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## You Were Born Knowing How to Persuade Others

Think back to when you were a teenager. Chances are, there were times when you needed to persuade your parents to give you something you wanted: Money, a later curfew, perhaps permission to go on a trip.

Do you remember how you asked them for these things? You certainly didn't use the same approach in asking your parents for money, permission, or a later curfew as you did when you merely asked them to pass the salt at the dinner table.

**So what was the difference?**

**First off, you knew that you needed to ask at the most opportune time.** You couldn't ask your mom when she was rushing out the door to go to work. She wouldn't pay attention to you. So you had to wait until a quieter moment and then strive to get her full attention.

It's also likely that you didn't just blurt out your request by saying, "Can I have a later curfew?" Of course you didn't say that. Your parents would have given you a little smirk of a smile and a firm "no."

**Instead, you built your case.** You told them how responsible you've become and how you always help out around the house, etc. If you did a good job building your case, chances are, your parents were agreeing with much of what you said.

After you built your case, did you just shut your mouth and see what happens? Of course not. **At that point, you had to tell them exactly what you wanted**, whether it was special permission, money, a later curfew, or whatever was on your mind. You were direct and very specific, telling them exactly what you wanted.

**Some things never change.** You see, now that you're a marketer, you need to dust off those sales skills and bring them back into use. Indeed, those three steps mentioned above are the **exact three steps the world's wealthiest marketers use every day** when they write copy.

Specifically, they get their prospect's attention, they build their case, and then they use a strong call to action to let the prospect know what to do next. If you'd like to learn how to create profit-pulling sales letters, **read on as we examine these three steps in detail...**

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## Step One: Grabbing Your Reader and Pulling Them Into Your Copy

Let's face it - your potential buyer isn't thinking about you. He's thinking about himself. He's thinking about his job, the fact that he needs to run to the store to get milk, and that the dog is giving him "the look" that signals it's time for them to go for a walk. He's thinking about his relationships, his crabby boss, his upcoming weekend, etc.

So when he hits your sales page, it needs to be strong enough to get his attention. It needs to grab him enough to **break through the conversations in his head and shift his attention to the conversation in your sales letter.**

The easiest way to do that? **Instead of competing with the conversations in his head, join them.**

*In other words, instead of trying to shift his attention away to something unrelated to him, shift his attention to something very relevant and important to him.*

As a marketer and product creator, you already know that your product or service IS relevant to your target market. You already know how it would benefit them. You already know that this product is perfect for your customer.

But he has no idea. And in fact, he doesn't even know why he should care. Given all that, *you have just a few seconds* to convince him that he needs to stop whatever he's doing and read your sales letter.

As you might expect, **the headline is what will capture his attention (or not)** in those first few crucial seconds.

As such, your headline is the most important part of your entire sales letter.

After all, if it doesn't do its job (capture attention,) the rest of your sales letter is worthless because IT WON'T BE READ.

*Think of it this way:* **The goal of your headline is to get the potential buyer to start reading the sales letter.**

That's it.

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The goal of your headline is not to sell the reader your product or service. That's what the rest of the letter is for. The headline is simply what you'll use to grab your reader and pull them into the rest of your copy.

*But remember this:* **Your headline absolutely needs to be relevant to the rest of the copy.** You can't put out a shocking headline like "The President Has Been Assassinated" just to get attention, and then go on to try to sell vitamins to the readers. They'll feel duped and angry if you do that.

Instead, you need to speak to your reader directly about something that's important to her. You may go on to arouse curiosity or promise a big benefit. But **whatever you do, it absolutely must be relevant to her and to the sales copy that follows.**

You can accomplish this by using a **pre-headline** and a **headline**.

The pre-headline is a line or two in smaller font above the main headline. Many times, it's used to get attention by addressing the target market.

*For example,* if your target market consists of people who own poodles, your pre-headline may simply be: "Attention Poodle Owners!"

If you own a poodle, would you at least read the headline if you saw a pre-headline that called out to poodle owners? Yes, chances are, you would keep reading.

Indeed, **the more specific you can be, the better.** For example, *if you can narrow down the target market further, than address them in a focused way in your pre-headline.* In our example, you might say, "Attention Toy Poodle Owners!"

If your product deals with housebreaking, then you can focus in even more by using a pre-headline like, "Attention Toy Poodle Owners - Who Else Wants to Housebreak their Poodle in Just 48 Hours?"

