

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your purchase of Randy Gage's Copywriting Stud Home Study Course.

You are about to embark on a journey into the psychology and strategies of Millionaire Copywriter Randy Gage as he shares with you his secrets of writing copy to sell more products and services.

As a trained copywriter, you can earn \$50,000 or \$75,000 a year, working part time from home in your bathrobe. If you're serious and work more, you can rake in \$250,000 a year or better. Best of all, you can do all this without a bunch of employees and overhead to eat up the majority of what you earn.

The possibilities that open to you once you learn these skills are vast, numerous, and very lucrative. Once you learn the creative writing and copywriting techniques in this copywriting course, you can:

- Create money-producing websites;
- Write a best-selling book;
- Create compelling sales letters, brochures, catalogs, and other marketing materials;
- Draft powerful proposals;
- Design ads that pull in orders like crazy;
- Create a product catalog that brings in tens of thousands of dollars a month;
- Earn passive income without working; and,
- Craft a sales letter that—with the right product at the right time—can make you a million dollars, euros, or pounds!

Each copywriting lesson consists of concepts and examples of a copywriting strategy and then practice exercises for you to complete to help you internalize each lesson. These lessons are for you to complete on your own, you don't need to send them in, nor will you be graded on them.

There is no "right" way to write copy. The only real outcome you are looking for is "effective." Meaning that the prospect buys the product. And of course you won't know that until you are writing real copy for the marketplace. That is why you test and track your results. However, know this:

The more you write copy, the better you will get at it. As long as you do the practice exercises in their entirety, your skills will improve. And by the end of the course, you will be writing powerful copy.

The program is designed to develop your copywriting skills from lesson to lesson, so we recommend returning to previous lessons for review prior to completing your next lesson.

Best of Success,

Ford Saeks

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Lesson One:

The Philosophy and Purpose of Effective Copywriting

Dear Colleague,

If you want to sell something with copy—anything—you have got to stop being so polite, correct and proper. And start to speak the way people do in the real world.

Which leads us to an interesting dilemma. Or two.

Such as how do you intelligently sell a product or service to predominately stupid people? And is it necessary to stoop down to the level of Jerry Springer, Fear factor and "the Osbournes" to do so?

Well indeed, those are some intriguing questions. Let's look a little deeper.

One of the first issues you will encounter in selling anything is the shrinking market of rocket scientists. Here's the reality...

Most people are dumb. I mean dumb as a post, dumb. And getting dumber. And the more intelligent you are, the easier it is to exploit the hapless, hopeless and helpless masses of mentally-deficient morons.

In America, the microcosm for the mass culture can always be found in the entertainment industry. Watch the movies, study the Nielson ratings and check out the New York Times bestseller list.

You will see that intelligent people like Jim Carey, Howard Stern, and David Letterman are making fortunes exploiting the appetites of a growing audience of functional idiots. And make no mistake; people like Stern and these others are brilliant. Usually genius.

And they have learned that the lower they lower the common denominator—the better it sells. Make a movie like *The Insider* and you'll garner lots of critical acclaim, but you won't sell much popcorn. Create *Dumb and Dumber*, *Austin Powers* or *The Anchorman* and you will take in hundreds of millions of dollars. It's like shooting fish in a barrel. It's the ultimate volleyball set up. Just spike it over the net and watch it drop for the point.

Aaron Spelling has become one of the most prolific and successful producers of all time creating cheesy tit & ass shows. Over the last couple of decades, to keep up with the mass market tastes, the shows have had to get more cheesy, show more flesh and have deteriorated to the intelligence level of a cucumber.

James Cameron takes a story about 1500 people who drown in a boat accident—crafts it into a film designed to appeal to your lack and limitation programming—and it becomes the highest grossing movie of all time. He personally makes \$200 million dollars—teaching you it's spiritual to be poor.

Now of course the same principles apply to the many of us that make our money selling information. It's pretty easy to pad your bank account selling the "lazy man's way to riches," no-money-down schemes and MLM programs where they "build your downline for you." Anthony Robbins has made millions exploiting weak-minded simpletons who are desperate for a guru to tell them what to think.

Now I use the word "exploit" judiciously. I say that because while technically it's true, in practice, it's another story. People like Spelling, Robbins or Rupert Murdoch don't really exploit people—the people willingly give themselves up for exploitation.

Thousands enthusiastically succumb to Tony's manipulation techniques, in exchange for the opportunity to learn a few themselves. Thousands more will willingly parade themselves as examples of people who cheat on their spouse, sleep with their pets, steal from their family, or spew venomous prejudice for the chance to appear on a syndicated television show.

Thousands more will perform the most embarrassing, inane or downright retarded things, in the hope of appearing on *America's Funniest Home Videos*, Letterman's Stupid Human Tricks or a multitude of similar shows on the Fox Network.

So what's all this mean to copywriting?

Simply that the more you skew your marketing to dimwits—the easier it is to be effective. And the more you exploit your marketplace's utter lack of discernment—the faster you will be successful. The more confrontational, strident, and vulgar your message is—the quicker the credit card orders start rolling in. In fact, here's an absolutely, fool-proof, sure-fire way to guarantee that you'll make millions of dollars:

Design your marketing strategy to appeal to the following two people:

Prospect # 1: Is a middle-aged man named Steve who goes to football games in January with no shirt on, and his team colors painted on his beer belly. He's too tired to make love to his wife and his idea of a perfect day off is having the house to himself, so he can surf the net and fantasize to pictures of nubile 15-year old girls. His favorite shows are COPS, Jerry Springer and pro wrestling.

He is not an evil man, in fact, quite the opposite. He is pretty much a peaceful fellow, other than macho bravado on Sunday afternoons when he's in a semi-drunken stupor hurling batteries and racial epitaphs against the players from the visiting football team. Other than that, he pays his bills, shows up for work on time, cuts his lawn regularly and he always tips the pizza guy two bucks.

Prospect # 2: We'll call Laura. Like her male equivalent, Laura is a likable person who gets along with most everyone. In fact, most guys look on her as "one of the guys," due to proclivity for wearing t-shirts with profane messages, her 2-pack-a-day habit, and her tough-talking exterior. In her single days, she was even more popular for her willingness to make out with certain guys around the trailer park.

These days, she's loyal to her live-in boyfriend Tom, even though he's an alcoholic, cheats on her regularly, and is sometimes abusive. She turns the other cheek because he's the father of her daughter, kind when he's sober, and takes her to *Red Lobster* on her birthday.

Laura has only a casual acquaintance with the dentist, and her favorite shows are COPS, Jerry Springer and Survivor. She is a waitress, but her dream is to open up her own business one day. It's just that after the government, groceries and Wal-Mart—there's never any money left at the end of the month.

So you see, making millions in marketing is easy. Simply tailor your marketing campaign to appeal to Steve and Laura. And the millions like them.

You appeal to their basest instinct. Sex. Consumption. Victim-hood. Lack and limitation. Show them how they can have all their desires now—and worry about paying for them later.

Sell them a car lease with no money down. Sell them furniture with no payments for a year. Extend them credit till they are spending 125% of what they earn. Market them Cheetos, Fritos, Doritos...chocolate

brownies with mocha-crunch ice cream, slathered in caramel, drizzled with chocolate and covered with marshmallow and whipped cream...Pizza Hut meat lovers pan pizza with extra cheese, stuffed crust. Then sell them diet Pepsi, herbal wraps, ephedrine supplements, buns of steel videos and liposuction. It's so easy it should be outlawed.

Ok, ok...I know what you're thinking...

You think I'm too cynical and I exaggerate. You know people like Steve and Laura exist, but you think they're a tiny part of the populace. And you think your market is more sophisticated. Educated. Professional.

Oh you silly, silly person.

You think because your guy watches Drew Carey instead of Jerry Springer—and your gal shops at Macy's instead of Wal-mart—they're above all that. But he's watching Carey 'cause Springer's on while he's at work, and she's shopping uptown because she's trying to outstatus the neighbors. They're driving Beamers instead of battered Chevys, but percentage wise—they're just as maxed out on their credit cards.

