celebrate successes. Find humor in failures.

Rule 7. Listen to everyone in your company, and figure out ways to get them talking.

Rule 8. Exceed expectations.

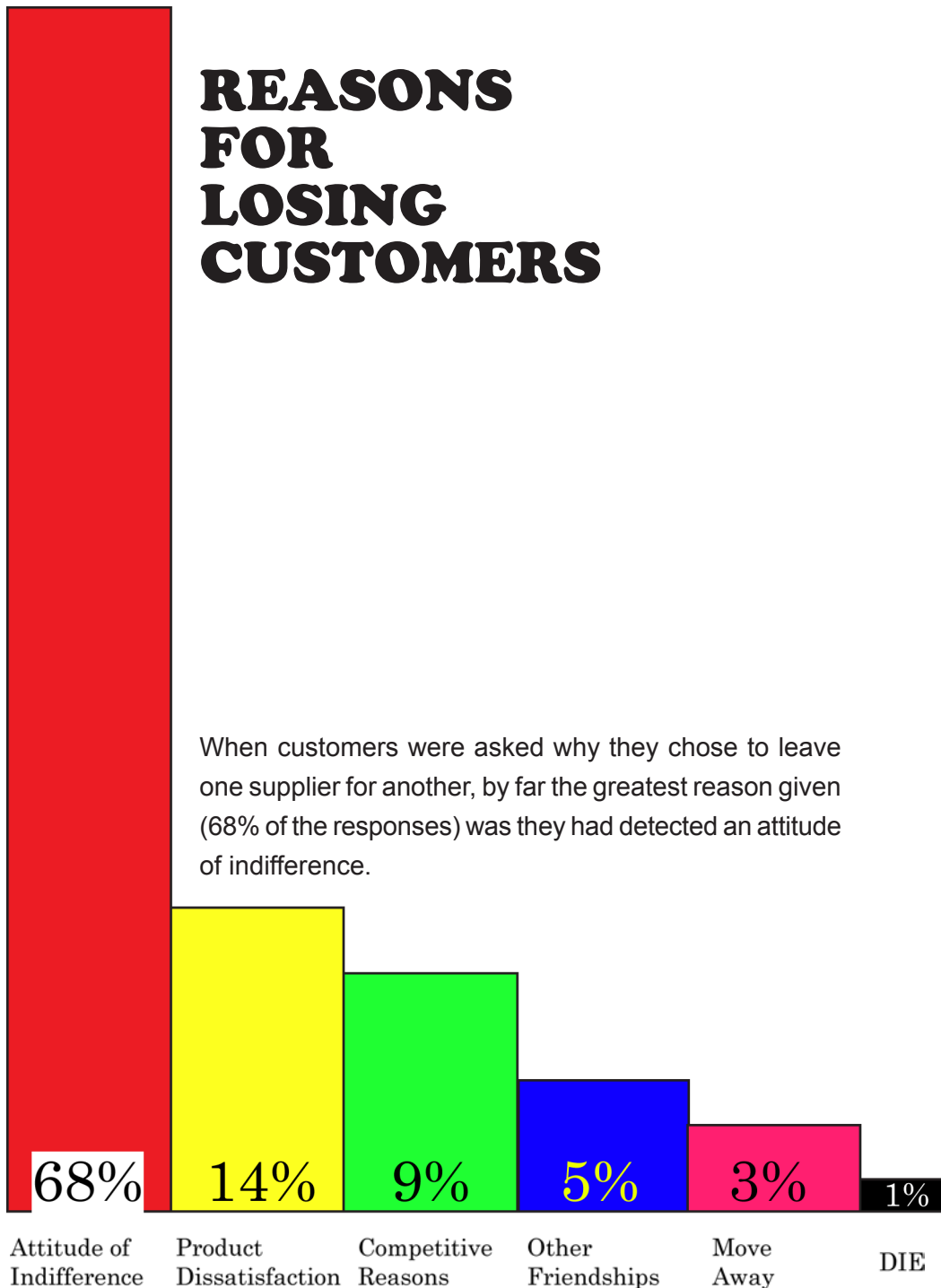
Rule 9. Control your expenses.

Rule 10. Swim upstream. If everybody else is doing it one way, try the opposite direction.

Source: Sam Walton, Penguin Books

# REASONS FOR LOSING CUSTOMERS

When customers were asked why they chose to leave one supplier for another, by far the greatest reason given (68% of the responses) was they had detected an attitude of indifference.



## ***PRICE VS. VALUE***

**“IT IS UNWISE TO PAY TOO MUCH, BUT IT IS WORSE TO PAY TOO LITTLE. WHEN YOU PAY TOO MUCH, YOU LOSE A LITTLE MONEY – THAT IS ALL.**

**WHEN YOU PAY TOO LITTLE, YOU SOMETIMES LOSE EVERYTHING BECAUSE THE THING YOU BOUGHT WAS INCAPABLE OF DOING THE THING IT WAS BOUGHT TO DO.**

**THE COMMON LAW OF BUSINESS BALANCE PROHIBITS PAYING A LITTLE AND GETTING A LOT – IT CANNOT BE DONE.**

**IF YOU DEAL WITH THE LOWEST BIDDER, IT IS WELL TO ADD SOMETHING FOR THE RISK YOU RUN, AND IF YOU DO THAT, YOU WILL HAVE ENOUGH TO PAY FOR SOMETHING BETTER.”**

***John Ruskin  
Philosopher  
1819-1900***

# Good Lists Make Good Mailings

by Alf Nucifora

Direct Mail programs succeed or fail for a variety of reasons, primarily because of the lists, the package and the offer. The list constitutes 40% of a successful mailing. Without a good, targeted list, the mailing will in all likelihood fail. The package (i.e., the look of the piece, the format) is responsible for 30% of the success. The remaining 30% is the offer itself.

There are basically three types of list:

- **Compiled Files**
- **Response Files**
- **Affinity Lists**

Let's look at them one by one.

## **Compiled Files**

These are very large databases, e.g. phone directory or drivers' license files that form the basis for building a database of information. There are more than 80 million consumers currently on file in these databases. Individual files can be overlaid or enhanced with demographic information (data) to obtain a more accurate profile of the intended target (demographics include age, income, sex, children, own/rent home, zip code, etc.). There are also compiled files of business-people by name, title/function, SIC code, size of company, number of employees, sales volume, zip code, etc.

## **Response Files**

These include people who have purchased a particular product or service including, for example, magazines, retail purchases, mail-order catalog purchases, etc. Don't forget that past buying habits can be a reliable indicator of future buying behavior.

## **Affinity Lists**

These detail people who are members of a similar association or grouping, e.g. doctors (AMA), lawyers (ABA), VISA cardholders.

## ***What will the list cost you?***

Lists are normally available on a rental basis (one time or multiple use) but never owned. Costs vary from 5¢ to 15¢ per name (\$50-\$150 per thousand) for basic consumer files, to 10¢ to 20¢ per name (\$100-\$200 per thousand) for more highly profiled targets.

Lists are normally delivered on printed cards, cheshire (paper) or pressure sensitive labels, and diskette or magnetic tapes. Phone numbers can also be obtained for follow-up telemarketing purposes but expect to pay 25¢ to 35¢ per name (\$250-\$300 per thousand) for accompanying phone numbers. A cautionary note: List owners will often "seed" their lists with trackable (sometimes false) names in order to keep tabs of what the renter mails and when. This seeding is also a security device to ensure that single-use renters don't pirate or copy the lists for unauthorized multiple use. This seeding process should be emulated by all list renters since it provides feedback information including timing of mailing/delivery.

### ***How to purchase a list***

Lists are available from a variety of sources including list renters, list compilers, list brokers, mail houses and direct-marketing firms. According to R.J. Kurey, President of the Atlanta-based Direct Marketing Group, a specialist in direct-response, the purchasing rules are clear:

- If you know exactly what you need, go directly to the list owner or list compiler, someone who maintains the file by updating the data on a regular (monthly) basis.
- If you know which list to use, then work with a mail house or direct-marketing firm. (Remember that there are more than 80,000 available lists to choose from).
- If you know what you want to mail and already have a list, then simply contact a mail house.

### **Some closing advice**

The mailboxes and wastepaper bins of America are stuffed with direct-mail pieces that fail to communicate or attract attention. Remember that a good list represents only 40% of a successful direct-mail effort.

### ***Therefore:***

- **Pay attention to design and format of the piece. Make it creative.**
- **Make sure that the offer itself is relevant and appealing.**
- **If in doubt, seek counsel from a direct-marketing firm that can provide objective and proven advice on development, design and list selection.**

Above all, ask questions and review samples and examples of previously successful direct-mail pieces and programs. The best direct mail always builds on the success of the past.

Alf Nucifora is an Atlanta-based marketing consultant. He can be reached via fax at 770.952.7834.

*Note: Service related businesses will do better by compiling their own lists of 50 - 300 companies and mailing several times a year – at least six – to the same people. Make each mailing at least 80% news and useful information and less than 20% sales pitch. The big test... Ask yourself, “Would I look forward to receiving this.” – K. Murray*

# GETTING HOT RESULTS FROM COLD CALLS

by Jeffrey Gitomer

**P**icture this. You're about to call a prospect to follow up for the third time. At the other end of the line, your prospect is doing nothing. He has his hand poised and ready on the top of the receiver, hoping you'll call and try to close the sale. Dream on.

Here's the real picture. Your prospect is in the middle of doing between a hundred and a thousand things, and will try his best to avoid you like the plague. In fact, on his list of the top 10 people he wants to talk to least, you're somewhere between the IRS and a spouse's divorce lawyer.



1. Failure to understand the other person's situation can lose you the sale. But it's only one of a number of areas critical to a salesperson's success on the telephone. Here are 13 other errors to watch out for:
2. Talking too long. There's a fine line between building rapport and being too long winded. Set objectives before each call. Time your calls. Stand up when you're speaking to get a better sense of urgency. Get all the business and personal relationship-building information you need.
3. Not getting to the point fast enough. Have the guts to spit it out without hiding behind insincerity. When I hear "How are you today?" on a cold call, it makes me want to throw up. State your objective first. It gives you a chance to build rapport.
4. Talking negatively about others. This is one of the poorest reflections you can give a customer or prospect about the way you do business. Don't say anything about someone that you wouldn't say to that person's face.
5. Making personal calls. It's so tempting to do, but it often ruins your focus. Sell while the time is right.
6. Making nonproductive calls. Time is money – your money. You choose the time you spend on the phone. Invest wisely. Make a list of calls and rate them A-B-C in priority.
7. Being unprepared to answer questions or make the right point. A bit of pre-planning is the difference between sale and no sale.
8. Making too few calls. Excuses of "I didn't have enough time" don't allow you to meet goals. Set time aside each day to make calls.
9. Not getting the results you need from a high percentage of calls. You may not have the product knowledge or sales skills needed (even though you're sure you do). Make a list of reasons why people are rejecting you and incorporate them into your training program.

10. Not making clear communications. Repeat important information verbally to the prospective client and confirm it in writing. Make a firm date to call back.

11. Not starting with daily goals and numbers. If it takes 20 calls to get four appointments, or 10 follow-ups to get one sale, those are the operative numbers of your success. Put your target numbers on the wall in front of your phone.

12. You realize that you don't have the training to harness the power of the phone. Develop a personal plan by identifying your specific weaknesses.

13. Blaming others for your failures. "He wouldn't return my call" or "He wouldn't give me an appointment" head the list. Wake up to the fact that your success or failure is your responsibility.

14. A bad attitude on the phone. No one, especially customers, wants to hear or feel your problems. Make them feel good and laugh. Surround your phone area with words of encouragement. Keep awards within eyesight. Have pictures of loved ones – things that make you smile on the inside and, in turn, on the outside.

Jeffrey Gitomer is president of Charlotte-based Business Marketing Services. His book the Sales Bible is now available. He can be reached at 800.242.5388.

*Note: Although you may never use cold calling as a sales technique, know how to do it well. Serious opportunities for discussing your business via phone will arise when you least expect it. Besides, most of these cold calling principals apply to face to face sales situations as well.*  
– K. Murray

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***“What do you do  
when **people hate you**  
because they are sick and tired  
of getting mail from you?”***

**T**here's only one answer to this question, and I use a story to make the point. "I have a friend named Robert, "I tell them, "Robert calls me up when he wants to borrow my car; when he needs money; whenever he has a problem..."

"Is Robert really my friend?"

If the only time you talk to your prospects and customers is when you want to sell them something, they won't be your friend. And they won't like receiving your direct mail.

On the other hand, if you add value; or give them something; or ask their opinion; or try to help them; they may even enjoy hearing from you.

This tip originally appeared in Alan Rosenspan's e-mail newsletter, "Improve Your Response." <http://www.alanrosenspan.com/>

# REGARDING CHANGE

Note:

Don't be afraid of progress, embrace it. Figure out how it can help you. History is littered with examples of the of the closed mind at work. The Director of the Patent Office in Washington, DC once suggested closing his department because "everything has been invented."

Here is another example...

April, 1832

Dear President Andrew Jackson:

The canal system of this country is being threatened by the spread of a new form of transportation known as railroads. The federal government must preserve the canals for the following reasons:

One - if canal boats are supplanted by railroads, serious unemployment will result. Captains, cooks, drivers repairmen, and lock tenders will be left without means of livelihood, not to mention the numerous farmers now employed in growing hay for horses.

Two - boat builders would suffer and towline, whip, and harness makers would be left destitute.

Three - canal boats are absolutely essential to the defenses of the United States. In the event of the expected trouble with England, the Erie Canal would be the only means by which we could move supplies so vital to waging modern war.

As you well know, Mr. President, railroad carriages are pulled at the enormous speed of 15 miles per hour by engines, which in addition to endangering the life and limb of passengers, roar and snort their way through the countryside setting fire to crops, scaring livestock, and frightening women and children. The Almighty certainly never intended that people should move at such breakneck speed.

— Martin van Buren  
Governor of New York

## THE GOOD BUSINESS BOOKMARK

1. Always give your people the credit that is rightfully theirs. To do otherwise is both morally and ethically dishonest.