*Another example:* Let's suppose you are selling a course on how to make money working at home. Your pre-headline can qualify your prospects and get their attention by asking a question such as, "Do You Want to Make a Full-Time Income Working Part-Time from the Comfort of Your Home?"

Now that you've grabbed the momentary attention of your target market by identifying them in the pre-headline, you now need to further get their attention by promising them a benefit or arousing their curiosity in your main headline (which is in a large font.) There are other ways to get attention -- such as by being controversial or shocking -- but promising benefits and arousing curiosity are the main two.

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Indeed, if you can create a headline that both promises a benefit and arouses curiosity, you'll likely have a winning headline.

Chances are, there are many benefits associated with using your product or service, right? Of course. **So what you want to do is identify one of the biggest - if not the biggest - benefit associated with your product, and promise this benefit to readers if they keep reading.**

*In order to know what your biggest benefit is, you also need to be aware of what is important to your target market.*

*For example, if you are selling watches to wealthy people who enjoy the prestige of an expensive watch, touting your watch as a "good value" in the headline isn't going to capture their attention.*

*Another example:* Some products (like cookware or mattresses) may do well to boast of a lifetime guarantee. However, a lifetime guarantee is not on the top of buyer's lists when it comes to items that won't be used much, such as wedding dresses or baby clothing. As such, mentioning the guarantee in the headline for products like these isn't likely to hold your reader's attention.

In addition to figuring out what's important to your prospects, you'll also want to consider some more "universal" wants of people. For example, **people want quick and easy solutions. They want magic bullets. They want to feel better, be more attractive, be wealthier and look younger** (among other things.)

If you can give your prospects a quick and easy way to look younger, mention that in the headline! If you can give them a quick and easy way to get richer, then by all means let them know in the headline. The same goes for feeling healthier, becoming more attractive, being happier, etc.

Also keep in mind some of the "power words" that stop people in their tracks. **The word "you" is one of the most powerful words you can use in your headline and elsewhere in your copy, so use it generously.**

After all, people are only interested in themselves and how your products benefit them. As they read their copy, **they're always thinking, "what's in it for me?"** If you orient the copy towards them through generous use of the word "you," your copy is already taking a big step towards answering the "what's in it for me" question.

Are there other "power words" to use in your copy?  
Of course. Here are some of the examples:

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People also like new things, so words like “new,” “introducing,” and “break-through” tend to capture attention.

People like knowing things that others don’t know, so using words like “secrets,” “revealed,” and “discover” tend to be powerful words in your copy.

And as already mentioned, since **people like their solutions quick and easy**, use words that convey that message where applicable (quick, easy, fast, etc.)

Now that you know what’s important to your prospects, and what sorts of “power words” to use to capture attention, you can start writing headlines. *Notice I said “headlines” and not the singular headline.* Since it is the most important part of your letter, it only makes sense to spend a good amount of time crafting the very best headline you can.

**You should draft dozens of headlines for your sales letter.** Don’t stop when you think you’ve created a good one. Keep going, and you’ll likely craft an even better one. This is what the professionals do -- some copywriting experts regularly write 50 or 100 headlines!

Now let’s look at a specific example of how to transform an average headline into something much more compelling...

*Let’s suppose* you’re selling a cream that helps users avoid wrinkles, smooth out laugh lines, eliminate crow’s feet wrinkles, etc. Perhaps you’d start out with a headline like: “Here’s How to Eliminate Crow’s Feet and Laugh Lines.”

Problem is, eliminating crow’s feet and laugh line wrinkles is a feature associated with using the cream. Sure, many people will make the logical jump between the features (eliminating wrinkles) and the benefits of using the cream. **However, your job is to make it easy on the reader and lay out the benefits clearly so the prospects don’t even have to spend a second thinking about how the product will benefit them.**

So what benefits are associated with these features? Overall, smoothing-out and eliminating wrinkles makes you look younger. And a person who looks younger may be more attractive, may be happier, may get more dates, etc.

Using these benefits, we can tweak the example headline into this: “Here’s How to Eliminate Crow’s Feet and Laugh Lines to Make You Look Younger.”

OK, that’s a little better. But let’s be a bit more specific. Instead of simply saying “younger,” let’s say “Ten Years Younger.”

Now, remember earlier, we mentioned that people like their solutions quick and easy. So let’s also let the reader now it’s a quick solution:

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“Here’s How to Eliminate Crow’s Feet and Laugh Lines Quickly and Easily to Make You Look Ten Years Younger.”