One day they'll meet at a meat-market singles bar, and they settle down to raise their 2.3 children. And as long as you keep your marketing at a level appropriate for prospects with a room temperature IQ—you'll sell them.

Which doesn't mean you should do it...

And brings us to the million-dollar issue. Which is this: Just because you can take candy from a baby, and get away with it - doesn't mean you should. Because even though you don't get caught, that doesn't mean there isn't a price to pay. There is. For you, your company or clients, and society as a whole.

Now, in case you're wondering, all of this has a lot to do with your copywriting...

As does another trend in mass culture. The edginess, push-theenvelope and mean-spiritedness of the entertainment and advertising media. In the eighties, what Johnny Carson did was boyish, playful and slightly mischievous. What Letterman, Leno and others do today is downright mean. George Carlin and Lenny Bruce pushed the envelope. Chris Rock, Dennis Miller and Russell Simmons blow it up with a nuclear warhead. Elvis Presley shaking his hips used to be scandalous. Now we have ads of half-naked people to sell microwaves.

Now don't get me wrong...

I'm not saying I want to go back to the way it was. I'm much more likely to be watching *The Sopranos* than some vapid rerun of Andy Griffith on the PAX Network. (I also happen to appreciate Dennis Miller as a guilty pleasure.) I've spent enough time in Europe to know that topless beaches and erotic TV channels are not going to be the end of the world.

I'm not advocating censorship or suggesting that we can turn back the clock. *In fact, that is neither possible, nor desirable*. We don't need laws to make Aaron Spelling, Tony Robbins and Rupert Murdoch illegal. <u>But you do have to think about how well you will sleep at night</u> if you make your money the way they do.

So I pose these questions to you...

What do half-naked, beefcake guys have to do with Samsung microwaves? Just how far are you willing to degrade yourself to make a sale? And if the only way you can get a prospect's attention is Beavis and Butthead vulgarity—is that really the customer you want?

There is certainly no doubt that the vast majority of boobs out there will respond to marketing geared to the basest level. <u>But for you to get</u> sucked in and pander to that diminishes you in two ways.

First, it takes all the challenge out of the equation. Selling "dream away the pounds" pills to chubby housewives is like having the only lemonade stand in the middle of the Sahara Desert. You lose your edge and there's no challenge in it.

More importantly—and the real cause of all my philosophizing this lesson—is the price it takes on your soul and the greater good.

Yes, I'm talking about social responsibility and the meaning of life. Because at the end of the day, you have to have some thoughts about whether what you do to earn a living contributes anything positive to the world community. You'll think less about money and more about meaning, or as my friend Nido Qubein would say, go from success to significance.

Now I'm sure when Aaron Spelling moves on to that great sitcom in the sky—the media outlets will mourn his passing as an American Icon. They'll talk about his success and his impact on the culture, and show clips from his shows from *Charlie's Angels* to *Beverly Hills 90210*. And most people watching will probably reflect in warm feeling of all the good times he provided them. And some of the rest of us will think, what a waste of talent.

Of course, it's not my job, or yours, to judge the lives that others lead. But it is our job to use discernment in the influences we follow, and the actions we take ourselves.

We can—you and I—choose to practice our craft with integrity and make a conscious decision to appeal to our market's higher aspirations, instead of pandering to their lowest instincts.

Now before you think I'm campaigning for sainthood - I readily accept my share of the responsibility for the downfall of civilization.

Those of you who have attended my \$10,000-a-person Boot camps have heard me relate the case study of my mega-successful "Are you a Schmuck?" ad. I have always pushed the envelope and I'm sure I always will. And my best marketing advice is for you to do the same. I can't begin to count how many times I have told a client, "If you don't get some complaints, we're doing something wrong."

One of the more successful letters I wrote for a recruiting manual talked about how it would help you attract prospects "orgasmic" with excitement. For every 5,000 letters that went out—2 complaint letters and 250 orders came in. I decided to put up with the complaints.

Today, more than ever, your copy needs to be bold, picturesque, and dramatic. It must sometimes conjure up painful or distressing images for the prospect. And you'll have to be blunt enough to get through his wall of self-denial, apathy, and fear of change.

This, of course, means giving him a headache—then selling him the aspirin. I'll never forget the campaign I did for a friend of mine with a hair replacement salon. He's gay and he wanted to target the gay market. I designed a two-page spread for the bar guides with the headline, "You're Bald, Ugly and Queer..." Underneath in smaller type was the subhead, "Fortunately for you—we can fix the first two." I thought we'd get a firestorm of complaints. Funny thing is, we didn't get any. And the ad was quite successful.

But here's the key...

Your job as a marketer is to get into your prospect's head and learn intimately what is causing him a headache. *Not to manufacture a new one, because there's no integrity in that.* (Example, programming kids to think they need cigarettes, drinking beer makes you popular, etc.)

Put yourself in your prospect's shoes and find out what is keeping him awake at night. Then, if your product can help him—make this clear to him in no uncertain terms. That may mean blunt, in-your-face, or outrageous copy. And probably does.

A plain vanilla, rational ad with all the logical reasons why your prospect should buy may not be enough. You're going to need to break through the clutter of other ads, the clutter in your prospect's mind, and his possible denial and apathy.

That is going to mean copy with emotion—usually charged, sometimes confrontational, and sometimes pushing the lines of good taste. Which of course, brings us back to the previous issue. Just how far are you willing to go—to make the sale? I'm not here to judge you, nor am I going to tell you what to do. Just do some critical thinking about the issue and know that everything has its consequences.

Truth is, I would probably not run the *schmuck* ad, or the *bald*, *ugly*, *queer* ad today. My consciousness is at a different level. I've been evolving my copy and my approach to appeal to a more intelligent demographic lately.

And you know what?

The response has been great on all fronts. It's really working, and I enjoy my work more and more. I also feel better because I'm bringing value to someone who wants it, not coercing some boob to do something he's not ready to.

Now be forewarned...

The market of thinkers is a lot smaller than the lemming market! But the good news is this. Thinkers don't need manipulative techniques to be sold. In fact, they don't need to be sold, period. If you show them a compelling reason why—they're happy to buy. And they have disposable income, buy often, stay loyal, and they're not looking for the

cheapest price. They look for people they trust, and the best value. Or in other words—they're the perfect customers.

This gets you out of the low price USP, and you can go after the high end of the market. And you'll find it's a lot more profitable to sell a smaller number of people at a better margin than to cut your own throat, trying to beat everybody else's low price.

This doesn't mean it will be easy. It's not supposed to be. You still have to:

- Write good copy;
- Call the potential problem or compelling benefit to the prospect's attention;
- Create word pictures in his mind; and,
- Give a call to action.

That doesn't mean get intellectual in your copy...

It means it's ok to target people who can string together a couple of sentences. It means you don't have to cater to functional idiots. But it does mean you have to connect the dots for your prospect. Make sure he or she knows what the problem is, and why your product or service can solve it.

Do this—and market products that offer real value—and you'll make a great living, and know you're contributing something of value in the big picture.

Food for thought...

Sometimes you have to push the envelope to break through the clutter. But a lot of the time, all that's necessary, is to do your job, and write good, benefit-driven, customer-centered copy.

Not enough about philosophy, let's talk practical application. The secret to effective copy is writing that is everyday, conversational copy. That means that it does not meet the standards of proper academic language. Things that would get a "D" in language class usually make a lot of money in the mail. Anything that your language teacher grades an "A" is virtually guaranteed to bomb in the mailbox.

You want to write the same way you would speak if you met your friends for a latte at Starbucks. At Starbucks you would never say, "The value of the product is determined by the..." You would say, "You'll love the way this widget..."

Regular conversation has dangling participles, run on sentences, oneword sentences and even one-word paragraphs. That's the way real people talk.

So if you want to sell to real people, you have to talk that way. All the time.