2. Be courteous to everyone. Have a genuine consideration for other people's feelings, problems and aspirations.

3. Never tamper with the truth. Don't rationalize. What you might like to be the truth is not necessarily the truth.

4. Be clear and concise in your writing and talking, especially when giving instructions to others.

5. Be generous. Remember that it is the productivity of others that makes your success possible.

6. Be enthusiastic. Smile a lot. Stay healthy. Dress smartly. Keep up with what's happening in the world.

7. Always give a bit more than your client expects. It's cheaper to give a little extra than it is to find new clients.

8. Re-read the above once a month.



**KEVIN D. MURRAY**  
Associates  
1-800-635-0811

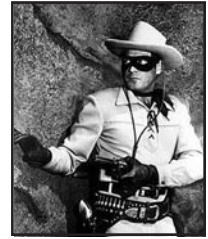
c. 1982

# **Life 101** (from various sources)

1. Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully.
2. Memorize your favorite poem.
3. Don't believe all you hear, spend all you have or sleep all you want.
4. When you say, "I love you," mean it.
5. When you say, "I'm sorry," look the person in the eye.
6. Be engaged at least six months before you get married.
7. Believe in love at first sight.
8. Never laugh at anyone's dreams.
9. Love deeply and passionately. You might get hurt but it's the only way to live life completely.
10. In disagreements, fight fairly. No name calling.
11. Don't judge people by their relatives.
12. Talk slow but think quick.
13. When someone asks you a question you don't want to answer, smile and ask, "Why do you want to know?"
14. Remember that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
15. Call your mom.
16. Say "bless you" when you hear someone sneeze.
17. When you lose, don't lose the lesson.
18. Remember the three R's: Respect for self; Respect for others; Responsibility for all your actions.
19. Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.
20. When you realize you've made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
21. Smile when picking up the phone. The caller will hear it in your voice.
22. Marry a partner you love to talk to. As you get older, conversational skills will be as important as any other.
23. Spend some time alone.
24. Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.
25. Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
26. Read more books and watch less TV.
27. Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll get to enjoy it a second time.
28. Trust in God but lock your car.
29. A loving atmosphere in your home is so important. Do all you can to create a tranquil harmonious home.
30. In disagreements with loved ones, deal with the current situation. Don't bring up the past.
31. Read between the lines.
32. Share your knowledge. It's a way to achieve immortality.
33. Be gentle with the earth.
34. Pray – there's immeasurable power in it.
35. Never interrupt when you are being flattered.
36. Mind your own business.
37. Don't trust a partner who doesn't close his or her eyes when you kiss.
38. Once a year, go someplace you've never been before.
39. If you make a lot of money, put it to use helping others while you are living. That is wealth's greatest satisfaction.
40. Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a stroke of luck.
41. Learn the rules then break some.
42. Remember that the best relationship is one where your love for each other is greater than your need for each other.
43. Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
44. Remember that your character is your destiny.
45. Approach love and cooking with reckless abandon.

# The Lone Ranger's Code

Version 2.0



The Lone Ranger...

is **Honest** - truthful, sincere, straightforward, non-deceptive, forthright

is **Fair** - open-minded, equitable, impartial, reasonable, consistent, just

is **Caring** - considerate, kind, unselfish, compassionate

is **Respectful** - civil, decent, honors right to self-determination, privacy and dignity

is **Loyal** - reliable, trustworthy, faithful to commitments, obligations, promises and principle

is **Tolerant** - unbiased, unprejudiced, patient, well-considers

does his **Duty** - responsible, accountable, self-restrained, pursues excellence

is **Morally Courageous** - courage of one's convictions, stand-up and be counted, express integrity

**Honesty** — tell the truth; don't betray a trust; don't deceive, mislead, be devious, tricky, or withhold important information in relationships of trust; don't steal, cheat or defraud. **Fairness** — treat all people fairly; be open-minded; listen to others and try to understand what they are saying and feeling; make decisions only on appropriate considerations; don't take unfair advantage of others mistakes; don't take more than your fair share. **Caring** — show you care about others through kindness, generosity, sharing and compassion; live by the Golden Rule; don't be selfish, mean, cruel or insensitive to others. **Respectful** — be courteous and polite; judge all people on their merits; respect the right of individuals to make decisions about their own lives; do not abuse, demean, or mistreat anyone; don't use, manipulate, exploit or take advantage of others. **Loyal** — standby, support and protect your family, friends, co-workers, employers, community and country; don't talk behind people's backs, spread rumors or engage in harmful gossip; don't violate other ethical principles to keep or win friendships or gain approval; don't ask a friend to do something wrong. **Tolerant** — be accepting of individual differences; do not judge people harshly just because they are different. **Duty** — be responsible, think before you act, consider the possible consequences on all people affected by your actions; be accountable, accept responsibility for the consequences of your choices; do whatever you can to fix your mistakes; be reliable; set a good example; don't blame others for your mistakes or take credit for others achievements; exercise self-control; be disciplined; be diligent and industrious; keep trying; do your best with what you have; don't quit or give up easily; play by the rules; obey laws; do your share.

## What would the Lone Ranger do?

(Character-based decision making)†

1. The Lone Ranger considers the interests and well being of ALL likely to be affected by his actions.
2. The Lone Ranger makes decisions characterized by his core ethical values of honesty, fairness, caring, respect, loyalty, tolerance, duty and moral courage.
3. If it is clearly necessary to choose one ethical value over another, the Lone Ranger will do the thing that he sincerely believes to be best for society in the long run.

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## 42 DEADLY AD COPY SINS THAT I'VE MADE

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I have read thousands of ad copies online and offline over my lifetime. I have read excellent ad copies that made me buy right away and some that may have had a decent product, but had a poor ad copy that turned me away.

Now that I am in business, I have written some of my own ad copies. Some of them have worked, some of them have bombed. The key is to keep changing and testing your ad copy, don't just write one and then stop. I don't have a college degree in copywriting, but I know to learn from the mistakes and never give up.

Below I've made a list of 42 deadly ad copy sins that I've made over the years and that you can learn from:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-no compelling headline</li><li>-no believable testimonials</li><li>-no sub headlines</li><li>-no attractive benefits</li><li>-no features</li><li>-no strong guarantees</li><li>-no asking or answering questions</li><li>-no proof of benefits offered</li><li>-no contact information for questions</li><li>-no endorsements</li><li>-no conversational writing</li><li>-too long of sentences</li><li>-no deadline to order</li><li>-no free trials</li><li>-spelling mistakes</li><li>-grammar mistakes</li><li>-too light text</li><li>-too dark background</li><li>-ad copy doesn't blend together</li><li>-no breaks in ad copy</li><li>-no bullets</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-ad copy in all CAPS</li><li>-few ordering options</li><li>-no visual aids</li><li>-no comparison to competition</li><li>-no reminding of benefits or deadlines</li><li>-no information about your business</li><li>-no appealing adjectives</li><li>-no appealing phrases</li><li>-too large text</li><li>-too small text</li><li>-no emotional appeal</li><li>-too large of paragraphs</li><li>-no story telling</li><li>-no underlining or bolding of keywords</li><li>-too short of ad copy</li><li>-too long of ad copy</li><li>-no facts or case studies</li><li>-hard to understand jargon</li><li>-no free bonuses</li><li>-too low of price</li><li>-too high of price</li></ul> |
|---|---|

Don't get me wrong, not all 42 of my ad copy sins will apply to each and every ad you write. It is just a list you can use in the future. If you currently have an ad copy, compare it to the list right now. Your ad copy could make or break your sales.

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by Larry Dotson

1075 FREE Internet Marketing eBooks, Courses, And Web Books! FREE

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<http://www.ldpublishing.com>

## MEDIA PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS...

### Write a Successful Press Release

A press release is one of the primary ways you can communicate news about your company to the media. Reporters, editors, and producers are hungry for news, and they often depend on releases to tip them off to new and unusual products, company trends, tips and hints, and other developments. In fact, much of what you read in newspapers, magazines, or trade publications, hear on the radio or see on television originated in press release form. Unfortunately, the average editor receives as many as several hundred press releases each week, the vast majority of which end up getting “filed.” Your challenge is to create a release that makes the journalist want to know more and discover that your story is one they must tell.

### Use these 10 tips to write a release that will get noticed.

#### 1. Use an active headline to grab the reporter’s attention

The headline makes your release stand out. Keep it short, active, and descriptive; in other words, use something like “Doe Named Man of the Year” instead of “John Doe Gets Award.”

#### 2. Put the most important information at the beginning

This is a tried and true rule of journalism. The reporter should be able to tell what the release is about from the first two paragraphs. In fact, chances are that’s all they may read. So don’t hide good information. And remember the “5 W’s and the H” - make sure your release provides answers to Who, What, When, Where, Why and How.

#### 3. Avoid hype and unsubstantiated claims

A writer can smell a sales pitch a mile away. Instead of making over-inflated statements, provide real, usable information. Find legitimate ways to set you and your company apart and stress those points. To promote your business, write a release that answers questions about your business, rather than one that provides only general statements about how great or interesting your business is without saying why.

#### 4. Be active and to the point

Use language that will get the reader as excited about your news as you are. If your release is boring or meandering, they may assume that you will not be a good interview.

#### 5. Keep your release to two pages or less

On the rare occasion, you can opt for a third page if it is necessary to provide critical details. Otherwise, if you can’t state your message in two pages, you’re not getting to the point.

#### 6. Include a contact

Make sure your release has a person the journalist can contact for more information. This person should be familiar with all the news in the release, and should be ready to answer questions. And issue the release on your company letterhead - it looks professional and gives the writer another way to reach your firm.

#### 7. Keep jargon to the minimum

If you’re in a technical field, try not to use technical terms. Many reporters are not as intimate with your company or your industry as you are. Real English, not jargon, best communicates your story.

#### 8. Stress benefits

This falls into the category of “don’t say it, show it.” Avoid saying something is “unique” or “the best.” Instead, show how people will benefit - i.e. save time, save money, make their life easier, etc.

#### 9. Be specific and detailed

Marcia Yudkin, author of “Six Steps to Free Publicity” calls this the “Yes, but what IS it?” syndrome. The reader needs to be able to visualize a new product, or know how a new service works. If in doubt, have someone unfamiliar with your product or service read the release and ask them to describe what you trying to publicize. And it’s better to use too many details than too few. So, as Yudkin notes, “Instead of ‘Jackson’s new book contains information designed to benefit any stock market investor,’ write, ‘Jackson’s new book contains seven principles of market analysis that enable even casual investors to choose profitable stocks.’ Even better, describe two of the seven principles right in the release.”

#### 10. Proofread

When you’ve finished your press release, remember to proofread it for typographical errors. If you don’t have a good eye for spelling or grammar, give the release to a friend or colleague who does. If your release looks sloppy and careless, so will you.

## **Press Kit**

A press kit is essentially an “information kit” that will provide a journalist with background information about you and your company. Basically, it is a folder (preferably one with your company’s name and logo on the outside) that contains many of the “informational” elements described below. Remember, it is not a sales brochure -- it should be a real help to reporters in writing their stories.

You will need to have press kits prepared when you are holding a press conference; when you go on a press interview; and whenever you are pitching a story to someone who does not know anything about your company. You also might want to send out an updated press kit once a year so that people following your company will have the most up-to-date information. The contents of your press kit should change depending on when you’re using it.

In general, it will include some or all of the following:

**Recent press releases**

**Background material about your company**

**A one-page fact sheet about your company**

**Biographies of your top executives**

**Photographs of products (be sure to include captions)**

**Photographs of your executives (essential for an interview)**

**Pertinent product sheets/brochures**

**Contact names and numbers**

## **Media Alert**

As the name suggests, a media alert is used to inform the media about a press conference, special event, demonstration, or other newsworthy event. It is a one- or two-paragraph “release” that focuses on what will occur, and why the media would be interested in it. You might want to think of it as a way of inviting the press to attend your event.

Here are some situations when a media alert would be effective:

**You’re holding a press conference**

**There’s a special demonstration inside your store**

**You’re presenting a keynote address to a local organization**

**You’re having a groundbreaking ceremony**

**Your company is sponsoring a charity event or making an important donation**

Be sure your media alert includes:

**What is happening**

**Why it is important**

**Where it is happening**

**When it will occur**

**Who to contact for more information**

**An invitation for the press to attend**

**And don’t forget to say that photo opportunities are available!**

## **Backgrounder / Fact Sheet**

A “backgrounder” tells your company’s story. It should include all pertinent information --about your company--its products or services, its market/industry, and its management team. It should be written in such a way that it holds a reporter’s interest. Keep it focused on benefits and information...once again, this is not a sales piece, so keep the hype to a minimum.

You can create a workable backgrounder by writing a paragraph or two about each of these elements:

**What your company does**  
**When and why your company was started**  
**A brief history of your company**  
**Your products or services**  
**Your key personnel**

You might also want to create a one-page corporate fact sheet. It is briefer and more “bare bones” than a backgrounder. A fact sheet lists the basics about your company, including:

**Your company name**  
**Your address and phone number**  
**The focus of your business**  
**Your products or services**  
**Your management team**  
**Contact names and numbers**

## **Biographies**

It is important for you to have up-to-date biographies of all your top executives. These are particularly critical when you are planning press interviews and press conferences, since reporters will want to know about the person they are interviewing.

Focus a bio on the person’s current responsibilities. What does he or she do for your company? That’s the most important information you include, and should be at the beginning (i.e. John Smith oversees Anycompany’s sales efforts). In other words, write it in reverse chronological order -- with the most recent information first, and the oldest last. You can also be creative -- talk about what sets a person apart from the crowd, what makes him/her different.

When you’re writing a bio, think in these terms:

**What does this person do for my company?**  
**Why does he/she do that job well?**  
**What other qualifications does he/she have?**  
**What did he/she do before? Is it pertinent to his/her current job?**  
**Is there anything else about this person that would make me stop and think “hey, that’s really interesting?”**

## **Press Releases**

A press release is the primary way you communicate news about your company to the media. Reporters, editors and producers are hungry for news, and they often depend on releases to tip them off to new and unusual products and companies, trends, tips and hints, and other developments.