Do you see how this headline is much better than the original headline? But you’re not done yet. From here, you should now start tweaking this headline to make it go from “average” to downright compelling.

For example, you may start crafting variations of this headline such as:

“Discover the Secret of Looking Ten Years Younger... in Just 5 Minutes a Day!”

“Here’s an Anti-Aging Cream that Makes You Look So Young and Beautiful, Your Husband will Call You his Trophy Wife!”

“In Just 21 Days from Now, You’ll Look so Young, People Will Mistake Your Teenage Daughter for Your Sister!”

...and so on. Keep tweaking and crafting new headlines until you have several strong headlines. **After you roll out your copy, you can start testing headlines to see which ones convert better.**

Now that you have your prospect’s attention, it’s time to bring them into the rest of your copy...

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## Step Two: Convincing the Prospect

While the body of your sales letter has many components, it has one overall purpose: **To make your case.**

**In other words, this is where the selling takes place - where you prove that your product is indeed the perfect solution to your prospect's problem.**

If you made a bold claim in your headline, it's in the body that you prove the claim.

It's here that you describe the benefits and features of your product, stir desire in the reader, and perhaps put them in an emotional state. It's in the body of your letter that you provide testimonials (further proof,) include a risk-reversal guarantee, and answer any objections the prospect may have.

We'll talk about all these and more in the following pages. But first, let's get an overview of the looks and mechanics of an average sales letter.

### What a Good Sales Letter Looks Like?

Writing the sales letter is part art and part science. As such, you'll find that **most successful sales letters follow a standard format as described below.**

We've already talked about the most important part of the letter, the headline. That along with any pre-headline and perhaps even a sub-headline is at the very top of the letter.

**Below the headline many marketers let readers know who is writing the letter.** You'll see notations like, "from the desk of Alex Smith." Sometimes, the marketer will display their picture here as well. Whether you do this is up to you.

**The next component that's pretty standard is the salutation or greeting.** You'll see openings like "Dear Friend." While that's pretty standard, it's also somewhat boring and can even put off those who are thinking, "You don't know me! How can I be your friend?"

A better bet is to again qualify your prospect by addressing them directly. Naturally, if you're sending personalized letters or if you've captured their name via a "squeeze page," you should address them directly by name. If not, use a salutation that identifies them as part of a specific group and captures their attention, such as "Dear Internet Marketer" or "Dear Soccer Fan."

**The next part is of course your opening paragraph.** Ideally, this should be short. You don't want to make it look like work to read your first sentence and

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first paragraph. Indeed, all your sentences and paragraphs should be short and easy-to-read.

If you haven't already pulled your reader in with a promise of a big benefit in the headline (also known as the "big promise,") then do so in your opening paragraph - preferably your opening sentence.

**The rest of the body consists of a series of easy-to-read paragraphs.** This is your sales pitch that's backed by things like bullets that emphasize the features and benefits of your product, testimonials from satisfied users and other proof, subheadings that emphasize other big benefits, a guarantee policy, a call to action, and an order button. We'll talk about these components in more detail shortly.

**Following the main body of the sales letter, you provide a closing - usually your signature.** You may want to create a graphic of your signature that looks like you signed the letter with a blue pen, followed by your type-written name underneath. In other words, make it look like a "real" letter.

**Finally, most sales letters include at least one P.S.** The P.S. is almost as important as your headline because people who skim your letter tend to read the headline first and then skip down to the bottom of your page where your P.S. is located. As such, your P.S. needs to act as a little sales person by re-emphasizing some of the biggest benefits and your call to action.

*In short:* Your sales letter will look a lot like a letter you might sit down and write to a friend. Indeed, when your prospect reads it, they should be able to feel the warm, conversational tone of your letter.

At this point, the inevitable question comes up: How long should the letter be?

### Who's King: Long Copy or Short Copy?

When you look at what all you have to accomplish in order to convince a prospect to purchase your product or service, it becomes clear that you'll likely end up with a fairly long letter.

And yet the debate continues to rage: Which is better, short copy or long copy? Those on the side of short copy say that no one reads long copy anyway. Those who favor long copy know that "the more you tell, the more you sell."

**The ultimate answer of course lies in letting your real customers vote with their wallets.**

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In other words, track your conversion rates and test long copy against short copy.