As we go forward, we'll look into other important components like the kinds of descriptive words you use, bringing emotion into the copy and other elements. But to begin, the most important thing you can do is let go of proper grammar, stilted prose and speak conversationally.

You'll see in the practice exercises I'm asking you to write up a few simple situations in conversational copy. Don't underestimate the power of this. Do it with all of your energy and purpose. You're probably anxious to get to the "exciting" stuff like headlines, offers and copy platforms. I understand and appreciate that. But we've got to get some fundamentals down first.

The other thing I want you to work on this lesson is the distinction between features and benefits. Features are the things about your product: It has 300 horsepower, it contains 15 special vitamins, it passed the GQ quality test, etc.

Benefits are inherently about the prospect. The things he or she will get if they get your product. So when you talk about benefits, you're talking about how the prospect will lose weight, get more energy, regrow his hair, make money, save money, or find a way to kill his mother-in-law without getting caught.

The secret of the most effective copy is that it leads with benefits, and validates with features.

Examples:

* You can trust our vitamins, because they have passed four rigorous quality control tests.

- * Your money is safe with us, because we are backed by \$8 billion in assets, have been serving our country for over 70 years, and all deposits are insured by the Federal Government.
- * Have no worries about your safety. Dr. Demento has performed more than 9,000 successful laser eye surgeries.
- * You'll enter highway traffic safely and easily, thanks to the 290 horsepower engine.

Just speaking in the prospect's language and focusing on the benefits to him or her is about 70% of effective copy. Yet most copywriters don't do even this. This stems from most people's misunderstanding of benefits.

They think a 400 horsepower engine is a benefit. But it's not. Fast acceleration is the benefit. They believe the fact a business is 25 years old is a benefit. It's not. The fact that the business has survived many storms and will likely be around to deliver service and honor a warranty is a benefit.

It's critical that you really understand the difference between these two things. So for your practice exercise this month, I'm also going to ask you to describe the feature and the benefits of five different products. Once you really have that down, we'll be able to do the really exciting stuff in the future lessons.

Until then, you have my...

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

Practice Exercises:

Part One: Conversational Writing

- 1) Write up to one page describing what you went through on the first day of school one year, back when you were a child.
- 2) Write up to one page describing what you went through on the first day of a job you have or had.
- 3) Write up to one page describing what happened around you while you were waiting for a bus.

And it's very important that you follow instructions. I asked for three different one page stories in this first lesson.

Don't write a four page story and do it in a microscopic font trying to make it a page. To sell product, our copy has to move the reader. And that means she has to be able to read it.

When we write sales letters, length is usually not an issue. But when you do space ads, magalogs, brochures, and classified ads, it most definitely is! When you market in these mediums, you will have to ruthlessly edit your material, to make your case convincingly, yet stay in the confines of what you have to work with. So start your practice right now with this first lesson.

Put a lot of emphasis on your openings. You want yours to be short, powerful, and lead people to the next paragraph. To do this, make your first paragraph short. Very short.

Many people today no longer read. Books scare them. So do long letters, and even long paragraphs. So make the first paragraph or two easy and non-threatening. Don't be afraid to do one or two sentence paragraphs.

Write up to one page describing what you went through on the first day of school one year, back when you were a child.	
	_
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	_

first day of a job you have or had.

Write up to one page describing what happened around you while you were waiting for a bus.

Part Two: Features versus Benefits

Write down two lists for each of the following five items. One list is the features, and the other list the benefits.

- 1) A Lamborghini Diablo
- 2) A Bible
- 3) The Berlin Philharmonic
- 4) A Teddy Bear
- 5) Online Bill Paying Service

Practice Exercise Tips:

Here are a few things to keep in mind for this and all your future projects. They will make your copy flow better, and avoid throwing up red flags that stop the reader in mid-copy.

ALWAYS put two spaces after every sentence. This allows the reader to breathe a little, and causes them to read in a cadence like the copy would be spoken. When you are debating whether or not to break a paragraph—always go with the break. You can't have too many paragraphs, but you can have too few.

Numbers one to nine should always be written out, while 10 and above you want to use the number digit. Exception: Never start a sentence with a number. So write it out, or find another way to word the sentence.

A Lamborghini Diablo

Features	Benefits

A Bible

Features	Benefits

The Berlin Philharmonic

Features	Benefits

A Teddy Bear

Features	Benefits

Online Bill Paying Service

Features	Benefits

LESSON ONE

LESSON ONE

LESSON ONE

Lesson Oni

Lesson Two:

Creating Headlines and Subheads that Grab Your Prospect by the Throat...

And have him hiking over the mountains to give you his credit card number!

Dear Colleague,

I see debates from time to time on what is the most important element of your copy. For me there is no debate.

It has to be your headline.

Why? Because it doesn't matter how great your offer is, how compelling the body copy is, or what a bargain your price is. If you have a lousy headline, no one will read further to discover the other stuff.

There are some other reasons as well...

A headline sets the tone of the copy, and puts the reader in a certain mindset before she even begins the copy. Let's suppose your headline is something like:

How Bad is Your Lawyer Ripping You Off?

The reader is likely approaching the copy with an expectation of finding out something her lawyer doesn't want her to know. An expectation of uncovering ways that she can save some money.

So assuming your product can address these issues, your prospect is already pre-framed for your offer before she begins your body copy! And that's a pretty strong position to be in.

Let's say your headline is something like:

Listen to the Birds Sing, as the Breeze Blows through Your Hair, Watching the Clouds Go By...

If you are selling a time share in Florida or Hawaii, or a resort vacation in Tahiti, this headline already sets the tone for you. Now you might argue that if the reader doesn't like the tropics and was more

interested in a visit to New York City they would be turned off by your headline. But who cares? Because that guy is not your prospect anyway.

Your job is to grab your prospect's attention. Anyone who is not a prospect isn't important to your copy. For example, let's say you are selling some kind of insurance for boats. A good headline for you might be something as simple as:

ATTENTION BOAT OWNERS!

Naturally anyone that doesn't own a boat will likely skip your ad. So what? You are not writing for everyone. You are writing for qualified prospects.

And that is the job of all your headlines and subheads. To get the prospect's attention. Get them to want to read the rest of the ad.

This is more important today than any other time in advertising history. Your prospect has never been more distracted, more assaulted with information, and more overwhelmed with stimuli.

If you are sending a sales letter, it's probably getting scanned over the garbage can. Your headline is going to get it read or canned. If you're doing a classified ad, it's probably competing with hundreds of other ads on just the same page. Even a four-color display ad in a magazine is fighting with dozens of other ads and dozens of pages of editorial for the prospect's attention.

Yet almost all copywriters—me included—devote far too little time to their headlines. In years past, I have usually got so enamored with my copy, I felt that I could get by with whatever headline popped into my head. And technically that was true.

My copy was for the most part very successful. And because I worked hard on strong opening paragraphs and have a strong "bucket brigade" pull through the body, I usually got the prospect going. But who knows how many I missed, because they never made it as far as the first paragraph.

I do know this...

In the last six months, I have made a very concerted effort to work hard on my headlines and subheads. And the results have been over the moon. So I'm not messing around any more. I spend as much time on

my headline as I sometimes do to write the whole sales letter. (Provided the letter isn't 40 or 50 pages of course!)

I think of some possible headlines before I start. I kick around at least 20, and decide on one as a working model. Then I start the copy. But all the time through the copy, I'm subconsciously thinking about better headline possibilities.

Then when I finish the copy, I will again cook around another 20 or so possibilities, until I feel I have got the best one. The one exception: When I have absolutely nailed it, and I know it. That could come at any time.

I know quality copywriters who write at least 100 different headlines for every piece they write. While I don't usually do that many, I can understand completely why they do. And it's probably a good thing when you are first starting out as a copywriter.

A couple years ago, I was conducting the Retreat for my Mastermind Council down in Costa Rica. We were kicking around titles for Bob Scheinfield's upcoming book. We had spent at least an hour on it, but nothing had grabbed anyone. He kept talking about how other success coaches all teach the same tired old techniques, but even together they aren't enough.