## **News Conferences / Briefings**

A news conference (or press conference) is a formal event to which you invite the press to learn more about an important, newsworthy announcement. For the most part, unless you have something truly momentous to announce, news conferences should not be used by small businesses. You probably won’t have the drawing power to justify putting together this kind of event, and other PR methods will be more effective.

The operative word in news conference is “news.” You will attract the press to a news conference by promising to deliver a real news story to them. It is important to keep that promise. If you don’t, you will be

like the boy who cried “wolf.” Waste a journalist’s time once, and you will not get that time again. And you won’t be doing any good to your company’s reputation.

A news briefing is a less formal get together -- you might bring together four or five reporters to give them an update on your company or fill them in on some new product information. You can also use the time to answer questions and let the press learn more about what you and your company do. You can hold a briefing in your company’s conference room, over lunch at a restaurant, or another comfortable location.

Here are some situations where a news conference or briefing might be appropriate:

**Your company is announcing the launch of a new product or service**

**Your company is acquiring a strong competitor (or is being acquired)**

**Your company strikes a major joint venture deal with a large corporation**

**To announce the findings of an important poll or survey**

## **Media Lists / Contacts**

Just as it is important to keep an accurate database of your customers and prospects, it is crucial to make sure you are targeting the right people with your media message. Many small businesses make the mistake of sending press releases to “Editor,” assuming it will be forwarded to the right person. That rarely happens. You need the name of the right editor or reporter.

Getting the right name is as simple as calling and asking who the right editorial contact is. Then get to know that person. Editorial contacts can be the most important element of your PR campaign. Think about it this way: a reporter is more likely to write about a company or person he/she knows about...and is MOST likely to write about a company or person with whom he/she has a relationship.

Editorial staffs change on a regular basis, and reporters often shift “beats” (what they cover). Be sure to review your media list every 4-6 months to keep it up to date.

To qualify your media contacts, ask yourself these questions:

**Is this a publication I want publicity in?**

**Do my customers/prospects read this publication (or watch this TV show)?**

**Does this person write about companies such as mine?**

**Does this person assign articles that would include a news event like mine?**

**Is there another writer or editor at this publication who would also be interested in my company?**

Credit: American Express

## ***How to Write and Format a Press Release for E-mail Distribution.***

The definitive style guide to the correct format for e-mail news releases based on feedback from journalists and reporters.

A conventional 'hard copy' press release is a brief document generally one to three double-spaced type written pages announcing news about your company, product or service to media professionals.

E-mail press releases are usually shorter in length than their print counterparts. The majority of electronic news releases sent are 500 words of text organized into five, short two to three sentence paragraphs.

E-mail software allows the user to set limits on the size of messages it will download. Since many individuals do not change the default limit on their e-mail software, long messages can be truncated. For this reason we discourage clients from sending extremely lengthy electronic news releases.

Information such as photographs, bios of company executives, white papers and other supporting documents usually included in a printed media kit may be published online where reporters may access them easily at their convenience.

If your company, for example, has completed an online survey of Internet shoppers, include a brief overview of the results in the electronic press release then follow that paragraph with the URL or home page address where complete survey results are published. The URLs for screen shots of your Web site and products may also be included in the news release.

Some reporters have limited online access. As a courtesy, always include a contact method for reporters who prefer to have materials mailed to them by conventional means.

Sending photographs and supplemental information files through e-mail attachments is not acceptable when contacting a reporter.

### **Information to Include in a News Release**

- A compelling e-mail subject header and headline.
- A first paragraph that covers the five W's: who, what, where, when and why.
- Electronic contact information including an e-mail address for the press contact and Web site address of the company. Reporters working on deadline will often choose to call a company representative rather than wait for a reply by e-mail. Be sure that in addition to e-mail contact information a phone number for the press contact is listed.
- The mention of key clients or endorsement from a 'non-biased' source like university professor or software reviewer. You should have permission from those sources to use their remarks in your press release.
- A short paragraph at the end of the release containing background information about the company. This might include a synopsis of the activities of the company, how long they have been in business, and any area of expertise. If the press release is about a book or entertainer then cover career high-points.

### **Story Tips**

Electronic PR does not differ from conventional PR in that one's ability to write and organize information well is rewarded with press coverage. However, the one-two punch of a creative subject header for your message and a clever "spin" to your news rings extra loud in a crowded inbox.

Many journalists respond to clever writing and news releases that describe how a new product or service is a solution to a business or consumer problem.

Pointing to a new business, consumer or health trend is another way to position a story.

Another popular method for obtaining press coverage is to ride piggy-back on a breaking news story by alerting the media to your client's expertise on that particular subject.

Like the Rolling Stones say, "Time is on your side." Be prepared to act fast if you sense a PR opportunity. Time the sending of your news release right and you can receive a windfall of publicity. That's where a service like ours can help.

In 1998, one of our software clients had the good fortune to be the only company delivering the Starr Report by e-mail using a proprietary technology for which the recipient paid to read the document. Many may remember the Starr Report was first published online. While individuals jammed Web sites attempting to read the document, our client offered the only alternative to the congestion. Following the distribution of a press release the company received thousands of requests for delivery and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to showcase their product. Electronic press release delivery is an excellent tool when a story has a limited shelf-life and or when a news window will be open only for a limited time.

### How to Format a Release

- 1) The first line of the e-mail message should read: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE in all caps. This lets the reporter know the news is authorized for publication on the date they receive it.
- 2) Allow one spacer line then write a headline using a combination of lower case and capital letters. Keep your headline to ten words or less. Do not write the headline in all capital letters because it is harder to read using e-mail software.
- 3) Allow another empty line for spacing, then begin the text of the release as we show with the city and state followed by a dash. All releases must include a date since reporters do not always use releases immediately.
- 4) There are a number of conventions for line length of electronic press releases. Xpress Press formats press release to the style most universal among e-mail readers.
- 5) Include press contact information below the text of the news release. A reporter reading your release should be able to make a decision about your story in the first screen of the e-mail message. Don't waste that space with contact information. They will scroll down to find out who to contact if they want to follow-up with you.
- 6) Finally, close the document with the characters -30- or ### which are style conventions that let the report know they have reached the end of the story.

### REMINDERS

Don't trust your word processing program to catch errors in grammar and spelling. Have a few individuals read the release before sending it to a reporter or news agency. Although an Xpress Press staffer reads through each release, we are reading a number of stories each day looking for obvious errors like the omission of an e-mail address for the press contact.

Additionally, remember that press releases are sent by e-mail and not everyone uses the same software. For that reason we do not use HTML tags, bold type or color text which may not transmit consistently across all computer platforms.

### Sample Press Releases

Below is a sample press release that generated quite a buzz for its company several years ago. Notice that the release does not follow the usual rules of including the five W's up front. However, the headline is a unique twist on words and grabs the reader's interest quickly.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Noodle Bytes Man

DUXBURY, Mass. - April 28, 1997 (Xpress Press)- Two years ago, Raymond Lemire was at one of those proverbial crossroads in life. Having been the victim of downsizing after a corporate merger, he faced the decision of whether to continue working for someone else or to start his own business.

Armed with statistics on growing pasta consumption, articles on the explosive growth of the internet and a second mortgage on his house, Lemire started the Flying Noodle and its Pasta of The Month Club.

His goal was to build a semi-virtual company. He would handle all the marketing, accounting and order taking from his home- based office, while the order fulfillment and warehousing would be outsourced. This would allow him to maximize time with customers and minimize his up front capital risk and ongoing overhead expenses.

His internet site is fast loading with whimsical noodle characters, a section on the history and lore of pasta and pasta sauces, recipes, a contest for newsletter subscribers and over 60 different pastas and 35 different pasta sauces. Customers can order via a state-of-the-art secure shopping basket system.

The internet site opened in December 1995 to the thunderous sound of emptiness. In the world of the internet, if you build it they will only come if you tell them you exist. Fortunately he also produced a direct mail brochure as insurance against his "sure bet" on the internet. This bought him the necessary time to really promote the site.

Now, a year and a half later, the Flying Noodle's internet site brings in 30% of the company's revenues. Lemire has added a Japanese language section to his web-site and has a growing base of customers. Over 40% of the company's revenues come from repeat business and customer referrals. About 10% of his business comes from overseas customers.

His advice to anyone who is thinking of starting an online business? Don't get carried away with the hype and forget about the basics of selling. Study the direct marketing field in terms of catalog structure, language, delivery systems, guarantees and style. Make your site as interactive as possible without ignoring the most important aspect of your site - it needs to be profitable in order to survive.

And the Flying Noodle? Is it surviving? "Business is five times ahead of 1996", says Lemire. "If we continue at this pace, 1997 will be a very good year for pasta."

You can check them out at <http://www.flyingnoodle.com> or call for their free brochure 1-800-566-0599.

Interview Contact: Raymond K Lemire, The Big Parmesan  
Telephone: 800-566-0599  
[bigparmesan@flyingnoodle.com](mailto:bigparmesan@flyingnoodle.com)  
<http://www.flyingnoodle.com>

Flying Noodle  
1 Arrowhead Road, Duxbury, Massachusetts, USA 02332  
Voice 800-566-0599 (USA 011) or 781-934-1519. Fax 781-934-1527

###

## When to Send Your News

### **Daily Newspapers**

Business and general assignment reporters working for newspapers and online dailies turn around stories within 24 and 48 hours. However, feature writers are working on stories weeks in advance of publication date. Press Releases about special events or with holiday tie-ins should be sent a minimum of three weeks in advance so the reporter has ample time to research and write the story. The same is true for promoting online webcasts and events. Three weeks is often needed to obtain coverage in Internet newsletters and online calendars.

### **Monthly Magazines**

Monthly publications close editorial content two months in advance of the issue date. It is not unusual for writers to be deciding on story content for a December issue in September. Stories with a holiday theme should be sent to allow the reporter ample time for research and coverage.

### **Radio and Television**

Radio or television stations may plug your Web site or product and perhaps be interested in having a representative from your company appear on one of their programs. Because interviews can be held over the telephone you might receive a call in the afternoon for a show airing that evening. Be prepared. Designate someone from your company as the spokesperson and have them prep for the show. In some cases you can ask the show's producer for a list of questions you will be asked. Plan how you will reply to the questions. Also plan how you will respond to the interviewer if they ask questions you do not wish to answer.

Courtesy The Xpress Press Service 1999  
<http://www.xpresspress.com/>

# the cluetrain manifesto

## the end of business as usual

A powerful global conversation has begun. Through the Internet, people are discovering and inventing new ways to share relevant knowledge with blinding speed. As a direct result, markets are getting smarter—and getting smarter faster than most companies.

These markets are conversations. Their members communicate in language that is natural, open, honest, direct, funny and often shocking. Whether explaining or complaining, joking or serious, the human voice is unmistakably genuine. It can't be faked.

You have two choices.

You can continue to lock yourself behind facile corporate words and happytalk brochures. Or you can join the conversation.

### **These are the new truths...**

1. Markets are conversations.
2. Markets consist of human beings, not demographic sectors.
3. Conversations among human beings sound human. They are conducted in a human voice.
4. Whether delivering information, opinions, perspectives, dissenting arguments or humorous asides, the human voice is typically open, natural, uncontrived.
5. People recognize each other as such from the sound of this voice.

6. The Internet is enabling conversations among human beings that were simply not possible in the era of mass media.

7. Hyperlinks subvert hierarchy.

8. In both internetworked markets and among intranet-worked employees, people are speaking to each other in a powerful new way.

9. These networked conversations are enabling powerful new forms of social organization and knowledge exchange to emerge.

10. As a result, markets are getting smarter, more informed, more organized. Participation in a networked market changes people fundamentally.

11. People in networked markets have figured out that they get far better information and support from one another than from vendors. So much for corporate rhetoric about adding value to commoditized products.

12. There are no secrets. The networked market knows more than companies do about their own products. And whether the news is good or bad, they tell everyone.

13. What's happening to markets is also happening among employees. A metaphysical construct called "The Company" is the only thing standing between the two.

14. Corporations do not speak in the same voice as these new networked conversations. To their intended online audiences, companies sound hollow, flat, literally inhuman.

15. In just a few more years, the current homogenized "voice" of business—the sound of mission statements and brochures—will seem as contrived and artificial as the language of the 18th century French court.

16. Already, companies that speak in the language of the pitch, the dog-and-pony show, are no longer speaking to anyone.

17. Companies that assume online markets are the same markets that used to watch their ads on television are kidding themselves.

18. Companies that don't realize their markets are now networked person-to-person, getting smarter as a result and deeply joined in conversation are missing their best opportunity.

19. Companies can now communicate with their markets directly. If they blow it, it could be their last chance.

20. Companies need to realize their markets are often laughing. At them.

21. Companies need to lighten up and take themselves less seriously. They need to get a sense of humor.

22. Getting a sense of humor does not mean putting some jokes on the corporate web site. Rather, it requires big values, a little humility, straight talk, and a genuine point of view.

23. Companies attempting to "position" themselves need to take a position. Optimally, it should relate to something their market actually cares about.

24. Bombastic boasts—"We are positioned to become the preeminent provider of XYZ"—do not constitute a position.

25. Companies need to come down from their Ivory Towers and talk to the people with whom they hope to create relationships.

26. Public Relations does not relate to the public. Companies are deeply afraid of their markets.

27. By speaking in language that is distant, uninviting, arrogant, they build walls to keep markets at bay.

28. Most marketing programs are based on the fear that the market might see what's really going on inside the company.

29. Elvis said it best: "We can't go on together with suspicious minds."

30. Brand loyalty is the corporate version of going steady, but the breakup is inevitable—and coming fast. Because they are networked, smart markets are able to renegotiate relationships with blinding speed.

31. Networked markets can change suppliers overnight. Networked knowledge workers can change employers over lunch. Your own "downsizing initiatives" taught us to ask the question: "Loyalty? What's that?"