**However, in most cases, you're likely to find that long copy outperforms short copy.** The more objections you can lay to rest and the more benefits and features you can convey, the more product you'll sell.

And what of those who say nobody reads long copy? Just remember this: **Sales copy can never be too long, only too boring.** For example, if I wrote a book all about you, your life, and even other people's opinions of you, would you read the book? Of course you would. Even if it was 1000 pages, you'd likely savor every word. A book that is all about you simply cannot be boring to you.

And the same goes with your copy. If you make your copy about your reader, you won't bore them.

Forget about how great your company is. No one cares.

**They only care about what your product will do for them.** Make your copy about your reader and his concerns and you'll have your prospects reading your entire letter.

Indeed, that's what you want - you want your prospects to read the entire letter. You already snagged their attention with the headline, and now you need to pull them into your letter and get them to keep reading right down to the bottom where they click on the order button.

How? By imagining your letter is a slippery slide...

### How to Create a Slippery Slide

The headline's job is to get your reader to read the first sentence. When you think of your letter as a slippery slide, then **the job of your letter's first sentence is to get the reader to read the second sentence.** And the second sentence's job is to get your reader to keep going and read the third sentence... and so on.

**That means every word and every sentence in your letter is important.** If you let your reader's attention stray for even a moment, they may lose interest in reading the letter - and that means you lose the sale. You need to hold their interest continuously while making your case for your product or service.

So what should be in these opening paragraphs? As with other elements of copy, different writers will have different ideas of how to do it.

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Some will start off with an exciting story that ties directly into the product's benefits. Other writers will start off by entering the conversation that's already going on in the prospect's head.

*For example*, the letter may emphasize with the reader who's having problems with acne. The letter "agitates" the problem by discussing how embarrassing acne is, how it dampens one's social life, and more. Then of course, the letter reveals the solution to the reader (which is to use the product/service.)

**The best thing you can do for yourself to further your copywriting education is simply to read a lot of sales letters.** Get on mailing lists. Read magazines and catalogs. Buy books that include old sales letters (like "Million Dollar Mailings".) Study proven sales letters to see how they create slippery slides.

**TIP:** If you want to go from being merely a good copywriter to becoming a great writer, start copying proven sales letters by hand. This will enable you to truly get a feel for the rhythm of copywriting.

## How to Start Your Letter

One way to write a sales letter is to start with a “brain dump.” This is where **you sit down and just write everything that comes to mind regarding your product.** Perhaps you imagine your perfect prospect sitting across the table from you, so in a conversational tone, you tell them how your product or service will benefit them.

However, most copywriters don’t stop with one draft. It’s usually during the editing process that they carve out a great sales letter out of their initial average draft. **It’s during the polishing process that you turn an average letter into one that will have your prospects eagerly reading each and every word.**

When you sit down to polish up your letter, your over-riding focus will be to ensure that every word, sentence, and paragraph serves its purpose. Specifically, that purpose is to keep the prospect reading right down to the order button - and then getting them to click that button and buy your product.

**Keep in mind as you write that you aren’t selling a product, but rather a benefit or set of benefits.** For example, no one is interested in buying “face cream.” However, they are interested in more youthful-looking skin.

Likewise, people buy lawns (the outcome) and not grass seed (the product.)

They buy prestige and not transportation when they buy an expensive car like the Rolls Royce.

They don’t buy “tooth whitener” - they’re buying the benefit of whiter teeth so they can be more attractive.

In short, people are buying benefits and NOT features. They’re buying outcomes and NOT products.

You can make your slide slippery by always keeping the focus of your letter on how the product will benefit the reader. What’s in it for her? How will her life change when she uses your product? How do you make her life easier? How do you save her money, make her younger, more beautiful, healthier, happier, thinner, or richer?

Make the letter about your prospect, and she’ll keep reading right to the very end.

## How to Appease Impatient Readers

While we hope that all prospects will read every word of our letter, we also know that in reality, it doesn't always happen that way. There are those who merely skim a letter before deciding whether to read further and/or order. Your letter must cater to them as well... and you must get them going down the slippery slide of your letter as well.

How? Simple: **By drawing their attention and their eyes into your letter whenever possible.** And you do this by sprinkling sub-headlines throughout your copy, plus emphasizing phrases with **bold lettering**, **bigger font**, **colored font**, or **highlighting**.

Don't overuse these elements, however. If you emphasize too much of your copy, not only does it look like a big mess, it ends up that you are not emphasizing anything at all.