I asked him how many of those techniques there were. He thought about it, and came up with ten. It hit me! Your book is called "The 11th Element" I told him.

He liked it. Then being a very thorough, methodical guy, he wanted to brainstorm some other ideas. I told him that I wouldn't waste my time. I know a winner when I hear it. He pushed a little more, but finally saw that I was intransigent.

So he waited till he got home. Then he emailed me again, and said he liked the title, and felt it was 90% there, but just needed a little tweaking. I wrote him back that if he was going to perform an abortion on my creation, I wanted nothing to do with it. He finally relented, sent it to the publisher, they loved the title, and it recently became a bestseller.

Sometimes I hit the "Eureka" stage right away. Do you remember the subject line in the email I sent out promoting the Copy College?

"Testicle Grabbing Headlines, Offers Only a Moron Could Resist"

See in an ezine or email promotion, your subject line is the headline. It's what determines whether the prospect opens your email, or hits hard on the delete key. Many people receive so much Spam that the delete stage is the first part of their day.

My headline got the message read, and the overwhelming response I received is the proof. In this case, that was the first or second headline idea I came up with. I knew instantly it was a winner, and spent not another second on it.

You will develop this intuition, if you haven't already. You just know by the response in your heart rate, breathing and blood pressure that you've nailed it.

Other copywriters, some of them quite successful, would beg to differ with me. They say the only thing that tells the proof is a test. But I know what I know. And I know when I have a winner. And you will too.

The Different Types of Headlines...

There are probably as many different permutations of headlines as there are copywriters. But I do believe that they can be grouped into some major categories. Each of these types serves its own purpose, depending on the product, service, concept or idea you are promoting. You will likely find a type that you gravitate to, and it works well for you. That's fine; you are naturally going with your strength. But be open to using other types occasionally, as the situation calls for them.

Here are the main categories I would break headlines into, with a couple examples of each:

* The Question Headline

Do You Make These Mistakes in English?

Have You Ever Wondered What the Man Who Drives the Snowplow Drives to Work?

* The News Headline

Amazing New Medical Breakthrough for Fat Loss

New Fat Loss Breakthrough Validated by Medical Community

* The Benefit Headline

Lose 30 Pounds in 30 Days

Make Enough Money to Buy a New Car!

* The Scare or Fear of Loss Headline

If You Don't Act Now, You'll Miss this Chance Forever!

Just How Much Money Are You Losing?

* The Intrigue Headline

Can You Pass the Prosperity Test?

I Can't Believe it's Happening to You Too ...

* The Testimonial Headline

"My Hair Started Growing Back in two Weeks!"

"The Stains came Out and my Carpet Smells Fresh as a Spring Shower" Let's look at these types and explore their uses a little deeper...

The Question headline is an offshoot of the Intrigue one. It is very effective if you ask the right question, because the prospect is curious what the answer is. Especially if it is a question that is relevant to their life. Even better, you can use the suspense of the answer to pull the reader through the rest of the copy, not revealing the answer till late.

The News headline works very well when what you're offering is new or breakthrough. It conveys a sense of urgency and importance, even credibility.

You want these to be a "breaking development" kind of thing. Here are some of the actual headlines submitted from students in my Copy College when I gave them the same practice exercises you are about to get—a News headline for the Bible.

Wealthy Canaanite Business Man Fathers Illegitimate Son with His Servant

Son Tricks Blind Father and Steals His Twin Brother's Fortune

Ruler of Egypt Forgives His 10 Brothers for Selling Him to Slavery

Pharaoh's Daughter Finds Baby Boy Floating On the Nile River

Man Swallowed By Big Fish and Lives!

The Benefit headline is the old standby, tried and true. You have a hard time going wrong using this approach, because if the benefit is desirable, you seize the reader's undivided attention right away.

The Fear of Loss or Scare headline is another old standby. The fear of losing something is greater than the desire for gain for a large percentage of people. The idea of losing money or missing out on something is too powerful for them to resist checking out your offer.

The Intrigue headline is one I use a lot. It lets you flex your creative muscles, yet does the important job of pulling the reader into your

copy. The important criteria are that the headline really does arouse interest, and the interest is relevant to the sales message. "What Da Vinci Really Thought About the Pope" may get attention, but if you're selling microwaves, what's the point?

Don't misunderstand intrigue headlines. The idea behind them is not that you try and make the sale in the headline, but to just intrigue the reader enough so she wants to read the copy. So don't try and make the whole sale at the top, or you'll give away the product and lose the intrigue.

So:

Do You Know Which Color Diablo You Would Look Best In? Come Visit Us and We'll Help You Find Out.

... Is not an Intrigue headline. But if we cropped it to:

Do You Know Which Color You Would Look Best In?

...Then it could be a great intrigue headline. Here are some of the great ones I received from Copy College students:

Want to Feel More Uninhibited than Running Naked Through a Church? Try It with Only Your V12 On!

Ready for a screaming tax write-off?
Or are your lips sealed?

Can this exotic little number go home with you?

Or are you commitment phobic?

It Even Sounds Fast

The Testimonial headline is a good one to use when you need to establish credibility. It can be a testimonial by a celebrity, but more often, it's simply from a satisfied customer. This one you just about always include in quotation marks. A technique you can use in other headline styles, BTW...

I often will put quotes around a benefit, news or scare headline as well. It gives the appearance that the statement was made by somebody (must be someone important), so the prospect often gives it more weight.

The Scintillating Success of Subheads...

But headlines are not the only assault weapon in your arsenal of attention grabbing actions. Subheads allow you to expand and further what you're doing with your headline. You can bring in other elements, or simply continue what you started with the headline. Here are examples using some of our earlier headlines, but adding a subhead this time around:

Do You Make These Mistakes in English? Common errors that make you look ignorant!

Amazing New Medical Breakthrough for Fat Loss New treatment expels fatty tissue from your body

Lose 30 Pounds in 30 Days Wear your new bikini next month!

If You Don't Act Now, You'll Miss this Chance Forever!
Only three days left...

Can You Pass the Prosperity Test?
Or are you destined to remain poor your whole life?

"My Hair Started Growing Back in two Weeks!"

Massachusetts man goes from bald to looking like Don King!

Ok, enough of my scintillating insights! The way to learn headline writing is to write them. So let's get to that.

You'll find your exercises next. Have fun with it and get those creative juices pumping. I'll talk to you next month. Until then, you have my...

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

Practice Exercises:

I've given you six major types of headlines. Now I want you to create some, but do so for some specific products. And we're going to continue the process you started in lesson one. So here's the deal:

- 1. Please write ten INTRIGUE headlines for the Lamborghini DIABLO:
- 2. Please write ten SCARE/FEAR OF LOSS headlines for the TEDDY BEAR:
- 3. Please write ten TESTIMONIAL headlines for the ONLINE BILL PAY SERVICE:
- 4. Please write ten NEWS headlines for the BIBLE:
- 5. Please write ten BENEFIT headlines for the BERLIN PHILHARMONIC:
- 6. Please write ten QUESTION headlines for A PRODUCT OR SERVICE OF YOURS. If you don't have a product yet, write these for a product you want to develop in the future, or a cause or organization you want to promote.

EXTRA EFFORT... add subheads...

If you're really feeling creative and compelling, you can get bonus points for also including subheads where appropriate.

Final Thoughts:

When I offered lessons one and two to the people in my Copy College, a funny thing happened. In lesson one, everyone did a great job at conversational copy. Same thing in lesson two—until some of them got to the philharmonic copy. Then they started getting very proper and stilted. Big mistake.

Even people who attend the opera, drive Bentleys, and go to the symphony speak at a normal 8th grade level. Change your tone for them and you'll lose them. Now get started!