32. Smart markets will find suppliers who speak their own language.

33. Learning to speak with a human voice is not a parlor trick. It can't be "picked up" at some tony conference.

34. To speak with a human voice, companies must share the concerns of their communities.

35. But first, they must belong to a community.

36. Companies must ask themselves where their corporate cultures end.

37. If their cultures end before the community begins, they will have no market.

38. Human communities are based on discourse—on human speech about human concerns.

39. The community of discourse is the market.

40. Companies that do not belong to a community of discourse will die.

41. Companies make a religion of security, but this is largely a red herring. Most are protecting less against competitors than against their own market and workforce.

42. As with networked markets, people are also talking to each other directly inside the company—and not just about rules and regulations, boardroom directives, bottom lines.

43. Such conversations are taking place today on corporate intranets. But only when the conditions are right.

44. Companies typically install intranets top-down to distribute HR policies and other corporate information that workers are doing their best to ignore.

45. Intranets naturally tend to route around boredom. The best are built bottom-up by engaged individuals cooperating to construct something far more valuable: an intranetworked corporate conversation.

46. A healthy intranet organizes workers in many meanings of the word. Its effect is more radical than the agenda of any union.

47. While this scares companies witless, they also depend heavily on open intranets to generate and share critical knowledge. They need to resist the urge to “improve” or control these networked conversations.

48. When corporate intranets are not constrained by fear and legalistic rules, the type of conversation they encourage sounds remarkably like the conversation of the networked marketplace.

49. Org charts worked in an older economy where plans could be fully understood from atop steep management pyramids and detailed work orders could be handed down from on high.

50. Today, the org chart is hyperlinked, not hierarchical. Respect for hands-on knowledge wins over respect for abstract authority.

51. Command-and-control management styles both derive from and reinforce bureaucracy, power tripping and an overall culture of paranoia.

52. Paranoia kills conversation. That’s its point. But lack of open conversation kills companies.

53. There are two conversations going on. One inside the company. One with the market.

54. In most cases, neither conversation is going very well. Almost invariably, the cause of failure can be traced to obsolete notions of command and control.

55. As policy, these notions are poisonous. As tools, they are broken. Command and control are met with

hostility by intranetworked knowledge workers and generate distrust in internetworked markets.

56. These two conversations want to talk to each other. They are speaking the same language. They recognize each other’s voices.

57. Smart companies will get out of the way and help the inevitable to happen sooner.

58. If willingness to get out of the way is taken as a measure of IQ, then very few companies have yet wised up.

59. However subliminally at the moment, millions of people now online perceive companies as little more than quaint legal fictions that are actively preventing these conversations from intersecting.

60. This is suicidal. Markets want to talk to companies.

61. Sadly, the part of the company a networked market wants to talk to is usually hidden behind a smokescreen of hucksterism, of language that rings false—and often is.

62. Markets do not want to talk to flacks and hucksters. They want to participate in the conversations going on behind the corporate firewall.

63. De-cloaking, getting personal: We are those markets. We want to talk to you.

64. We want access to your corporate information, to your plans and strategies, your best thinking, your genuine knowledge. We will not settle for the 4-color brochure, for web sites chock-a-block with eye candy but lacking any substance.

65. We’re also the workers who make your companies go. We want to talk to customers directly in our own voices, not in platitudes written into a script.

66. As markets, as workers, both of us are sick to death of getting our information by remote control. Why do we need faceless annual reports and third-hand market research studies to introduce us to each other?

67. As markets, as workers, we wonder why you’re

not listening. You seem to be speaking a different language.

68. The inflated self-important jargon you sling around—in the press, at your conferences—what's that got to do with us?

69. Maybe you're impressing your investors. Maybe you're impressing Wall Street. You're not impressing us.

70. If you don't impress us, your investors are going to take a bath. Don't they understand this? If they did, they wouldn't let you talk that way.

71. Your tired notions of "the market" make our eyes glaze over. We don't recognize ourselves in your projections—perhaps because we know we're already elsewhere.

72. We like this new marketplace much better. In fact, we are creating it.

73. You're invited, but it's our world. Take your shoes off at the door. If you want to barter with us, get down off that camel!

74. We are immune to advertising. Just forget it.

75. If you want us to talk to you, tell us something. Make it something interesting for a change.

76. We've got some ideas for you too: some new tools we need, some better service. Stuff we'd be willing to pay for. Got a minute?

77. You're too busy "doing business" to answer our email? Oh gosh, sorry, gee, we'll come back later. Maybe.

78. You want us to pay? We want you to pay attention.

79. We want you to drop your trip, come out of your neurotic self-involvement, join the party.

80. Don't worry, you can still make money. That is, as long as it's not the only thing on your mind.

81. Have you noticed that, in itself, money is kind

of one-dimensional and boring? What else can we talk about?

82. Your product broke. Why? We'd like to ask the guy who made it. Your corporate strategy makes no sense. We'd like to have a chat with your CEO. What do you mean she's not in?

83. We want you to take 50 million of us as seriously as you take one reporter from The Wall Street Journal.

84. We know some people from your company. They're pretty cool online. Do you have any more like that you're hiding? Can they come out and play?

85. When we have questions we turn to each other for answers. If you didn't have such a tight rein on "your people" maybe they'd be among the people we'd turn to.

86. When we're not busy being your "target market," many of us are your people. We'd rather be talking to friends online than watching the clock. That would get your name around better than your entire million dollar web site. But you tell us speaking to the market is Marketing's job.

87. We'd like it if you got what's going on here. That'd be real nice. But it would be a big mistake to think we're holding our breath.

88. We have better things to do than worry about whether you'll change in time to get our business. Business is only a part of our lives. It seems to be all of yours. Think about it: who needs whom?

89. We have real power and we know it. If you don't quite see the light, some other outfit will come along that's more attentive, more interesting, more fun to play with.

90. Even at its worst, our newfound conversation is more interesting than most trade shows, more entertaining than any TV sitcom, and certainly more true-to-life than the corporate web sites we've been seeing.

91. Our allegiance is to ourselves—our friends, our new allies and acquaintances, even our sparring

partners. Companies that have no part in this world, also have no future.

92. Companies are spending billions of dollars on Y2K. Why can't they hear this market timebomb ticking? The stakes are even higher.

93. We're both inside companies and outside them. The boundaries that separate our conversations look like the Berlin Wall today, but they're really just an annoyance. We know they're coming down. We're going to work from both sides to take them down.

94. To traditional corporations, networked conversations may appear confused, may sound confusing. But we are organizing faster than they are. We have better tools, more new ideas, no rules to slow us down.

95. We are waking up and linking to each other. We are watching. But we are not waiting.

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# the cluetrain manifesto

the end of business as usual

However, world rights granted for non-commercial use on condition that this page remains intact. Rip it, steal it, web it, mail it, post it. This message wants to MOVE!

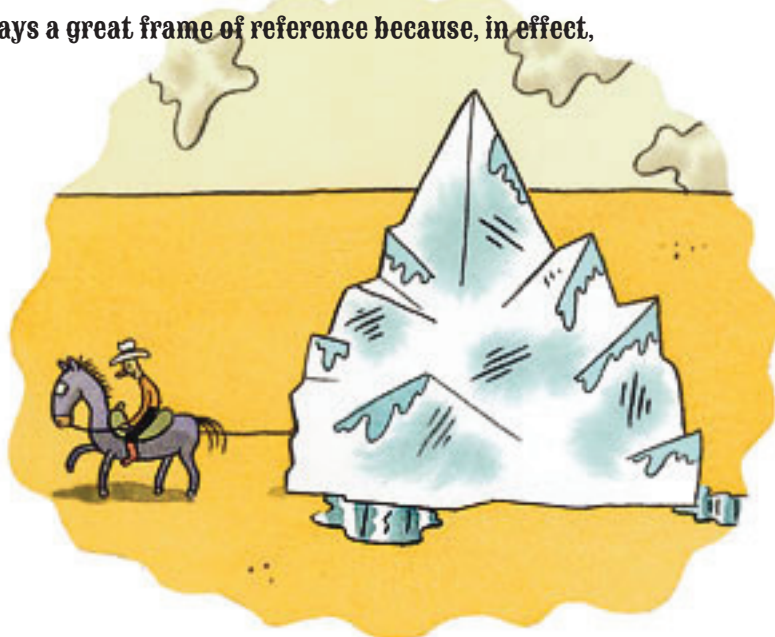
# **P**ERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR

- ★ High energy level
- ★ The self-confidence to look at something and say, “I can probably do that better.”
- ★ A vocabulary that doesn’t include the word “failure”
- ★ The ability to quantify the downside of risk
- ★ The ability to say “no” fast
- ★ The self-awareness to know you are fallible
- ★ The self-control not to worry and not look back
- ★ The eye of a realist, no matter what the circumstances
- ★ The strength of character to survive the loneliness that comes with going left when everyone else is going right

**Samuel Zell — Chairman, Equity Office Properties Trust & Equity Group Investments**

## **Other Zells...**

- ★ Look for incremental opportunity – one plus one equal three
- ★ Steer clear of theoretical, hypothetical and personal prejudices
- ★ Conventional wisdom is always a great frame of reference because, in effect, it tells you what not to do.



# Ideas for an Effective Business Reply Card

By Alan Rosenspan, owner, Alan Rosenspan & Associates

**T**he business reply card (BRC) should not be designed to cleverly blend in with the rest of the direct mail package. It should stick out like Yao Ming in a Volkswagen convertible.

**Here are a few ideas to help your BRCs stand out:**

- 1.** Use **color**. A bright, almost fluorescent reply card has outpulled many other versions for Harvard Men's Health Watch newsletter.
- 2.** Use an unusual **S**hape. The Smithsonian has used an "L" shaped format with great success. The part you send back is the bottom of the "L". Every time I show this sample in a seminar, I'm tempted to tear it off – it's that compelling.
- 3.** Make sure you put your **phone number** and your Web site **URL** on your reply card. It may be the only thing people save from your mailing.
- 4.** Make sure your reply card passes the "**empty envelope**" test. If for some reason the post office destroyed your direct mail package, and everything fell out of the envelope except your reply card, does it have enough information for people to respond? And does it persuade people to respond?

These tips originally appeared in Rosenspan's e-mail newsletter, "Improve Your Response."  
<http://www.alanrosenspan.com/>

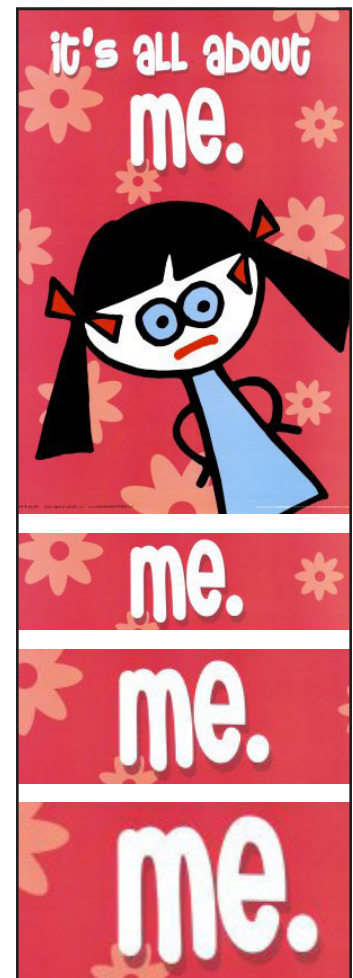
## Beware of 'Rock Star' Designers

### Their work can be all about... **THEM**

*from Denny Hatch's – Business Common Sense*

#### Points to Consider:

- Before hiring a designer for a project, first determine the purpose of the design — whether it be a logo, billboard, magazine illustration, sales brochure, annual report, newspaper ad or book cover.
- Communicate to the designer **precisely** what you want the design to accomplish.
- I have found that designers can be very patronizing to executives, saying in effect, “You don’t know anything about creative; leave that to me.” If you feel uncomfortable with the design, then the design is wrong. Period.
- Be prepared to sit on the designer and have the job done over and over again until it satisfies you — not the designer — and the original intent.
- If the designer whines that you’re stifling creativity, get another designer immediately.
- In the immortal words of Ed McCabe of the old RCA Record Club, “Every time we get **CREATIVE** we lose money.”
- Finally, make a black-and-white photocopy of the ad or page. If it’s difficult to read the type, send it back to the designer for surgery.



*Also beware of becoming  
a 'Rock Star' yourself.*

# THESE 10 QUALITIES MAKE A WINNER

1. Positive Attitude
2. Enthusiasm
3. Determined
4. Motivated
5. Confident
6. Optimistic
7. Dedicated
8. Happy
8. Good Listener
10. Patient

This list is useful for what it says, and for what it omits. For example, note that none of these top winning qualities has anything to do with physical or mental ability.

Patrick O'Dooley - the compiler of the list - suggests to his audience that they imagine that some of them are reborn as a five-pound bar of raw iron (worth about \$5.00) and some are five-pound bars of gold (worth about \$30,000.00). The gold bars begin life worth far more than those made of iron. But, if the gold ore people are complacent, and the iron ore people work on themselves, and transform themselves into watch springs, for example, they can go from a worth of \$5.00 to a worth of hundreds of thousands of dollars — by making the best possible use of what they are.

Although we can't change our "raw materials" much, O'Dooley points out that the "process of refinement is one thing you can control."

**Moral: Don't view potential in terms of physical or mental aptitudes — attitude makes the difference!**

Patrick O'Dooley, Flight Plan for Living, The Art of Self-Encouragement, ISBN: 0942361555

# Negotiating 101: 25 tips for success

by Harvey MacKay – <http://harveymackay.com>

If you ask me what one skill has made the biggest difference in my career, hands down I would say: **negotiating**. It applies to selling, purchasing, hiring, firing, expanding, downsizing and every other phase of business you can name. It's part of the game that I am particularly fond of, and it's not just to see how much I can get the other person to give. I like to learn from the varied strategies that other people use.