What you do want to accomplish through sub-headlines and emphasis is to **give those readers who skim the page a good feel for what your product can do for them.** And as mentioned before, you want to grab their attention so that perhaps they'll start reading your copy more closely.

When you are finished writing your copy, look at it from the viewpoint of someone who skims it.

Do you have bold words, text in "break away" boxes, and sub-headlines that convey benefits to the reader? Can you both convey benefits and arouse curiosity to bring the skimmer into your copy?

If not, tweak your sub-headlines until they tell their own story about your product and arouse enough interest to bring the reader into the copy.

## How to Put Your Prospects in a Buying Mood

Here's one of the big secrets to creating compelling copy: **People buy because of their emotions and justify their purchase based on logic.**

For example, do you suppose that people buy Rolex watches because they keep exceptionally good time? Of course not. They buy Rolex watches because of the prestige.

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A person who buys a Rolex isn't pouring over the mechanical features of a watch to see what makes it a better watch than, say, a regular watch you can pick up in a department store for less than \$100.

Instead, he's imagining what his friends will say when they see that shiny Rolex on his wrist. He's imagining how women will flirt with him when he's wearing that watch. Maybe he's even imagining himself feeling an air of superiority over some of his business colleagues because this Rolex is a symbol of his massive success.

**It's that emotion that makes him buy this watch...** and he clicks that order button.

**But then his logical left brain kicks in.**

His left brain has no use for something that impresses women or business colleagues. In fact, if the customer really sat down and thought about WHY he wants the watch, he might feel a little uncomfortable. Let's face it, buying something to make others feel inferior isn't something we like to admit.

So his left brain justifies the purchase. What a great warranty! Look at the quality craftsmanship! And, my oh my, do these watches keep exceptionally good time.

Later on when he sees the bill for his watch on the credit card statement, he can justify the expenditure since he's had so many watches that quit on him over the years. But secretly he knows he really bought the watch for all those emotional reasons listed above.

And so it is with your prospect, no matter what you're selling. **You need to put your reader in the right emotional state.** Make them get emotional as they envision using your product.

**And then, yes, mention the features of the product too so that their logical brain can justify the purchase.**

Let's take a weight-loss product for young women, for example. The logical side of the brain wants to lose weight for health reasons. Yet if pressed, there are likely plenty of young women who feel invincible and can't even imagine health problems at their age. Still, it's a good way to justify spending a fortune on diet pills or other aids.

At the moment she's buying, however, she's approaching that "buy now" button in an emotional state. Maybe she can see the look on her ex-boyfriend's face the first time he sees her new drop-dead gorgeous body. There are some women who'll pay a fortune in hopes of living out that very fantasy.

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Or let's take a cookbook as another example. Logically, you'd buy a cookbook so that you have a variety of meals to serve your family. But emotionally, there's a part of the prospect who enjoys the praise he or she imagines receiving after cooking a particularly delicious dish.

Keep this in mind as you craft your letter. **Your goal is to get the prospect to imagine herself receiving the promised benefits of using your product... and whatever emotions she'll feel as she does so.** As you make your case and put your prospect into this emotional buying mood, **be sure to give the prospect enough information so she can back up her buying decision with logic.**

### **How to Craft Benefit-Packed, Curiosity-Arousing Bullets**

Nearly every sales letter you come across will include bullets that highlight the features and benefits of the product or service. **The reason you see bullets is because this is another way to draw the skimmers into your copy.**

Imagine instead that you listed your main features and benefits within regular paragraphs. Sure, the few people who read every word of your letter would be pulled from the headline right down to the order button, and they'll read everything in between.

But those who skim would see the headline, subheads, a few bold words, and the P.S. They are likely to miss the benefits of your product if they're hidden in a paragraph rather than put in an easy-to-read list. **And if the reader doesn't know how the product benefits him, he won't buy.**

**As such, the bullets are another extremely important part of the letter.**

Much of the selling happens within your  
bulleted lists of benefits.

This is the part of the letter where you are really able to **stir desire in your prospect** because he can really see what your product will do for him.

The bullets are so important that you should spend a great deal of time crafting this list of benefits. **Indeed, you can consider each bullet like a mini-headline** where you use your "power words" and promise a benefit in each bullet. If you list a feature of your product, try to weave in the benefit.

*For example,* a feature of a computer might be that it includes two gigs of RAM (memory.) The benefit of this RAM is that you can be sure all your software will run smoothly on your computer.