Write ten INTRIGUE headlines for the Lamborghini DIABLO:						

ONLINE BILL PAY SERVICE

Write ten NEWS headlines for the BIBLE

Write ten BENEFIT headlines for the BERLIN PHILHARMONIC:	

Write ten QUESTION headlines for A PRODUCT OR SERVICE OF

YOURS. If you don't have a product yet, write these for a product you want to develop in the future, or a cause or organization you want to promote.

Product / Service / Cause

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD

LESSON TWO

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD

LESSON TWO

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD

LESSON TWO

Lesson Three:

Creating Copy Leads that Addict the Prospect to the Copy . . .

Dear Colleague,

It's 11:17 pm, and another Hurricane is bearing down on Florida. I've got a plane to catch in the morning, but I can't leave with doing something very important...

Which of course is sending you lesson three, in your continuing quest at becoming a world-class copywriter. And what an important lesson it is. Because it's about another of the critical skills that separate the professionals from the wanna-bes.

Last time we looked at the critical issue of your headlines. And how important they are to get the prospect to read the first paragraph. Now we have to continue the process. We've got to create a first paragraph that no prospect could read without simply HAVING to read the second one.

This is what we do throughout our copy. Each feature is designed for one simple function: *To get the prospect to read the next section.*

We want a headline that makes him read the subhead. A subhead that makes him read the opening. And an opening that makes him read the second paragraph. And each paragraph after that has the same function; to pull the reader through.

We will use some other elements in the latter stages to create a "bucket brigade" flow to the copy. (This term comes from the days when fire fighters used a bucket line of water to put out blazes. Each person handed off to the next one.) That's what the sections of your copy have to do.

The headline is the most critical. What we're working on today is the second most important element. The opening is where the vast majority of readers will make a final decision on whether to explore the rest of your copy. So the opening has got to grab them quick, hard, and unequivocally.

For most beginning copywriters (and many experienced ones), opening a letter or ad is their hardest task. Once they get into the

stream of the copy, they do fine. But most people take a few paragraphs getting "warmed up." Unfortunately the few paragraphs it takes to do that are likely to be the ones that drive away a large percentage of the prospects.

No matter what medium you are working in, the prospect is busy, skeptical, and distracted. They open your sales letters over the trash. They scan a page in a magazine or newspaper before the commit to reading it. Their fingers are on the radio preset button or the TV remote, just waiting to punch.

So you don't have time to warm up. You have to grab them by the collar, throw them up against the wall, and practically shout, "This is important to YOU. Pay attention now!"

And that has to happen first with your headline, and then your copy lead. So how do you get right into the meat, and grab the prospect without meandering around, warming up?

I've found a way. A way that gets you immediately in a compelling narrative; one that commands the prospects attention. Not only does it work great for any copywriting, but you can use what I'm about to share with you to start a book, short story, or magazine article.

Simply I have created five copy lead templates. Use any one of them, and you are immediately into the copy narrative. And once you're there, the copy will flow naturally.

All are effective; it is simply a case of deciding, which one is appropriate for the offer that you are making. Often when a sales letter I'm writing "stalls" on me, I set it aside, and start a new one with a different type of lead.

Turn the page now to see the copy lead templates...

Here are the five copy lead types with some examples of how you might use them.

The Burning Question(s):

First, two questions, if I may...

Have you ever sat down and figured out exactly how much money you are losing because...

I have to ask. Do you realize the amount of money you're losing because...

Have you ever wondered why some people are successful, while others struggle just to make ends meet?

The Invitation:

You're invited to be one of the first in your area to receive...

It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to...

This letter is your personal invitation to...

I'd like to take this opportunity to extend a very special invitation to you. It's an invitation to...

The "Behind the Scenes" Story:

It was 8:00 on a Thursday morning. I arrived at my office to find...

I just got off the phone with Jim Smyth. He told me...

It's 10:30 on Sunday morning and the church bells are ringing in San Cristobal, Venezuela. I'm sitting on the balcony of my room at the...

It's about twenty after 11, on a Tuesday morning, and I'm thinking that life is pretty good. I got up at 9:30...

Well it happened again. I proposed a marketing strategy to a new client—who told me it wouldn't work.

The "You" Approach:

I am so certain that you'll be delighted with our landscaping service that...

If you are worried about the future...the market crashing...your savings wiped out...a long-term recession, then pay very close attention to what I'm about to tell you.

Executives like you are a very special breed. You're the kind of person that...

I'm writing because I believe that you are the kind of individual we are seeking. A person who...

The Take-Away:

Odds are that you don't even qualify for the offer I'm about to make. But on the slight chance that you are...

I doubt very seriously if you're the type of person to whom this letter applies. But the issue at hand is so critical that I'll take that chance.

I don't know if what I'm about to tell you is right for you. Frankly, it may be out of your budget...

Ok, now you've seen the five types of openings, with some examples of each. Let's get to the good stuff...your practice exercises.

Practice Exercises:

Start five different letters for this product, using each of the five types above. You're writing it for a very special product. You've just been hired to sell one of the Concorde jets that were recently retired. The price tag is a cool \$100 million, and only one is being sold. The rest are all going to museums. So imagine that you are writing to the prospect that has enough status, sophistication, and money, to purchase a product of this magnitude.

Now you will actually be doing two things for each opening, because in addition to your copy lead, you need to create a headline as well. Build on what you learned from lesson two.

You can use any of the headline types you prefer. But I want you to practice writing one lead of each of the five types I've shown you today. THE LEAD SHOULD ONLY BE ONE PARAGRAPH, TWO AT MOST.

If you get inspired and end up writing pages of copy...that's great. But the real thing to practice this month is the lead. You have to learn how to effectively capture the reader's attention, and pull her into your copy.

Other thoughts . . .

Like all projects, if you want your copy to be great, make sure you do the necessary research. If you are not really familiar with what the plane does and its storied place in history, you can't write effective copy.

This is not a little plane that people buy and fly themselves. It is a supersonic jet that travels at Mach 2.2 and requires the most skilled pilots in the world. It slashes hours off of long trips, and it has had a special mystique from the time the first one took off. This mystique only grew over time. I know people in London who went outside to see the plane every single day at the time it was scheduled to fly overhead. For years!

If you want to be a world class copywriter, you must be willing to research your product and learn everything you can about it.

Also, don't make the mistake of trying to close the sale in one paragraph. Deadly mistake. We're talking about a \$100 million jet here. You're not going to sell it with four or five sentences. Just

practice the opening here. Let the opening do its job—which is to get the reader into the rest of the copy.

For a product like this, I would lead with serious intrigue. Then we slather on all the prestige, exclusivity, and status. Next we go to tangible benefits. And only then would I start to sell the plane, reveal the price, etc.

The one exception:

Sometimes for a really high end product like this, you want to lead with the price, particularly if you are doing the "takeaway." In a case like this, you might do an opening something like:

"Dear Colleague,

"If you need to do an Easter egg hunt to find a \$10 million good faith deposit, this letter is not for you. Likewise if you can't afford \$100 million to be the only person in the world to own one of its most extraordinary treasures..."

In a case like this, you slap the prospect upside the head with the price. Otherwise follow the earlier pattern.

Your next lesson will arrive in a month. Until then, you have my...

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

The Burning Question:

Headline	
Dear Colleague,	
Dear Concague,	

The Invitation:

Headline	
Dear Colleague,	
3 ,	

The "Behind the Scenes" Story:

Headline	
Dear Colleague,	

The "You" Approach:

Headline	
Dear Colleague,	

The Take-Away:

Headline	
Dear Colleague,	

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD! **LESSON THREE**

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD! **LESSON THREE**

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD! **LESSON THREE**

Lesson Four:

Bringing Gut-Wrenching Emotion to Your Copy...

Dear Colleague,

I started doing my own ads back when I was in the restaurant business. Later I got involved in Network Marketing, and did a lot of promotions there as well. As with everything in life, we give what we want to receive . . .

Copywriting is no different. If you are a rational, logical left-brained person—as I was in those days—you naturally write rational, logical copy. It just seemed so simple to me. Because I evaluated all decisions based on the logic of the situation. I just assumed that this is what everyone did.