## ***Here are some of the lessons I have learned over a lifetime:***

1. You can't negotiate anything unless you absolutely know the market. Only then will you be able to recognize a good deal when you see it.
2. If you can't say yes, it's no. Don't sugarcoat it. Don't talk yourself into yes just to seem like a nice guy. No one ever went broke because he or she said "No" too often.
3. The single biggest tool in any negotiation is the willingness to get up and walk away from the table without a deal.
4. Always, always, before you begin any negotiation, look beyond the title and make sure the person you're dealing with is in a position of authority to sign off on the agreement. If not, don't deal until you can negotiate with someone who is.
5. It's not how much it's worth. It's how much people think it's worth.
6. Many people listen ... very few actually hear. You can't learn anything if you are doing all the talking.
7. In any negotiation, the given reason is seldom the real reason. Find out the real reason, and your probability of success goes up dramatically.
8. No one ever choked to death swallowing "his" or "her" own pride.
9. In the long run, instincts are no match for information.
10. There's no more certain recipe for disaster than a decision based on emotion. Or another way of saying this is: Make decisions with your heart, and you'll end up with heart disease.
11. A dream is always a bargain no matter what you pay for it. If it's something you've always wanted, and this is your big chance to get it, go for it and make it work.
12. The most important term in any contract isn't "in" the contract. It's dealing with people who are honest. As the old adage goes: You lie down with dogs ... and you get up with fleas. Rotten wood cannot be carved.
13. There is no such thing as a "final offer."
14. Try to let the other person speak first.
15. Never give an ultimatum unless you mean it.
16. You cannot get dealt in with a straight flush unless you are in the game.
17. Smile and say no, no, no, no, no ... until your tongue bleeds.
18. Agreements prevent disagreements. You have to fight your guts out for an agreement and then you won't have a disagreement.
19. If you can afford to buy your way out of a problem, you don't have a problem.
20. More deals result from whom you know than what you know. And it's not just whom you know but how you get to know them.
21. The walls have ears. Don't discuss any business where others can overhear it. Almost as many deals have gone down in elevators as elevators have gone down.
22. People don't plan to fail, they fail to plan. Top negotiators debrief themselves. They keep a book on themselves and their opponents. You never know when that information may be gold.
23. Your day usually goes the way the corners of your mouth turn. Your attitude determines your altitude.
24. People go around all their lives saying: What should I buy? What should I sell? Wrong question: When should I buy? When should I sell? Timing is everything.



**Mackay's Moral:** 25. When a person with money meets a person with experience, the person with the experience ends up with the money and the person with the money ends up with the experience.

# 18 Web-Marketing Concepts

That Make A Difference

## 1. Think Audiences Not Markets

What's your market? Hire a consultant to help you with your Web-business problems and one of the first questions he or she will ask is, what's your market? How about eighteen to thirty-four year old, single male college graduates with a dog named Spot; or maybe forty-five to fifty-nine year old married women, who hate their husbands and can't get their adult children to move out of the house. Maybe, just maybe, they're asking the wrong question.

The Web isn't about markets, it's about audiences. Audiences need to be entertained, enlightened, and engaged, and if your website doesn't, you're never going to achieve what you want.

Time to rethink how you're delivering your marketing message. Start treating Web-visitors like an audience not a market, and you might just find what it takes to be successful on the Web.

## 2. Think People Not Customers

You know all those visitors you attract to your website with your brilliant search engine optimization schemes, how many actually purchase anything? Stop treating visitors as if they are already customers and start treating them like what they are - people. That's right, people. You know the two-legged funny creatures with wants, needs, desires, and maybe even a few bucks to spend.

Customers are always looking for a deal and they're leery of websites that only want to take their hard earned cash. Treat your Web-visitors like people who can satisfy their wants, needs, and desires with your assistance and guess what? Maybe it will make a difference: one small step for Web-credibility, one giant leap for Web-success.

## 3. Think Experiences Not Features

Bought any good features lately? Didn't think so. You would think the way business pushes the whole feature-frenzy thing that features are exactly what people are looking for, but nobody buys features, they don't even buy solutions - boy doesn't that whole solution provider nonsense really get to you after a while.

What people really buy are experiences, hopefully positive ones. Whether it's soft ice cream or a new accounting program, what people are paying for is the experience your product or service provides.

Does your website offer an experience? Does it explain the experience your product or service delivers? If it doesn't, then you really haven't got anything anybody wants.

## 4. Think Emotion Not Logic

Think you're a logical person, always making rational decisions based on practical criteria, and bottom line results. So tell me what was the functional thinking that went into the purchase of those leather pants you bought last year, or that sixty inch plasma television you bought just to watch the big game?

Let's get real. You make purchasing decisions based on what you want, and then justify them with seemingly sensible rationalizations, just like everybody else. So stop trying to appeal only to the practical, logical, aspects of bean-counter sales, and start pushing the feel good aspects of emotional marketing.

If you're trying to appeal to an audience that gets its only satisfaction out of acquiring the most features for the least cost,

then your marketing to the wrong audience.

## 5. Think Memories Not Promotions

Most animals live in the moment, whereas human beings live in the past. Our here and now and our plans for the future are based on our experiences, our histories, and our memories.

We take pictures of our kids, holidays, and special events; we commemorate birthdays, anniversaries, promotions, and milestones of all kinds. Even the significance of our prized possessions is centered on the fact that those mere objects represent memories of the people, places, and events that shaped our lives.

Real marketing, the kind that creates long-term clients and customer relationships, is not about coupons, sale promotions, or deep discounts; it's about delivering memories.

## 6. Think Marketing Not S.E.O.

Okay, here's one you've heard from us before: think marketing not search engine optimization. Sure you've got to drive as many people to your website as possible, but if your marketing message is so confused, unfocused, and hard to comprehend because of all the keyword density and S.E.O. tricks, then what have you really accomplished other than wasting people's time? And people really get upset when you waste their time.

## 7. Think Stickiness Not Hits

It's not about how many hits you get on your website, it's about how long people stay. If visitors remain on your site long enough to get your marketing message then you must have said something worth listening to, and if visitors get the message, your site has done its job.

If your website delivers the message, then you can expect the email inquiries and phone calls to start flowing, but it's still up to you and your sales staff to close the sale: people close sales not websites.

## 8. Think Stories Not Pitches

Did you hear the one about the farmer's daughter and the search engine optimizer ... Stories, everyone loves stories. In fact before the invention of the Gutenberg press, oral story telling was the way knowledge got passed down from one generation to the next, and how news was sent from one region to another.

Now that we have this multimedia Web-environment, we can continue the tradition of real people delivering creative audio and video presentations that capture the imagination and drive home the marketing message so your audience won't forget who you are. Nothing informs, engages, and entertains, like a good story: sounds to me like one heck of a way to sell to an audience desperate for meaningful communication.

## 9. Think Focus Not Confusion

There you go again, telling everyone who will listen all the wonderful things you and your company can do. Trouble is, telling them all those things just confuses them.

What is the product or service that is most important to your company, the one you are determined to sell to your audience? That's the one you want to talk about. That's the one you want to devote your marketing effort to promoting. That's the one you want people to think about when they hear your name or see your logo. Focus your communication or your message will just be a forgettable, incomprehensible blur.

## 10. Think Campaigns Not Ads

Isolated one-time advertisements are like one-night-stands: exciting for a while but ultimately unfulfilling and devoid of meaning. Your audience is looking to get married, not a short-term fling. Your marketing has to woo your visitors with long-term campaigns that tell your story and deliver your focused message; audiences expect to be courted and counseled with meaningful communication. And that takes time and commitment.

If you're spending money on just ads, you might as well be throwing that money down the drain. There is a better way. So if you're looking for a long-term relationship with your audience, think campaigns not ads.

## 11. Think Message Not Hype

What message are you delivering to your online visitors? Are you telling them you've got the best product, at the best price, with the best staff, and world-class customer service? Is that what you saying? Guess what? Nobody cares, because nobody believes you.

There is only one way to show people you're the best and that is to prove it, but here's the catch, you can't prove it until they become customers. Whoops. Okay, so what's the solution? How about a real marketing message that speaks to what your audience really wants. It's not about you it's about them.

## 12. Think Personality Not Banality

Does your website just lie there like a lox; you know that cold, dead fish that often comes with a bagel? No personality, just more of the same tedious, dull, dreary, mind-numbing, tiresome, lackluster, monotonous, stuff everybody else has. Boring! This is the new Web, so if you can't get with it, you'd better get out because you're wasting your time and everybody else's.

You're so worried about downloading times that you forgot to put anything on your site worth seeing or hearing. Check your logs. If people are jumping ship faster than rats on a burning ship, it's time to try something new; like, maybe some compelling content.

## 13. Think Branding Not Copyrights

Hey, I love the Beatles. I grew up with them, and I have all their records - ya records, like vinyl dude, not CDs. And guess what, I've also got a Mac, in fact I've got a bunch of them, not to mention iPods and other assorted Apple gizmos and gadgets. And you know something, I've never once got John, Paul, George, or Ringo confused with Steve Jobs. Amazing!

Worry just a little less about all that small print stuff and more on building a memorable brand that people will remember, and that nobody will mistake for some johnny-come-lately imposter.

## 14. Think Positioning Not Slogan

It's funny how people have a position on almost everything: you name the issue and people will have a definite opinion on what they think, except when it comes to their businesses. Just because you have a cute slogan that you print under your logo, doesn't mean you own a position in your audience's minds.

It seems businesses can't stand to make a definitive statement about who they are and what they do. Why is that? Afraid they'll lose a customer I guess, but if people don't understand exactly what you do, and why they should be doing business with you, then they're never going to be customers anyway.

No company can be all things to all people and companies that try, never go anywhere. Tell people who you are and what

you do and forget about all the other stuff, it just gets in the way.

## 15. Think Sensory Appeal Not Cents Appeal

Do you want people to sit-up and take notice of what you have to say? Do you want people to actually remember what you're telling them? While if that's the case, you better appeal to their senses, and we're talking about sights and sounds.

Deliver all your juicy, got-to-have content in an audio and video presentation that will stick in people's heads.

If all you're doing is appealing to their desire to spend less, then maybe they aren't the customers you're looking for anyway. Nobody can afford to sell for less all the time, every time.

## 16. Think Identity Not Logos

Is your company the equivalent of the invisible man? You're on the Web, but nobody cares because you're not saying anything worth listening to, and if they do see you, you are instantly forgettable.

You've got to have an identity, a personality, an image, and there is no better way to create that identity than with a video of a real person delivering your marketing message in an entertaining, memorable manner.

## 17. Think Entertainment Not Biz-speak

Speaking of entertaining, you cannot engage, enlighten, or entertain if everything you present sounds and looks like it came from some b-school text book, or from one of those self-help courses on direct marketing guaranteed to make you a millionaire in only three weeks.

Every business has a story to tell and they can all be presented in a compelling way with a little imagination and creativity. And yes, even b-to-b businesses can rise above the mundane and deadly boring, if only they take the time and make the effort.

## 18. Think Communication Not Copy

Last but not least, let's all remember, that websites are about communication. If you've got nothing to say, nothing to offer, or are afraid to say what you can do for your audience, then how do you expect to be successful.

Filling your Web pages with keyword density prose and instantly forgettable sales copy is not going to win the day.

Whether you are presenting your case in text, audio, or video, it better be interesting and enlightening - even text can be entertaining if written with style and attitude.

When websites fail, they fail because they do not communicate a realistic, believable, convincing marketing message.

About the Author: Jerry Bader is Senior Partner at MRPwebmedia, a website design firm that specializes in Web-audio and Web-video. Visit <http://www.mrpwebmedia.com/ads>, <http://www.136words.com>, and <http://www.sonicpersonality.com>. Contact at [info@mrpwebmedia.com](mailto:info@mrpwebmedia.com) or telephone (905) 764-1246.



**The Collected Wisdom  
of Denny Hatch**  
<http://www.dennyhatch.com>

• To a PR or marketing professional, the Xxxxx e-mail campaign seems messy. But keep in mind the three-word dictum of Lew Smith, at Grolier Enterprises:

***“Neatness rejects involvement.”***

• **“The most essential gift for a good writer is a built-in, shock-proof, shit detector. This is the writer’s radar and all great writers have had it.”**

—Ernest Hemingway

• **“Public relations is the business of letting people in on what you are doing.”**

—Evelyn Lawson

• **“In the marketplace, as in theater, there is indeed a factor at work called ‘the willing suspension of disbelief.’”**

—Bill Jayme

• **“Never try to sell two things at once.”**

—Dick Benson

• **“Confuse ‘em, ya lose ‘em.”**

—Paul Goldberg

• **“Short words, short sentences, short paragraphs.”**

—Andrew J. Byrne

• Notice how in those e-mails where the campaign wants action, **it sprinkles live hyperlinks throughout the message.** Thus the moment a prospect decides to act, the click-on mechanism is right there. Force a person to hunt for a hyper-link and chances are you have lost the response.

• **“Make it easy to order.”**

—Elsworth Howell, Founder Grolier Enterprises and Howell Book House

• **It is very sexy to receive inside information** and then see it breathlessly reported in the media the next day.

• **You cannot judge good direct marketing;**

...it judges you.

• **Customers don’t have needs; they have wants.**

Marketing people are in the business of creating wants, not serving needs.

— Denny Hatch

• **The emotional hot buttons that make people act are:**

fear – greed – guilt – anger – exclusivity – salvation – flattery – patriotism.

“If your copy isn’t dripping with one or more of these,” wrote Seattle marketing guru Bob Hacker, “tear it up and start over.”

# 12 Copywriting Secrets for Publishing Offers

## 1. Use a credentializing prehead in your e-promo.

This is a short piece of copy that appears above the main headline, usually in smaller type. The prehead builds credibility even before the actual sales message begins. This is crucial for disarming the prospect's skepticism right from the start and giving your spokesperson instant validity.

## 2. Be an advocate.

A powerful way to bond emotionally with your prospect is to establish a common enemy and then position your spokesperson as a fighter on the prospect's behalf.

## 3. Give away valuable information.

It's not enough to sell just the sizzle anymore. You need to throw out some red meat. Readers are impatient. They expect instant gratification or they're gone. To satisfy that urge and keep them involved in your sales message, give them a reason to continue reading. One way is by delivering valuable information within the promotion itself.

## 4. Make your promotion newsworthy.

Tying your headline or theme into a timely news event is a seductive way to hook the reader. The reason is obvious: If it's in the news, it's something that the reader is probably already thinking about. Also, a promotion with a newsworthy theme makes it seem less like a sales piece and more like information that is relevant, important and personal.