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*Another example:* If you're selling a report, one feature is that the report is short, perhaps only 20 pages. The benefit is that it's a quick and easy read for busy people - no fluff!

*A final example:* One of the poodle's features is that they don't shed. The benefit of this is that the owner doesn't have to spend an hour vacuuming the dog hair off the sofa.

In addition to weaving together benefits and features in your bulleted list, **you'll also want to arouse curiosity whenever possible**. If you're selling a book or other information product, this is extremely easy.

*For example,* you can have a bullet that looks something like this:

→ See Page 87 to Discover Which Diet Aid Doctors Everywhere are Calling the 'Miracle Fat Burner!'

The reason the above example is so compelling is because it's specific (see page 87); it uses power words ("discover"); it's backed by an authority figure (doctors); it uses social proof ("doctors everywhere"); and it arouses curiosity.

If you were looking to lose weight quickly, chances are, a bullet like this would certainly arouse your curiosity and increase your desire to buy the report.

Now think about your own product and how you can create benefit-packed statements and bullets that create desire and arouse curiosity.

## How to Lend Credibility to Your Letter and Prove Your Case

So far, you've crafted a letter that's pulled the reader into the copy, right down to your list of benefits where you intend to do some hard-core selling. But let's face it, in the back of your prospect's mind, she's probably saying, "Yeah right, this is too good to be true."

**And even if it's not too good to be true, some people simply won't believe you.** After all, anyone can put a letter on the Web and make whatever crazy claims he/she wants to make.

That means as you build your case, you need to do a few things: **Prove your case using facts and figures, be specific to increase credibility, and get testimonials from others.** The first and second item on this list may go hand in hand to further increase your credibility.

So what do I mean by "facts and figures?"

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Consider some of the examples you see in other advertisements. For example, you'll hear a statement that "four out of five dentists prefer this brand of gum."

AquaFina bottled water recently created a television commercial that talks about how many times they filter and purify their water.

Dove soap talks about being  $\frac{1}{4}$  moisturizing cream and being 99.9% pure.

All of these are good examples of using facts and figures to talk about your product. **You can talk about facts directly related to the product and/or how it's made or you can talk about a measurable change people experience when they use the product** (e.g., "95% of people who followed this diet lost 10 pounds in two months.)

You may even use some sort of case study or even a scientific experiment where you share **specific, measurable results** obtained by users. If you can get an unbiased third party to collect the data and report the findings, all the better... and all the more credible.

**The second way you can lend credibility to your letter and help prove your case is to be specific.**

Notice in the above Dove example that they claim to be 99.9% pure. For all practical purposes, they could call their soap 100% pure - and for all we know, maybe it IS 100% pure. But Dove chose to say 99.9% pure, as that's a more believable figure.

*Another example:* Let's suppose we go back to the example where a certain percentage of people lost 10 pounds on the diet. To increase believability, the marketer should state the exact figure, such as, "95% of participants lost 10.4 pounds in two months."

See the difference? Ten pounds is a good number - 10.4 pounds is even better.

*A final example:* Let's suppose you are talking about money. Instead of saying, "You can make up to \$1500 in your free time," be specific and say, "You can make up to \$1567.33 in your free time." Do you see how the more specific number is the more believable number?

**Finally, one of the very best ways to prove your case is to provide testimonials from others.**

Everyone knows that a marketer is of course going to toot his own horn about his products. That's to be expected, and many people view this with a fair amount of skepticism. However, when an unbiased third party recommends the product, we sit up and take notice.

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Think about it for a moment and you'll see examples of this in your own life. For example, let's suppose you saw an advertisement in the newspaper for a new pizzeria in your neighborhood. And let's further suppose that this new place claimed to have the best pizza in the region.

Would you believe it? Probably not. Naturally you would be skeptical since you know plenty of other places that serve good pizza.

Now suppose that you overheard two people on the street talking about the pizzeria, and they confirmed that "yes," the new place DOES have the best pizza in the region.

Would you believe it? Absolutely! After all, these two people have nothing to gain by sharing their experiences. Assuming these two people really are unbiased third parties, their conversation is likely to erase your skepticism.