Yikes! What a bad assumption.

In fact, the people who decide things purely by logic are a minuscule minority. In further point of fact, you'll find that most people base decisions on the most illogical, irrational reasons imaginable. And if you asked them to justify this, they couldn't. Because first of all, they wouldn't even believe you if you told them they based their decisions on anything other than reason.

But just because they don't know why they really make decisions—don't think you can't know this. Because if you want to be a world-class copywriter, you must understand the psychological triggers that cause people to act. And here's the most important one:

People buy on emotion—and justify by logic.

They do not buy a Chagall painting because it's a good investment. They buy it because they want it in their home; the beauty and the joy it will bring them. Then they justify to themselves what a good investment it will be. The emotion caused the purpose—the logic justified it.

If you assault your prospect with all the rational, logical and sensible reasons she should buy your product or service, she might. More likely, however, she will make a mental note that it sounds like a good idea and plan to do it later. Which she probably won't.

Logic gives the reason to buy, but emotion creates the urgency. Imagine if Renee Fleming or Luciano Pavarotti simply read their lines from their opera performances out loud from the script. You might say the plot was interesting, but it's unlikely you'd stay with it.

Music is just notes on a page, until Carlos Santana plays them on his guitar. Movies are just words on paper until Robert DeNiro brings them to life. Information is just facts, until a compelling speaker transforms them into relevance. In all these cases, it is the emotion that takes the ordinary and turns it into magic.

Copywriting is no different. The difference between an adequate copywriter and a world-class one is the amount of emotion they create. Now you may be wondering how you create emotion if you are selling something plain like tires, bikes, or a restaurant:

Easy. You don't focus on the product—but how the prospect uses it. Which is always good advice in any case.

For tires, you could sell safety as the prospect transports her children, the fear she would face on a lonely road at night after she has a flat, or the danger of a blowout as she hurtles down the highway at high speed.

If you're selling mountain bikes, you don't sell gearshifts and pedals. You sell the high of riding your bike through the Appalachian Trail, the view from the top; the exhilaration of making it.

If you're a restaurant, you can do the easy thing, which is offering early bird dinners and cents off coupons. But a great copywriter would paint a picture of a warm, tender and intoxicating romantic dinner for two. Or in a family restaurant, the great times the kids will have.

Yes, the food in your restaurant is important, just as the performance aspects and features of your mountain bike are. But the best way to anchor the tangible benefits of those features is to make their case in an emotional way. Here's an easy way to do that: Start your copy with these words:

"Put yourself in this picture . . . ""

This is something I do quite a lot. It's a very unusual way to start a sales letter (which I always like to do), and it immediately gives me a

chance to start painting a picture. Here's an example of when I did this. Imagine if you are a professional speaker and you get a letter with the following opening:

* * *

Dear Colleague:

This is not hype—this is the real deal. How one man's making millions—and how you can duplicate him. Put yourself in this picture . . .

The owner of a speaker's bureau tells you what you have to do to get booked by her;

A man who has sold over \$500 million worth of books, tapes and videos through direct mail, infomercials and space ads, teaches you how to do the same thing;

A speaker who has worked in almost two dozen different countries shows you how she did that—and how you can too, if you desire;

You learn how to get on TV and radio; how to publish stories by you, and get stories written about you, from one of the world's premier experts;

You hear the man many consider to be the best platform presenter alive today, up close and personal—and learn from him what he did to get so good;

You learn marketing strategies from someone who came out of nowhere—to build a million-dollar-plus speaking business in only five years;

* * *

In this letter, I actually go on for over two more pages—painting the picture of what I want the prospect to visualize. This letter was directed to professional speakers to sell the Home Study version of my Speakers Institute, so I painted the appropriate picture they could expect to experience if they attended. You want to paint the picture of what your prospect can expect from your product or service. In this

case, it's not that emotional, but you can see how to use the device for storytelling. Next we'll look at working in some emotion.

Here's a very interesting twist...

Sometimes you don't tell the story of what they will get when they buy your products. Sometimes you tell the story of what will happen if they don't! Let's go back to our tire store analogy.

* * *

Dear Friend;

Put yourself in this picture . . .

You're driving along the Interstate, in a blinding rain. An eighteen-wheeler passes you by, sending a tidal wave of water across your windshield. Your thoughts turn to the safety of your children in the back seat. Suddenly—you hear a loud noise, and the steering wheel lurches to the left. The car is out of control . . .

* * *

This can be a very effective way to market. You don't sell the benefits of your product as much as you do the bad things that will happen if the prospect doesn't buy your product. Consider this if your product or service is one that can make a strong difference in a prospect's life or career

Here's another look at the concept. My friend Daniel Pagliari used to publish a magazine in the U.K. for network marketers. Like a lot of my protégées, he keeps a file of successful ads and letter from the past—which he uses as inspiration when he sits down to write copy.

He wrote a control letter to promote his magazine. The inspiration he used was the "tale of two men" letter, which is still a control today for *The Wall Street Journal*. It's a good example of storytelling and probably one of the most imitated letters of all time. I know of at least two or three dozen variations of the original. Here's how Daniel started his letter:

* * *

Dear Network Marketing Professional,

On a bright summer afternoon, 3 years ago, Mark and Jake joined The Average Network Marketing Company.

Mark and Jake were very much alike. They had more or less the same qualifications to start their own business and they both had similar backgrounds. They were full of dreams and wanted to attain financial security through network marketing.

Aah . . . the network marketing dream.

Recently they met at the annual convention of their MLM Company.

Although Mark and Jake are still very much alike (they are both happily married and have two children) today, there is a difference . . .

Mark still works two jobs, has many debts and continually struggles to meet quotas with his MLM Company. And all he has to show for three years of hard work is a £306.18 monthly bonus cheque.

Jake, on the other hand, dedicates *less* time to his business than Mark does. Yet, he has made it to the top position in his company.

Jake works only 3 to 4 hours a day on his business. He has implemented systems that have turned his business into a complete, turn-key, auto pilot operation. He knows that even if he goes on holiday for a full month, when he comes back his cheque will be bigger than the previous month. He has a constant stream of qualified prospects joining his downline, has gained the respect of his business associates and people follow him like a magnet. Jake has gained the recognition of his company and at the annual convention received the *Top Distributor Award*.

His cheque last month was for £46,568.77...

Why the Difference?

* * *

The letter did ok, but he wanted to improve the results, so he asked me to critique it. Take a look at what I did, and compare it side by side with Daniel's version:

* * *

Dear Network Marketing Professional,

At about nine o'clock on a balmy summer evening three years ago, Mark and Jake joined the same network marketing company. They had more or less the same qualifications, and they came from similar backgrounds. They were each full of dreams and wanted to attain financial security through Network Marketing.

Recently they met at their annual company convention. And while Mark and Jake are very much alike (they are both married and have two children) today, there is a very big difference in what has happened in the last three years . . .

For Mark, things are not going well. He still works two jobs, has many debts and continually struggles to meet his quotas with the company. All he has to show for three years of hard work, hundreds of meetings and a lot of rejection, is a £306 monthly bonus cheque. He has frequent arguments with his wife, most of them about money.

She feels he should be spending more time with her and the kids, but Mark is always attending another meeting somewhere. She can't understand why he's missing their children growing up for such a measly cheque each month. She resents it, and the bitterness is tearing into the fabric of their marriage.

Jake, on the other hand, actually dedicates less time to his business than Mark does. Yet, he has made it to the top position in his company. He quit his day job a year ago, so he has breakfast with the family and takes his kids to school every morning.

He takes his family on several holidays a year and is able to provide a life of security, without the stress of financial pressure. Because he's been there at the important times in his children's life—he has a wonderful relationship with them. His family is

happy and well adjusted, and they live in a beautiful neighborhood with good schools and nice neighbors.