## 5. Tell a story.

Opening your promotion with a story is an excellent way to slip past your prospect's defenses and instantly engage him. Stories have a universal appeal: They cut across age groups, gender, economic backgrounds—everything. People relate to other people or to “human interest” stories. A well-told story touches our emotions on a primal level, persuading us to pay attention. Because of its charm, prospects don't perceive a story as a “selling” message.

## 6. Address your prospect's emotions.

Bad copy starts with the product. Good copy starts with the prospect. Great copy starts with the prospect's emotions. Do what method actors do when they take on a role: Get in the skin of your prospects. See the world through their eyes. Figure out what keeps them awake at night. Once you do that, it will be easier to reach them on a gut level. Prospects buy with their emotions, then justify it with their reason.

## 7. Make product benefits come alive.

This takes benefit copy to a deeper level by demonstrating how your product makes a clear, practical improvement to your prospect's world. For example, an added benefit of subscribing to your investment newsletter is receiving flash alerts whenever a late-breaking news event affects your readers. The more specific the benefit, the more powerful the copy.

## 8. Admit a (modest) flaw.

People in general and prospects in particular are naturally skeptical of those who don't own up to the occasional mistake. Highlighting a flaw in your spokesperson counteracts that doubt.

## 9. Compare apples to oranges.

Prospects might balk at paying a high price for your information. They might see it as a bunch of paper stapled together or words on a computer screen, instead of a unique way to add value to their lives. Therefore, a publication-to-publication price comparison is ineffective. Instead, compare the price of your product to the service it provides. Let's say your publication focuses on ways to manage your office more efficiently and sells for a modest \$97. The smart marketer will compare this to the price that a management consultant charges to come into your office and give you personal service. Obviously this costs more. By positioning your low-cost publication as an alternative to a high-priced consultant, your subscription price suddenly looks like a bargain.

## 10. Make the price seem even cheaper.

Still another way to show the affordability of your publication is to break down the price in terms of months or days. A newsletter that sells for \$300 a year sounds expensive. But it sounds downright cheap when you say it costs less than \$1 a day. You can reduce the price further in the prospect's mind by comparing it to an ordinary item which the prospect already buys to make it seem like a steal. “A subscription to the Widget Advisor costs just \$1 a day. A cup of coffee at Starbucks costs four times more!”

## 11. Dramatize the guarantee.

A strong guarantee is a vital plank in your sales argument. Too often, it's written in generic, boilerplate copy: One guarantee starts to sound like every other. Instead of tacking it on almost as an afterthought, embody it with a bold, specific promise that shows the guarantee in action. An investment publication could say something like this: “If Stock Market Alert doesn't uncover recommendations that could make you 10 times the cost of your subscription in the first year, we'll gladly refund your money even on the last day.”

## 12. Strengthen your guarantee to the max.

Some publishers are reluctant to offer 100 percent money-back guarantees. Many give full refunds only up to 30, 60 or 90 days. Publishers assume, mistakenly in most cases, that they'll lose money by offering a full, complete refund. Yet evidence suggests that this is not the case. A few people will take you up on it, but the overwhelming majority of your new subscribers will not. A full, unconditional guarantee is undeniable proof of your product's credibility and helps to smash yet another obstacle to ordering.

By Robert Lerosé, Target Marketing



# You have just 7 seconds!

According to research at New York University you have 7 seconds to make a lasting first impression. In that amount of time you will have been evaluated and major decisions will have been made about your Credibility, Confidence and Competence.

## Seven ways to make a positive first impression

1. Before you walk through the door create an approachable attitude.
2. Stand tall, shoulders back, head high.
3. Smile is an invitation, a sign of welcome. Research shows that when you smile at someone it activates the reward center in that person's brain.
4. Make eye contact. Looking at someone's eyes transmits energy and indicates interest and openness.
5. Raise your eyebrows. Opening your eyes slightly more than normal. The raised eyebrow flash is the universal signal of recognition and acknowledgement.
6. Lean in slightly. It shows that you are engaged and interested. It shows agreement.
7. Shake hands. Quick and effective way to establish rapport. Research shows that it takes an average of 3 hours of continuous interaction to develop the same level of rapport that you can get with a single handshake.

# Must Have Personality Traits

- **Honesty**
- **Enthusiasm**
- **Integrity**
- **Confidence**
- **Kindness**
- **Positive Attitude**
- **Fairness**
- **Patience**
- **Good listener**
- **Happy**
- **Compassion**
- **Motivation**
- **Determination**
- **Optimism**
- **Dedication**
- **Humor**



# Five ways to lose out on a consulting gig

By William Lewis

**1: Don't price yourself out of the market. It's okay to hold firm on a reasonable price for your skills, but the key word is reasonable.**



**2: Don't invite yourself into the fold. You can alienate the group if you get too cozy and start acting like a permanent employee. Getting too chummy or participating in office gossip can make you look like you're knocking at the clubhouse door, wanting to be let in. Since a successful project can depend greatly on a good relationship with your team, make sure that you don't make them feel threatened on their own turf. You should include yourself only when invited to team activities, meetings, and discussions, and be sure to retain your professional demeanor.**

**3: Don't forget what type of consultant you are.**

**The term consultant is a generic term for anyone with expertise who is employed for a project with a fixed term. However, there are two types of consultants: One is as an expert who is specifically asked for their opinion on how to approach or plan a project or resolve an issue; the other type of consultant is brought in for skill and skill alone. The latter is typically not asked for opinions beyond the casual comment about an alternative solution. If you give a 30 minute diatribe on how your last company did it, you may be doing nothing more than annoying your client manager and ensuring that you won't be invited back.**

**4: Don't be hypersensitive.**

**If you need constant patting on your head or are sensitive to criticism, you may last only a few days in the consulting world. Project managers can be very direct and sometimes nasty. They are paying a premium for you to get a specific task done on a tight schedule, and they expect you to come in to the project with guns blazing. Even if you do a great job, you may not get any praise other than a standard "thank you." As far as the client is concerned, your praise is in the form of a big fat check for your time and efforts. Make sure you realize that it's all business.**

**5: Don't expect it to go permanent.**

**There is nothing wrong with wanting a consulting job to go permanent, especially if you like the company or you've had a hard time keeping a regular paycheck. A problem can arise if you approach your manager about offering you a position or act as if that will be the outcome. These comments can come off as begging for a full time job when none is promised or even available. On the flip side, if you are extremely good, you may be invited to interview with the client company.**

# TESTIMONIALS

Word of mouth is a powerful marketing tool.

## 1. Create Your List

Put together a list of clients for whom you have successfully worked, especially examples which had a noteworthy outcome. Target people or companies who have recognizable names.

## 2. Collect the Praise

Send them an e-mail or give them a quick phone call asking them for a few minutes of their time. Either have them write answers to well-prepared questions you present, or record their answers. Be respectful of their time. Express your gratitude.

## 3. Edit

Once you have collected written material or recordings, edit them into concise and compelling testimonials. Be respectful of your audiences time. After editing, get the person's approval for the altered presentation.

## 4. Choose Your Soapbox

- Brochures, and other marketing materials
- Newsletters
- Website
- Social network profiles.
- Case histories



# Secrets to Writing Marketing Copy that Customers Can't Ignore

By Kristin Zhivago

## 1. Talk As If You Are Sitting Next to Someone on the Beach

A friend of mine who does voiceovers recently interviewed at an audio book company. As she was auditioning, reading a fiction book, the guy interviewing her gave her a tip: “Talk as if you are sitting next to someone on the beach.” Great advice.

That is the first secret to writing copy in this age of customer conversations. You’re there together, you’re friends, you’re looking at the scene in front of you, and you’re talking about things that matter.

It’s personal. It’s relevant. It’s trustworthy. It’s a conversation.

The real question they want answered is, “What’s going to happen to me after I say yes?” This includes concerns such as:

- Are they going to treat me differently after I sign up?
- Who is going to service my account? Have I met that person (or those people) yet?
- What can go wrong—and what will happen when something does go wrong?
- Will their services live up to the claims they have made?
- Will I regret this?
- How easy will it be to get out of it if I do want to bail out?

## 2. Help Your Customer Weigh the Tradeoffs

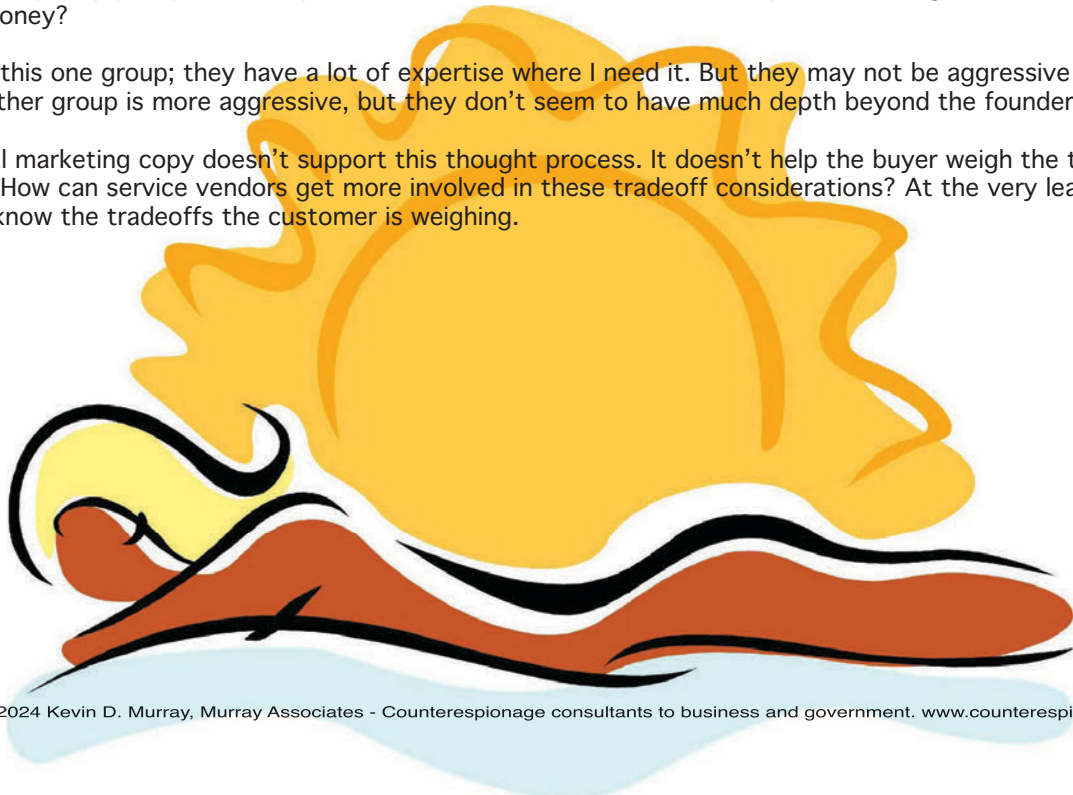
Weighing tradeoffs dominates the buying process.

If I use this service, I get a lot of great strategy help, but I’m not so confident in their ability to execute.

They are pretty pricey. Do I really want to hire them, or could I do this myself or through someone else for less money?

I liked this one group; they have a lot of expertise where I need it. But they may not be aggressive enough. This other group is more aggressive, but they don’t seem to have much depth beyond the founder.

Typical marketing copy doesn’t support this thought process. It doesn’t help the buyer weigh the tradeoffs. How can service vendors get more involved in these tradeoff considerations? At the very least, they must know the tradeoffs the customer is weighing.



# TOO BIG

TOO SMALL

**“Having the right amount of characters on each line is key to the readability of your text.** It shouldn’t merely be your design that dictates the width of your text, it should also be a matter of legibility.

“The optimal line length for your body text is considered to be 50-60 characters per line, including spaces (“Typographie”, E. Ruder). Other sources suggest that up to 75 characters is acceptable. So what’s the downside of violating this range?

**“Too long** — if a line of text is too long the visitor’s eye will have a hard time focusing on the text. This is because the length makes it difficult to get an idea of where the line starts and ends. Furthermore it can be difficult to continue from the correct line in large blocks of text.

**“Too short** — if a line is too short the eye will have to travel back too often, breaking the reader’s rhythm. Too short lines also tend to stress people, making them begin on the next line before finishing the current one (hence skipping potentially important words).

“It turns out that the subconscious mind is energized when jumping to the next line (as long as it doesn’t happen too frequently). At the beginning of every new line the reader is focused, but this focus gradually **wears off** over the duration of the line (“Typographie”, E. Ruder).

“In order to avoid the drawbacks of too long and too short lines, but still energize your readers and keep them engaged, we suggest keeping it within the range of **50-75 characters per line.**”

—Christian Holst, Baymard Institute

Note: This page’s text is about 55-60 characters per line.



The prints of Nathaniel Currier and James Merritt Ives flooded America in an unstaunched flow from before the Civil War to the eve of World War II.

The prints began to appear as early as the 1830's, when the Massachusetts-born Currier set up shop in Lower Manhattan near City Hall. In 1857 he formed a partnership with James Ives. They hired a stable of illustrators, and over the next 50 years their assembly-line factory produced an average of three to four new prints a week in unlimited editions.

Didactic images like their “Ladder of Fortune” (subtitled “Industry and Morality bring solid rewards. Idle schemes and speculations yield poverty and ruin.”) adapted religious sentiments to secular ambitions.

The New York Times - July 14, 1996



# 12 THINGS HAPPY PEOPLE DO DIFFERENTLY

by Sonja Lyubomirsky

**Express gratitude.** -- When you appreciate what you have, what you have appreciates in value. Being grateful for the goodness that is already evident in your life will bring you a deeper sense of happiness.

**Cultivate optimism.** -- Winners have the ability to manufacture their own optimism. No matter what the situation, the successful diva is the chick who will always find a way to put an optimistic spin on it.

**Avoid over-thinking and social comparison.** -- Comparing yourself to someone else can be poisonous. If we're somehow "better" than the person that we're comparing ourselves to, it gives us an unhealthy sense of superiority.