And so it is with your sales copy. Every time you make a big promise or talk about a benefit, your prospect is saying to himself, "Yeah, right" with disbelief. **But the more proof you can roll out from unbiased third parties, the more credible you become.**

**TIP:** Since your testimonials can be used to back up your claims, one way to handle it is to **put specific testimonials immediately following specific claims.**

*For example,* let's suppose your sales letter for a diet book talks about how many pounds people can lose using your program. Immediately following this claim, you can use a testimonial that supports it: Specifically, where a third party talks about exactly how much weight they lost in what time frame.

*Another example:* Let's suppose you talk about how easy the weight loss program is to follow. People think diets are difficult, so they'll be skeptical. This then would be a good place for you to place a few testimonials from people raving about how easy it is to follow the diet.

## How to Overcome Your Prospect's Objections

You've created an attention-grabbing headline and an opening sentence that sets people up to go down your "slippery slide" from paragraph to paragraph, right through your benefit-laden bullets, through your emotional and logical "arguments," right down to where you prove your case.

**And yet as the reader goes through your copy, she is bound to have questions and objections.** If you were in a face-to-face sales situation, it'd be easy to handle these objections because you answer them as the prospect raises them.

It's a little more difficult in writing, since you have to anticipate their objections.

*For example*, if you have a large piece of exercise equipment, one objection that is likely to be raised is, "Will this fit in my home?" To that end, you need to tell the reader the exact dimensions of the equipment, as well as mention its space-saving design.

**One common objection is likely to be the price.** The person is probably thinking, "Can I afford this?" To counter that objection, you can take the price down to its smallest increment.

*For example*, instead of saying that a service is \$27 per month, you can say that it costs just 90 cents per day, less than a cup of coffee at McDonald's.

So how do you discover other objections? **Talk to a few people from your target market and try to "sell" them your product.** Take note of what questions they ask you. If even one or two people ask a question, chances are, others in your market will ask that same question as they read your copy.

## How Risk-Reversal Increases Conversions

Another element you'll want to include in the body of your sales letter is the "risk reversal," which in most cases, is simply known as the guarantee policy. The stronger your guarantee, the better. That also means the longer your guarantee, the better.

You see, if you have a short guarantee (such as one week,) some people will refund after only a few days because they may not even have had a chance to try out your product yet. So to be safe, they'll refund for fear of missing the one-week deadline.

Now you give a guarantee that's three months, six months, 12 months long -- or even a lifetime guarantee - and you'll find people aren't in any hurry to ask for a refund. Most of the time, your conversion rates increase and refunds decrease with the strength and length of your guarantee policy.

**While the increasing the length of your guarantee makes it stronger, there are other ways to make it stronger.** *For example,* assure people that it's an unconditional, no-questions-asked guarantee. Or if applicable in your case, you can offer a "satisfaction guaranteed or double your money back." Now that's a strong guarantee!

**Another way to frame your risk-reversal is not by offering a guarantee, but rather by offering a free trial up front.** This works really well with membership sites, software, and similar products. You give prospects three days or one week or a month free to try out the product ...and only at the end of the trial period are they charged.

This puts 100% of the risk on you, as they get to truly try out the product for free. As such, they don't have to worry about refunds not being honored and similar fears. Your conversion rate will increase using this method and your refund rate will basically be non-existent since consumers try before they buy.

Now let's move on to the last part of your copy...

## Step Three: Asking for the Order

You've sparked the interest of your reader and held this interest all the way through your copy. You've made your case, and you've even proven it.

Now what? **Simple: You need to ask for the order.**

This step -asking for the order- is simple and obvious. Yet amazingly enough, many marketers fail to take this crucial step.

Imagine if you went to buy a new car. The sales person tells you all the benefits of the particular model. She stirs your desire for the car. And then suddenly, the sales person stops talking, turns on her heel, and walks away.

You get left standing there, a bit perplexed about what to do next. If you're only mildly interested in the car, you may just leave the dealership. If you're extremely interested, you'll likely go looking for the sales person to ask how to purchase the car.

But here's the thing: even if you were only mildly to moderately interested in the car, had the sales person asked for your order, you probably would have made a deal on the spot.

The same goes for your sales copy. **Once you've aroused interest and made your case, you need to ask for the order.** You need to tell the reader exactly what you want them to do. This is referred to as the "call to action."

If you want them to phone in their order, then specifically say, "Pick up the phone right now and dial 1-800-xxx-xxxx to place your order...."

If you want them to order online, tell them exactly how to order (e.g., "Click the "buy" button below right now to reserve your spot....")