Jake works only 3 to 4 hours a day on his business. He has implemented systems that have turned his business into a complete, turnkey, auto pilot operation. He knows that even if he goes on holiday for a full month, when he comes back his cheque will be bigger than the previous month.

He has a constant stream of qualified prospects joining his downline, has gained the respect of his business associates and people follow him like a magnet. Jake has gained the recognition of his company and received the Top Distributor Award at the annual convention. His cheque last month was for £46,568.

What happened?

* * *

Now of course I simply expanded the story, and I tried to convey what these guys (and their family) might be feeling in this situation. That emotion makes the story much more impactful.

In each situation you write about—no matter what the product or service is—ask yourself what is the inherent emotion involved.

When I coach copywriters, the most common comment I make is, "Give me more emotion." Most people today have distanced themselves from their emotions. It's a protective mechanism that a dysfunctional society creates.

Here's the symptom when you're writing copy:

You write about all the physical stuff. The window rattled. You saw the shadow of the burglar, the room was hot, the phone was out of reach, etc. This is all PHYSICAL stuff. The history report of what happened.

All good, all necessary. But I need FEELINGS!

What were YOU feeling when you saw the shadow of the burglar? How was your breathing? Your heart rate? Perspiration? What was racing through your mind? Did you think you were going to die?

When you tell the reader about your deepest feelings, then they can really identify with you. You have a true, supernatural connection. But you have to be vulnerable and reveal yourself if you want this bond to happen.

And once this bond happens, magic happens! That is the copy that moves heaven and earth, because you have a rock-solid connection with the reader that can't be broken.

Real world class copy touches people on an emotional soul-to-soul level. But to do that, you must take off your mask and be willing to reveal yourself in total and brutal honesty. But once you do that, your copy breaks through to the ultimate response levels. Because it is speaking to humans about the real human condition.

You'll find your practice exercises next. As you do them, keep thinking about how you might bring in the emotional element.

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

Practice Exercises:

 Write ten words that convey great emotion to you. They can be happy, sad, terror or anything in between. Mainly I am looking for words that instantly trigger some emotion. 	

2. Write one paragraph on the time you were the happiest in your life.	

Write one paragraph on the time you were the saddest ion your life.	
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4. Write one paragraph when you felt the most terrorized in your life.				

Write one paragraph on when you felt the safest in your life.				

Lesson Five:

The Bucket Brigade Flow . . .

Pulling the Reader through Your Copy

Dear Colleague,

Now we get to have some fun! This lesson we work on the copy devices that pull the reader through your copy, and get them to the point where they are taking out their credit card.

Your **headline** grabbed them by the throat. Your **subhead** intrigued them to read further. Your **opening paragraph** hooked them into the letter. Now you've got to bring him or her through the rest of the story:

The features of the product, the guarantee, the ordering details, and the call to action. This is no small task, and it's the area where most copywriters fall down. And the area where the world class writers shine...

So how do they do it?

Well a lot of it comes from simply writing in conversational style, the way we learned in lesson one. Because when you write the way people actually speak, that means you will drop some sentences right in the middle. Pick up others in the middle.

Have one word sentences. Or even paragraphs.

And that cadence will naturally work to bring the reader through your copy. Because they will read it the way you speak it; and no one likes to lose a conversation in the middle. (Which is why you should always put two spaces, not one, after each sentence.)

Now here's your first insight: Stop and reread the first seven paragraphs I've written so far. And notice how they start and end, how long they are, and the way they feed to each other. Do that now.

Now think back to the copy you've written in this course so far. I bet the vast majority of it is has paragraphs that are much longer than these. They are harder on the eyes. They scare the reader. And they deaden the flow.

So this month I want you to work on shorter, one-thought paragraphs. Varying the length of the paragraphs. And PLEASE – give me some one or two word paragraphs!

You're not getting paid by the word. You get paid for making the sale. And to sell, you have to write the way you speak.

The other weapon you have is a simple, but very powerful one. *Punctuation.*

If you study my most successful sales letters, you'll find that I use the ellipses extensively. (. . .) It is my most important copy flow device, because it alerts the reader that there is more to come, and naturally leads to the next paragraph. There are not too many people alive who can read a paragraph ending in an ellipsis, and not go on to read the next one.

I like to use hyphenated sentences. And when I need a slightly longer pause, then I use the "em-dash" (which is the long hyphen). If you have a main thought—but want to take a detour—you can use a double hyphenated sentence like this.

Helpful Hints:

- Ellipses dot dot dot . . .
- Em-dash a longer hyphen.

If you use Microsoft® WORD to write copy, you can create an Em-Dash automatically by tying a word, then press "dash dash" (keys) without any spaces before or after and the next word in the sentence. WORD will automatically replace the "dash dash" with an Em-dash.

Plus, if you're using Windows® you can go to Start >> Run >> and type "charmap" and then search for the Em-dash Character. Don't get hung up on the technology, but remember that punctuation is a power tool to help the reader get through your copy.

The analogy that applies here comes from the days of volunteer firefighters, before fire hydrants and long hoses. They use to form a

line of people, and pass the buckets of water to the front, and the empty ones back to get refilled. This was called a bucket brigade. You want your copy to have a bucket brigade flow that pulls the reader through it.

Here are the instructions for your practice exercise:

Write the first page of a sales letter. Do this for a product or service of yours that you have, or want to develop. ONE PAGE MEANS ONE PAGE! Do not try to jam three pages worth into the space.

Start with a headline and salutation. If you want a subhead, use one of those also. Then pick one of the template openings you learned in the earlier lesson shown on the next couple of pages. And make sure you have at least one paragraph that is just one word or one sentence.

I want to reiterate that it is important that you don't try and cram more words into one page just to show you can write. If you want your copy to pull, you have to let it breathe. The more space you leave, the faster you pull the reader through the copy.

So please don't try to dazzle with quantity. Go with quality. I want you to focus on the most compelling first page you can put together. And the most important consideration I want you to work on is the flow of the copy; how each paragraph pulls through to the next.

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

Here are the five copy lead types from lesson 3 for your review.

The Burning Question(s):

First, two questions, if I may...

Have you ever sat down and figured out exactly how much money you are losing because...

I have to ask. Do you realize the amount of money you're losing because...

Have you ever wondered why some people are successful, while others struggle just to make ends meet?

The Invitation:

You're invited to be one of the first in your area to receive...

It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in a once-in-alifetime opportunity to...

This letter is your personal invitation to...

I'd like to take this opportunity to extend a very special invitation to you. It's an invitation to...

The "Behind the Scenes" Story:

It was 8:00 on a Thursday morning. I arrived at my office to find...

I just got off the phone with Jim Smyth. He told me...

It's 10:30 on Sunday morning and the church bells are ringing in San Cristobal, Venezuela. I'm sitting on the balcony of my room at the...

It's about twenty after 11, on a Tuesday morning, and I'm thinking that life is pretty good. I got up at 9:30...

Well it happened again. I proposed a marketing strategy to a new client—who told me it wouldn't work.

The "You" Approach:

I am so certain that you'll be delighted with our landscaping service that...

If you are worried about the future...the market crashing...your savings wiped out...a long-term recession, then pay very close attention to what I'm about to tell you.

Executives like you are a very special breed. You're the kind of person that...

I'm writing because I believe that you are the kind of individual we are seeking. A person who...

The Take-Away:

Odds are that you don't even qualify for the offer I'm about to make. But on the slight chance that you are...

I doubt very seriously if you're the type of person to whom this letter applies. But the issue at hand is so critical that I'll take that chance.

I don't know if what I'm about to tell you is right for you. Frankly, it may be out of your budget...

Practice Exercise:

Write the first page of a sales letter. Do this for a product or service of yours that you have, or want to develop.

Start with a headline and salutation. If you want a subhead, use one of those also. Then pick one of the template openings from page 4 or 5. And make sure you have at least one paragraph that is just one word or one sentence.

-	

Lesson Six:

Setting the Table . . .

Painting the Picture of the Problem . . . or the Salvation!