**Practice acts of kindness.** -- Performing an act of kindness releases serotonin in your brain. (Serotonin is a substance that has TREMENDOUS health benefits, including making us feel more blissful.) Selflessly helping someone is a super powerful way to feel good inside.

**Nurture social relationships.** -- The happiest people on the planet are the ones who have deep, meaningful relationships. Did you know studies show that people's mortality rates are DOUBLED when they're lonely?

**Develop strategies for coping.** -- How you respond to the "cra-p-tastic" moments is what shapes your character. Sometimes crap happens -- it's inevitable.

**Learn to forgive.** -- Harboring feelings of hatred is horrible for your well-being. Your mind doesn't know the difference between past and present emotion. When you "hate" someone, and you're continuously thinking about it, those negative emotions are toxic for your well-being.

**Increase flow experiences.** -- Flow is a state in which it feels like time stands still. It's when you're so focused on what you're doing that you become one with the task. Action and awareness are merged.

**Savor life's joys.** -- Deep happiness cannot exist without slowing down to enjoy the joy. It's easy in a world of wild stimuli and omnipresent movement to forget to embrace life's enjoyable experiences. When we neglect to appreciate, we rob the moment of its magic.

**Commit to your goals.** -- Being wholeheartedly dedicated to doing something comes fully-equipped with an ineffable force. When you're fully committed to doing something, you have no choice but to do that thing.

**Practice spirituality.** -- When we practice spirituality or religion, we recognize that life is bigger than us. We surrender the silly idea that we are the mightiest thing ever. It enables us to connect to the source of all creation and embrace a connectedness with everything that exists.

**Take care of your body.** -- Taking care of your body is crucial to being the happiest person you can be. If you don't have your physical energy in good shape, then your mental energy (your focus), your emotional energy (your feelings), and your spiritual energy (your purpose) will all be negatively affected. Consistent exercise raises happiness levels.

# ON VOICE MAIL

Institute of Management Consultants USA

1. Never state in the message that you plan to call them back, or ask them to call you back at a certain time. This only gives them an excuse to not call you.
2. Don't leave voicemails at odd hours of the night. The best hours to leave them are 6:45 am - 8:00 am and from 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm.
3. That said, messages left on a Friday afternoon are the least likely to be returned. Monday is busy, so only high-priority activities get immediate attention.



4. If you can't say it briefly, don't say it at all. Voicemail is not "story time". The optimal message is between 8 and 14 seconds.

5. Leave your phone number twice, it gives them time to write it down. Never leave your website address as this gives them the chance to make a decision without calling you back.

# 10 Worst Presentation Habits

Institute of Management Consultants USA

## 1. **Read from notes.**

Review your material, absorb it and deliver it without notes.

## 2. **Avoid eye contact.**

Make eye contact with your listeners 90% of the time. Glance at your notes or slides from time to time, but just as a reminder. Speak to your listeners, not your slides.

## 3. **Dress Down.**

Always dress appropriately for the culture, but a little better than everyone else.

## 4. **Fidget, jiggle and sway.**

Simple solution? Don't! Videotape presentations or rehearsals to catch your flaws.

## 5. **Fail to rehearse.**

Practice every component of your presentation - the material, flow of slides and when and where you may walk or interact with the audience.

## 6. **Stand at attention.**

Move, walk, use hand gestures - be animated in voice and body.

## 7. **Recite bullet points.**

Don't write too many words on a slide. Avoid more than 4 words across or 6 lines down. Tell stories, anecdotes and examples.

## 8. **Speak too long.**

Do you spend 5 minutes saying something you could say in 30 seconds?

## 9. **Fail to excite.**

Tell them why they should be excited about your content - why they should care.

## 10. **End with an inspiration deficit.**

Summarize what you said in your presentation, but leave them with one key thought that makes an impact or makes their jaws drop.

# THE PERFECT BUSINESS

by Richard Russell  
(<http://www1.dowtheoryletters.com/>)

I once asked a friend, a prominent New York corporate lawyer, "Dave, in all your years of experience, what was the single best business you've ever come across?" Without hesitation, Dave answered, "I have a client whose sole business is manufacturing a chemical that is critical in making synthetic rubber. This chemical is used in very small quantities in rubber manufacturing, but it is absolutely essential and can be used in only super-refined form.

"My client is the only one who manufactures this chemical. He therefore owns a virtual monopoly since this chemical is extremely difficult to manufacture and not enough of it is used to warrant another company competing with him. Furthermore, since the rubber companies need only small quantities of this chemical, they don't particularly care what they pay for it -- as long as it meets their very demanding specifications. My client is a millionaire many times over, and his business is the best I've ever come across." I was fascinated by the lawyer's story, and I never forgot it.

When I was a young man and just out of college my father gave me a few words of advice. Dad had loads of experience; he had been in the paper manufacturing business; he had been assistant to Mr. Sam Bloomingdale (of Bloomingdale's Department store); he had been in construction (he was a civil engineer); and he was also an expert in real estate management.



Here's what my dad told me: "Richard, stay out of the retail business. The hours are too long, and you're dealing with every darn variable under the sun. Stay out of real estate; when hard times arrive real estate comes to a dead stop and then it collapses. Furthermore, real estate is illiquid. When the collapse comes, you can't unload. Get into manufacturing; make something people can use. And make something that you can sell to the world. But Richard, my boy, if you're really serious about making money, get into the money business. It's clean, you can use your brains, you can get rid of your inventory and your mistakes in 30 seconds, and your product, money, never goes out of fashion."

So much for my father's wisdom (which was obviously tainted by the Great Depression). But Dad was a very wise man. For my own part, I've been in a number of businesses -- from textile designing to advertising to book publishing to owning a night club to the investment advisory business.

It's said that every business needs (1) a dreamer, (2) a businessman, and (3) a S.O.B. Well, I don't know about number 3, but most successful businesses do have a number 3 or all too often they seem to have a combined number 2 and number 3.

Bill Gates is known as "America's richest man." Bully for Billy. But do you know what Gates' biggest coup was? When Gates

was dealing with IBM, Big Blue needed an operating system for their computer. Gates didn't have one, but he knew where to find one. A little outfit in Seattle had one. Gates bought the system for a mere \$50,000 and presented it to IBM. That was the beginning of Microsoft's rise to power. Lesson: It's not enough to have the product, you have to know and understand your market. Gates didn't have the product, but he knew the market -- and he knew where to acquire the product.

Apple had by far the best product in the Mac. But Apple made a monumental mistake. They refused to license ALL PC manufacturers to use the Mac operating system. If they had, Apple today could be Microsoft, and Gates would still be trying to come out with something useful (the fact is Microsoft has been a follower and a great marketer, not an innovator). "Find a need and fill it," runs the old adage. Maybe today they should change that to, "Dream up a need and fill it." That's what has happened in the world of computers. And it will happen again and again.

All right, let's return to that wonderful world of perfection. I spent a lot of time and thought in working up the criteria for what I've termed the IDEAL BUSINESS. Now obviously, the ideal business doesn't exist and probably never will. But if you're about to start a business or join someone else's business or if you want to buy a business, the following list may help you. The more of these criteria that you can apply to your new business or new job, the better off you'll be.

(1) The ideal business sells the world, rather than a single neighborhood or even a single city or state. In other words, it has an unlimited global market (and today this is more important than ever, since world markets have now opened up to an extent unparalleled in my lifetime). By the way, how many times have you seen a retail store that has

been doing well for years -- then another bigger and better retail store moves nearby, and it's kaput for the first store.

(2) The ideal business offers a product which enjoys an "inelastic" demand. Inelastic refers to a product that people need or desire -- almost regardless of price.

(3) The ideal business sells a product which cannot be easily substituted or copied. This means that the product is an original or at least it's something that can be copyrighted or patented.

(4) The ideal business has minimal labor requirements (the fewer personnel, the better). Today's example of this is the much-talked about "virtual corporation." The virtual corporation may consist of an office with three executives, where literally all manufacturing and services are farmed out to other companies.

(5) The ideal business enjoys low overhead. It does not need an expensive location; it does not need large amounts of electricity, advertising, legal advice, high-priced employees, large inventory, etc.

(6) The ideal business does not require big cash outlays or major investments in equipment. In other words, it does not tie up your capital (incidentally, one of the major reasons for new-business failure is under-capitalization).

(7) The ideal business enjoys cash billings. In other words, it does not tie up your capital with lengthy or complex credit terms.

(8) The ideal business is relatively free of all kinds of government and industry regulations and strictures (and if you're now in your own business, you most definitely know what I mean with this one).

(9) The ideal business is portable or easily moveable. This means that you can take your business (and yourself) anywhere you want -- Nevada, Florida, Texas, Washington, S. Dakota (none have state income taxes) or hey, maybe even Monte Carlo or Switzerland or the south of France.

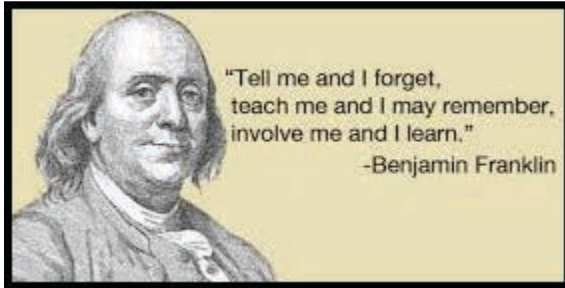
(10) Here's a crucial one that's often overlooked; the ideal business satisfies your intellectual (and often emotional) needs. There's nothing like being fascinated with what you're doing. When that happens, you're not working, you're having fun.

(11) The ideal business leaves you with free time. In other words, it doesn't require your labor and attention 12, 16 or 18 hours a day (my lawyer wife, who leaves the house at 6:30 AM and comes home at 6:30 PM and often later, has been well aware of this one).

(12) Super-important: the ideal business is one in which your income is not limited by your personal output (lawyers and doctors have this problem). No, in the ideal business you can sell 10,000 customers as easily as you sell one (publishing is an example).

That's it. If you use this list it may help you cut through a lot of nonsense and hypocrisy and wishes and dreams regarding what you are looking for in life and in your work. None of us own or work at the ideal business. But it's helpful knowing what we're looking for and dealing with. As a buddy of mine once put it, "I can't lay an egg and I can't cook, but I know what a great omelet looks like and tastes like."

# BEN FRANKLIN'S LIST OF VIRTUES:



## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN CREATED A SYSTEM TO DEVELOP HIS CHARACTER.

1. **Temperance.** Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. **Silence.** Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. **Order.** Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
4. **Resolution.** Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. **Frugality.** Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. **Industry.** Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. **Sincerity.** Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. **Justice.** Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. **Moderation.** Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. **Cleanliness.** Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.
11. **Tranquillity.** Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
12. **Chastity.** Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
13. **Humility.** Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

The morning question, What good shall I do this day?	5	Rise, wash, and address <i>Power- ful Goodness</i> ; contrive day's busi- ness and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study; and breakfast.
	6	
	7	
	8	
	9	Work.
	10	
	11	
	12	Read or overlook my accounts, and dine.
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	

*“With 50 years in direct marketing under my belt,  
the checklist below is hard-wired into my DNA.”*

~Denny Hatch



## The Direct Marketer's Checklist

### All Media

1. Does your message employ at least one (preferably several) of the seven key copy drivers—the emotional hot buttons that make people act:  
Fear - Greed - Guilt - Anger - Exclusivity - Salvation - Flattery?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
2. Does your copy contain some or all of the 13 most powerful and evocative words in the English language?  
You - Save - Money - Guarantee - Love - Results - Proven - Safety - Easy - New - Health - Discovery - Free  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
3. Since “you” is the subject of every sales effort, is your promotion about “you”—as opposed to “we,” “us” or “our”?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
4. “The prospect doesn’t give a damn about you, your company or your product. All that matters is, ‘What’s in it for me?’ “ —Bob Hacker  
Are you emphasizing your product and what it will do for the prospect rather than yourself and your company?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
5. “Probably well over half our buying choices are based on emotion.” —Jack Maxson  
“When emotion and reason come into conflict, emotion always wins.” —John J. Flieder  
Is your sales pitch emotional (rather than analytical and rational)?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
6. “People want quarter-inch holes, not quarter-inch drills.” —MBA Magazine  
Does your sales pitch highlight benefits (e.g., you get quarter-inch holes)—as opposed to features (e.g., buy this drill)  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
7. “Your job is to sell, not entertain.” —Jack Maxson  
“Cute and clever simply don’t work.” —Nigel Rowe  
Is your presentation cute, clever and entertaining?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
8. Do you make an offer?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
9. “You cannot sell two things at once.” —Dick Benson  
Are you giving the prospect too many choices?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
10. “The right offer should be so attractive that only a lunatic would say ‘No.’ “ —Claude Hopkins  
“If you want to dramatically increase your results, dramatically improve your offer.” —Axel Andersson  
Is your offer the very strongest one you can field?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

11. Does your company name and address, 800 number and hyperlink appear somewhere on every piece in the promotion?

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Do you include a guarantee of satisfaction backed up with the real signature of a real person?

☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you have a deadline date that is so far in the future it loses urgency, or so near to the drop date that if the mailing is delayed your promotion is chopped liver?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Do you include testimonials from happy customers or donors?

☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Is your offer so simple an idiot can understand it?

☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Do you make it easy to respond?

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. Has your paranoid legal department destroyed the flow of the argument with disclaimers and footnotes in gray sans serif mouse type and/or a bunch of the following in superscript: \* ‡ TM © 1 2 3 ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Before going live, have you handed your promotion off to a half dozen strangers—who have no skin in the game—to make sure the whole thing makes sense, tracks, and the ordering mechanism is smooth and easy?

☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Can customers respond in the manner most convenient to them: mail, phone, fax, email or via your Web site?

☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Does your response link to your offer take the customer to a special satellite page that directly relates to that specific offer—as opposed to your general homepage?

☐ Yes ☐ No

21. Did you add a variety of “seed” addresses—colleagues nationwide, who will forward the mailing to you when received—so you can see how the piece looks when delivered and the date received?