Marketers have actually tracked their conversion rates. **Those that have a direct and specific call to action outperform those without a call to action.**

That means you don't just say, "Order now," but you tell them exactly how to order now as described in the above examples.

**Being direct and specific does two things.**

**First, it increases conversions because there is no guesswork on the prospect's part.** You're telling them what you want them to do, and exactly how to do it, and when to do it ("right now"). Prospects aren't left wondering how to order.

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**Second, the call to action is important because it's all part of "assuming the sale."** Indeed, your entire sales letter should be written from the viewpoint that you're already assuming the person is going to buy.

*For example,* a good telemarketer or face-to-face sales person never asks if you'd like to order. They assume you are going to order. So instead of giving you a choice between ordering or not ordering, they give you a choice between paying cash or putting it on your credit card.

*Another example:* Have you ever bought shoes at a shoe store where a sales person serves you? The sales person never asks, "Would you like to buy these?" That gives you the opportunity to say no.

Instead, the sales person assumes you are buying them and asks you, "Would you like me to wrap them up, or would you like to wear them now?"

You need to use this same technique in your own sales letter, and especially when you ask for the order. **Assume they're buying.** Don't ask a question that can be answered "no," and thus, kill the sale.

Don't use weak language such as, "If you'd like to order...." That gives your reader an opportunity to think that perhaps they wouldn't like to order right now. Instead, assume the sale and say, "Click the buy button right now..."

Do you see the difference?

Be confident in your letter and in your call to action.

**People will follow you if you project yourself to be a strong and confident leader.**

## Creating a Sense of Urgency

Despite a strong and specific call to action, some prospects may decide they need some time to think it over. **The problem is that if they leave your sales page, they're very likely to forget about you.** They simply won't remember to come back... and that means you've lost a relatively easy sale.

So how can you decrease these lost sales? **By creating urgency in your offer.**

Generally, this is achieved in **one of two ways:**

- 1) By placing a deadline on the current offer;
- 2) By limiting the offer to a certain number of customers.

*For example,* you can offer a special introductory price or other discount price that's set to expire on a certain day. Perhaps you've seen online that some marketers say the price will increase at midnight. When you come back the next day, you're told the same thing.

Don't do this, as it will only destroy your credibility. Set a real deadline, and when the offer expires, increase the price as promised.

Another way to increase urgency using a deadline is to offer a bonus gift to those who order before a deadline.

Instead of using a deadline, you can make the offer available to a limited number of people.

*For example,* you can offer a low price to the first 250 people who order or you can offer a bonus gift that's only available to those who are among the first to order.

You can further increase urgency by showing how many are left at the special price or with the special bonus. For example, you may have originally offered this to the first 250 customers, but perhaps there are only 35 left. Let potential customers know this! They'll realize quickly that they should order now to avoid missing out.

But just as with time deadlines, be sure that you really do take the offer off the table once the specified order number has been reached. Some marketer's websites say that "only 35 remain," and yet you can visit the site months later and that number hasn't changed at all.



Obviously, this damages your credibility. **If you are going to offer something to the first X number of buyers, then keep an accurate count and remove the offer when the limit is reached.** If you keep count on the website itself, then update it regularly so that customers can see it is indeed a real offer.

## Final Words

Starting very early in life, you began using your persuasion skills to get others to give you what you wanted. It's very likely you still use these same skills on a weekly, if not daily, basis. Every time you try to bring someone to your way of thinking - whether it involves a political candidate or simply which restaurant to go to - you're using those persuasion talents.

As you've seen in this report, selling something via a sales letter is not much different than your daily persuasive activities among friends, family, and colleagues. **All you need to do is get and hold their attention, make your case, and then call them to a specific action.**

It may sound simple, but as you've seen, this formula is extremely powerful. Indeed, it could be worth thousands, perhaps even millions, of dollars to you.

The number one thing to always keep in mind is that you must frame your case from your prospect's viewpoint. As he reads your letter, he'll always be thinking, **"What's in it for me?"**

If you can answer that question to his satisfaction, you'll make the sale. If you develop a letter that answers that question to the satisfaction of a relatively small percentage of prospects, you can make yourself rich beyond your imagination.

As some of the greatest copywriters have said repeatedly, **you may be just one sales letter away from your fortune!**

Just keep these three simple steps in mind:

- 1) Get your readers' attention.
- 2) Make your case (convince the prospect.)
- 3) Ask for the order (call to action.)

John Delavera & **{--your-full-name--}**

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