☐ Yes ☐ No

22. Have you personally dialed the 800 number in your ad (website/letter, etc) to make sure it is correct?

☐ Yes ☐ No

23. Will the phone be answered no later than the second ring?

☐ Yes ☐ No

24. Did you provide customer service (or order intake) with copies of sales material (brochures, print ads, outer envelope, etc.), so they know what specific offer/product the caller talking about—as well as actual product samples (if available)—so they can answer questions?

☐ Yes ☐ No

25. Do you have a fail-safe system in place that enables you to measure responses by source and determine return on investment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

26. Are your telephone sales representatives (TSRs) trained to ask for the key code?

☐ Yes ☐ No

27. Do your TSRs have an irresistible upsell in their bag of tricks, so they might generate some additional revenue?

☐ Yes ☐ No

28. Are you able to fulfill orders immediately?

☐ Yes ☐ No

29. Are absolutely foolproof instructions included with the shipment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

30. "The sale begins when the customer says 'yes.'" —Bill Christensen

Does your fulfillment material resell the product and reassure the customer that buying it from you was a really smart decision?

☐ Yes ☐ No

31. Does your fulfillment material make the customer feel good about doing business with you? Does it contain a phone number in case the customer has a question?

☐ Yes ☐ No

32. Is the product or service ready to use immediately for instant gratification? In other words, can the customer wear it, eat it, start reading or listening to it, hang it on the wall, sit in it, or plug it in and have it do its thing the moment it's unwrapped?

☐ Yes ☐ No

33. Do you make it easy to return the merchandise?

☐ Yes ☐ No

34. If the promotional effort is successful, can you turn on a dime and roll it out immediately to new prospects?

☐ Yes ☐ No

35. Is 20 percent of your marketing budget allocated for testing?

☐ Yes ☐ No

### **Direct Mail**

36. All of the above plus:

37. "A letter should look and feel like a letter." —Dick Benson

Does your letter look and feel like a letter?

☐ Yes ☐ No

38. If the letter is personalized, does the typeface in the personalization (date, name, address, salutation) match the typeface in the body of the letter?

☐ Yes ☐ No

39. Does the signature look real (as opposed to a computer-generated font) and printed in blue or black ink (as opposed to red)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

40. Are all the elements in the mailing small enough to fit in the envelope and folded so they're machine-insertable?

☐ Yes ☐ No

41. Have you checked the key coding, so that you can track the order back to the original source of the name and thus determine ROI?

☐ Yes ☐ No

42. Have you given the lettershop detailed instructions—and a sample dummy of the mailing—so no question exists about how every element is folded, which order it's inserted and which side faces the envelope flap?

☐ Yes ☐ No

43. Has a USPS expert analyzed your entire mailing to guarantee that you're taking advantage of all possible technology and presort postal discounts down to carrier route sort?

☐ Yes ☐ No

44. Have you checked with your local postmaster to be sure the thing is indeed mailable?

☐ Yes ☐ No

45. Have you cleared the mail date with all the list owners from whom you're renting names?

☐ Yes ☐ No

46. Are the permit numbers on your outgoing indicia and incoming business reply mail correct?

☐ Yes ☐ No

47. Is the address on your business reply mail correct?

☐ Yes ☐ No

48. Do you have postage money for the mailing on deposit with your lettershop or the USPS?

☐ Yes ☐ No

49. Do you have money deposited in your USPS Business Reply account?

☐ Yes ☐ No

### **Space (Off-the-Page) Advertising**

50. All of the above plus:

51. "I've never bought an ad at full rate in my life." —Iris Shokoff

Do you have a professional media buyer negotiating the best rates?

☐ Yes ☐ No

52. Does the publication have a history of success with direct response advertisers, and have your competitors advertised there?

☐ Yes ☐ No

53. If your ad is running in a niche publication (as opposed to general interest), have you versionalized the headline and copy to appeal to that specific readership?

☐ Yes ☐ No

54. Is the order coupon on the lower outside corner of the ad (as opposed to the gutter, the top or worse, in the center?

☐ Yes ☐ No

55. Is the coupon square or rectangular as opposed to a triangle, rhomboid, circle, or some other weird and disconcerting shape?

☐ Yes ☐ No

55. Are the reply address, phone number, email address and Web address on the order coupon as well as in the ad itself?

☐ Yes ☐ No

57. Is there room on the coupon to legibly write a credit card account number and all other information?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## **Catalogs**

58. All of the above plus:

50. Have you included an order form?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## **Email/Ecommerce:**

60. All of the above plus:

61. Is the subject line of your email no more than 35-40 characters max?

☐ Yes ☐ No

62. Is the subject line of your email a grabber—irresistible?

☐ Yes ☐ No

63. Will your subject line get past spam filters?

☐ Yes ☐ No

64. Remembering that you're a mouse-click from oblivion, is your landing page powerful, to the point, easy to navigate, and not wordy or boring?

☐ Yes ☐ No

65. Do distractions exist on your landing page that could take the customer's mind off the business at hand (e.g., Investor Relations, Press Office, About Us, Site Security, etc.)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## **Broadcast—DRTV:**

66. All of the above plus:

67. Are your 800 numbers and Web reply address prominently displayed in large type at the bottom of the screen throughout the commercial?

☐ Yes ☐ No

68. Have you alerted your inbound telemarketing operation as to the precise times that your commercials are running and provided a response estimate?

☐ Yes ☐ No

69. Have you made arrangements to handle overflow calls during spike periods?

☐ Yes ☐ No

70. IMPORTANT: Did you have at least one professional proofreader to flyspeck your copy for misspellings, typos, errors and goofs?

☐ Yes ☐ No



# David Ogilvy on Readability:

1. Avoid gray walls of type.
2. A display subhead of two or three lines between your headline and your body copy will heighten the reader's appetite for the feast to come.
3. After two or three inches of copy, insert your first mini-headline, and thereafter pepper mini-headlines throughout. They keep the reader marching forward. Make some of them interrogative, to excite curiosity in the next run of copy.
4. An ingenious sequence of boldly displayed boldface mini-headlines can deliver the substance of your entire pitch to glancers who are too lazy to wade through the text.
5. Type smaller than 9-point is difficult for most people to read.
6. Break up the monotony of long copy by setting key paragraphs in boldface or italic.
7. Insert illustrations from time to time.
8. Help the reader into your paragraphs with arrowheads, bullets, asterisks and marginal marks.
9. Never set your copy in reverse (white type on a black background) and never set it over a gray or colored tint. The old school of art

directors believed that these devices forced people to read the copy; we now know that they make reading physically impossible.

10. If you use leading between paragraphs, you increase readership by an average of 12 percent.

11. If you have a lot of unrelated facts to recite, don't try to relate them with cumbersome connectives; simply number them, as I am doing here.

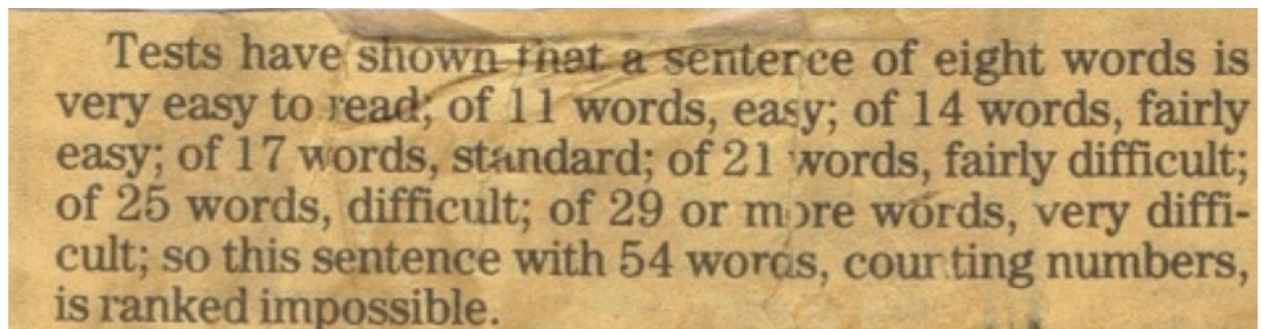
## Denny Hatch Picks Up Where David Ogilvy Leaves Off

12. How Long Should a Sentence Be?

—Clipping from a Virginia Newspaper (below) from subscriber Scott Huch, who taped it on his desk lamp 30 years ago. Below is the text:

"Tests have shown that a sentence of eight words is very easy to read; of 11 words, easy; of 14 words, fairly easy; of 17 words, standard; of 21 words, fairly difficult; of 25 words, difficult; of 29 or more words, very difficult; so this sentence with 54 words, counting numbers, is ranked impossible."

13. I instinctively count the words of every long sentence I write. Any sentence longer than 29 words is either trimmed or split up.



14. For body copy in print communications, use a serif font.

15. Digital body copy should be sans serif.

16. “Ideal width of a line on paper: Anything from 45 to 75 characters is widely-regarded as a satisfactory length of line for a single-column page set in a serifed text face in a text size. The 66-character line (counting both letters and spaces) is widely regarded as ideal.” —Robert Bringhurst, *Elements of Typographic Style*

17. “To determine line length for optimum readability, a good guideline is between nine and 12 words for unjustified text. Fewer words may cause the sentence structure to break up, and may also result in too many hyphenations. Both of these reduce readability. Conversely, a line with more than 12 words can become tedious to read. Additionally, a reader can easily get lost when going from the end of one long line to the beginning of the next, and may inadvertently reread the same line, or miss a line or two.” —Ilene Strizver, founder, *The Type Studio*

18. Online Readability: “Line widths should be 50 to 75 characters including spaces.” —Christian Holst, *Baymard Institute*

19. The 50 most frequently looked-up words by readers of *The New York Times* (1/1/2010 through 5/26/2010) (Alphabetically, not by number of look-ups)

Note: If you use any of these, chances are good your reader may leave you to look it up. The thread is interrupted and maybe you’ve lost a reader.

alacrity — antediluvian — apoplectic — apostates — atavistic — austerity — baldenfreude — canard — chimera — comity — crèches — cynosure — démarche — desultory — egregious — epistemic — ersatz — feckless — hegemony — hubris — incendiary — inchoate — Internecine — jejune — Kristallnacht — laconic — Manichean — mirabile dictu — nascent — obduracy — obstreperous — omertà — opprobrium — overhaul — peripatetic — polemicist — prescient — profligacy — profligate — provenance — putative — redoubtable — renminbi — sanguine — sclerotic — solipsistic — soporific — sui generis — ubiquitous — verisimilitude





### "The S.W.E.A.T. Pledge" (Skill & Work Ethic Aren't Taboo)

1. I believe that I have won the greatest lottery of all time. I am alive. I walk the Earth. I live in America. Above all things, I am grateful.
2. I believe that I am entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Nothing more. I also understand that "happiness" and the "pursuit of happiness" are not the same thing.
3. I believe there is no such thing as a "bad job." I believe that all jobs are opportunities, and it's up to me to make the best of them.
4. I do not "follow my passion." I bring it with me. I believe that any job can be done with passion and enthusiasm.
5. I deplore debt, and do all I can to avoid it. I would rather live in a tent and eat beans than borrow money to pay for a lifestyle I can't afford.
6. I believe that my safety is my responsibility. I understand that being in "compliance" does not necessarily mean I'm out of danger.
7. I believe the best way to distinguish myself at work is to show up early, stay late, and cheerfully volunteer for every crappy task there is.
8. I believe the most annoying sounds in the world are whining and complaining. I will never make them. If I am unhappy in my work, I will either find a new job, or find a way to be happy.
9. I believe that my education is my responsibility, and absolutely critical to my success. I am resolved to learn as much as I can from whatever source is available to me. I will never stop learning, and understand that library cards are free.
10. I believe that I am a product of my choices – not my circumstances. I will never blame anyone for my shortcomings or the challenges I face. And I will never accept the credit for something I didn't do.
11. I understand the world is not fair, and I'm OK with that. I do not resent the success of others.
12. I believe that all people are created equal. I also believe that all people make choices. Some choose to be lazy. Some choose to sleep in. I choose to work my butt off.

On my honor, I hereby affirm the above statements to be an accurate summation of my personal worldview. I promise to live by them.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Mike Rowe Dated September 2, 2013

[www.mikeroeWORKS.com](http://www.mikeroeWORKS.com)



# 9 Signs Your Top Talent is About to Leave

## 1 Change in Attitude

They seem more negative toward the company and its goals.



## 2 Less Productive

Their work output and quality decline noticeably.



## 3 More Absences

They start taking more sick days or unexplained time off.



## 4 Quiet in Meetings

They stop speaking up or sharing their thoughts in meetings.



## 5 No Longer Excited

They show no enthusiasm for new projects or initiatives.



## 6 Avoiding Commitment

They hesitate to agree to long-term projects or make future plans.



## 7 Less Engaged

They don't seem as interested in their work as they used to be.



## 8 Skipping Work Events

They no longer attend company social events or team outings.



## 9 Networking More

They begin to attend more networking events and update their online profile.



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## **The Nine Inviolable Rules of Advertising** **Compiled by Denny Hatch Over 60 Years.**

**Rule #1:** “The only purpose of advertising is to make sales. It is profitable or unprofitable according to its actual sales.”

—Claude Hopkins, Scientific Advertising

**Rule #2:** “Your job is to sell, not entertain.”

—Jack Maxson, freelancer, creator of the Brookstone catalog

**Rule #3:** “If it doesn’t sell, it’s not creative.”

—Credo of Benton and Bowles, Chicago, in the 1930s

**Rule #4:** “Every time we get creative we lose money.”

—Ed McCabe, president of BMG Music Club

**Rule #5:** “Beware of humor in advertising. People don’t buy from clowns.” —David Ogilvy

**Rule #6:** The 7 emotional hot buttons that make people buy: Fear – Greed – Guilt – Anger – Exclusivity – Salvation – Flattery

—Bob Hacker, Axel Anderssen, Denny Hatch

**Rule #7:** “The prospect doesn’t give a damn about you, your company or your product. All that matters is, ‘What’s in it for me?’”

—Bob Hacker

**Rule #8:** Always listen to W-I-I FM.

—Direct Marketing Old Saw

**Rule #9:** “Always make it easy to order.”

—Elsworth Howell, CEO, Grolier Enterprises



Murray's Credo