Dear Colleague,

This lesson we will build even more on your past lessons, and also enter some exciting new territory in terms of great copywriting. We're going to practice the core base of all copywriting. This is what I call "the premise and solution."

I believe this premise and reaction is critical to all great copywriting. The premise is either the amazing benefits you are promising the prospect from your product—or the harrowing consequence he will face if he doesn't get your product.

So the premise can either be good:

Make more money!

Lose weight for the holidays!

Learn how to play the piano.

Or the premise can be bad:

How much money will you lose?
Will you be a victim of skin cancer?
Don't miss the best investment opportunity in ten years!

In other words, the premise you create is either a benefit to move the prospect toward, or a fear to move away from. Both are effective.

I'm a positive guy, so I usually use a move toward benefit approach. But not always. Some products just naturally call for a move away from fear approach that works better for them. Use whichever one

works best for you. (Sometimes you will use one, and bring in the second one in a supporting role later in the copy.)

But there's another part of the equation. The presentation of the solution...

Of course the solution is your product or service that you are marketing. But here is the key—the thing that separates world-class copywriters from the ordinary: The ordinary guys usually just introduce their product or service from the start.

The world-class copywriter first sets the stage with the premise—and only then introduces the product. And then only as the solution to the premise. The product is the thing that will get them the benefit they are drawn to, or protect them from the fear they are running from.

This is extraordinarily powerful. And one of the best ways to make your copy grab the prospect by the throat. Think about the difference:

Suppose you get a letter that begins with something like this below:

Dear Colleague,

We'd like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. We're "Johnson and Schmidt," a law firm that specializes is estate planning. . .

* * *

You see that kind of opening all the time. Yawn. Now look at the same thing, but using a premise and solution approach:

How Much Money Will You Donate to the Government... Instead of Leaving it to Your Family?

Dear Colleague,

Did you know that estate taxes and probate fees could steal 10 or 20 percent of the money you want to leave to your heirs? So if you have \$500,000 in your estate, fifty to hundred grand, gone. Poof!

Donated to the government, so they can buy \$300 ashtrays, \$2,000 toilet seats, and more retirement programs for politicians. Your money is slashed right off the top, taken from

your intended recipients, and squandered by the government hacks.

Fortunately, it doesn't have to be that way...

Let me introduce Johnson and Schmidt. We're a law firm that specializes in estate planning. We can help you keep your money out of the greedy hands of pillaging politicians...

* * *

Do you see what a powerful difference it makes? Instead of just introducing the product out of the blue, the premise puts it in perspective. Even if the product and its benefits are great, it will always be more powerful if you present a premise first, then the product as solution. So that's what you're going to do this lesson!

Now notice that you can set the premise with any one of the five template openings I gave you in previous lessons. Let me give you some examples, using the same situation as above, the estate planning law firm:

The Burning Question Opening:

Dear Colleague,

Do you realize how much of your hard-earned money will end up eaten up in estate taxes instead of going to your spouse and children?

I bet you would be amazed to learn just how much of your money gets frittered away in probate costs, inheritance taxes, and legal fees. I've seen people lose more than half a million dollars, right off the top!

But fortunately, that doesn't have to happen to you. I'd like to introduce Johnson and Schmidt. We're a law firm that specializes in estate planning. We can help you keep your money out of the greedy hands of pillaging politicians . . .

* * *

The Invitation Opening:

Dear Colleague,

Because of your position in life, you're invited to a very special, invitation-only event. This event is for people who want to protect their wealth, yet keep it growing consistently. People who want to provide for their spouse and children, long after they are gone.

If you have loved ones you want to provide for, this may be the most important letter you've ever read. Please let me introduce Johnson and Schmidt. We're a law firm that specializes in estate planning. We can help you keep your money out of the greedy hands of pillaging politicians . . .

* * *

The "Behind the Scenes" Opening:

Dear Colleague,

I just got off the phone with a grief stricken daughter who just lost her father. Of course her loss was devastating. But it only got worse . . .

Turns out her father hadn't done proper estate planning. Like many people, he thought having a will was enough. And what a tragic mistake that turned out to be.

Even with a will, you'd be amazed how much of your hardearned wealth gets bled off by probate costs, inheritance taxes, and legal fees. I've seen people lose more than half a million dollars, right off the top!

But fortunately, that doesn't have to happen to you. I'd like to introduce Johnson and Schmidt. We're a law firm that specializes in estate planning. We can help you keep your money out of the greedy hands of pillaging politicians . . .

* * *

The "You" opening:

Dear Colleague,

You and your family could be at serious financial risk right now. The wealth you have worked you whole life to build, could have a large chunk of it snatched out of your estate at your death. Money you set aside to protect and provide for your children could instead be highjacked to fund another ridiculous government program to study the flow rate of ketchup!

Even if you have done a Will, you'd be amazed how much of your hard-earned wealth gets bled off by probate fees, inheritance taxes and legal fees. I've seen people lose more than half a million dollars, right off the top!

But fortunately, that doesn't have to happen to you...

I'd like to introduce Johnson and Schmidt. We're a law firm that specializes in estate planning. We can help you keep your money out of the greedy hands of pillaging politicians...

* * *

The Takeaway Opening:

Dear Colleague,

You may not be at the level of financial status for the program I'm about to tell you about. In fact, it's only designed for those that have reached the pinnacle of wealth. If you don't qualify, please accept my apologies for bothering you. But on the chance you do, pay very close attention to what I am about to reveal to you.

Because if you have worked hard and build up a sizable retirement portfolio, and want to provide for your loved ones after your death, this may be the most important letter you have ever read.

You and your family could be at serious financial risk right now. The wealth you have worked you whole life to build, could have a large chunk of it snatched out of your estate at your death. Money you set aside to protect and provide for your children

could instead be highjacked to fund another ridiculous government program to study darter snail migration!

Even if you have done a Will, you'd be amazed how much of your hard-earned wealth gets bled off by probate costs, inheritance taxes, and legal fees. I've seen people lose more than half a million dollars, right off the top!

But fortunately, that doesn't have to happen to you . . .

I'd like to introduce Johnson and Schmidt. We're a law firm that specializes in estate planning. We can help you keep your money out of the greedy hands of pillaging politicians . . .

* * *

Notice that in each of these, we set the premise first. This serves to get the prospect's attention, and let her know that this matter applies directly to her. Then we introduce the solution, which in this case is the estate planning firm.

See how easy that is? Of course you do! Now I want you to do it. To flex your copywriting muscles and get some great practice that will serve you well in the years ahead.

So here are your practice exercise instructions:

There are five parts. Please make sure you do all five!

- 1) Create a headline. (Any type you choose, but keep in mind what kind of opening you are going to be using.)
- 2) Write a salutation. ("Dear Colleague" is fine.)
- 3) Set the premise using on of my five template openings. Either talk about a benefit they will get, or a problem they will want to avoid.
- 4) Introduce the product as the solution. Just present what the product is, and write a sentence or three, on how it can help the prospect. Stop writing there. Then do step five:
- 5) Go back to what you have written so far, and select portions of the type to be the "internal message."

The internal message is the text that you highlight with CAPS, *italics*, **bold** or <u>underlining</u>. This gives certain text more power. You use this to pull readers into the copy farther, and to get "scanners" to decide to read the whole letter.

DON"T OVERDO IT!

Never use more than one highlight. If something is bold, you don't need to underline it too. Don't highlight too much, or else it seems nothing is highlighted. So use it like a rapier. Just the things you want to really stand out and grab the prospect.

We'll be working with the internal message more in the lessons ahead. But I want you to start practicing with it now.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You don't have to write pages of benefits on the product and finish the sales letter. Yet. Just get the premise and solution part down now. And we'll go into the later stuff in the next lessons.

Please follow these instructions exactly. Don't try to close the prospect and everything else that would come in a complete letter. I know you want to naturally finish the process and write the whole letter. But you are not ready to do that yet. There are many other components of world class copy I haven't introduced to you yet. And I want you to learn this important one completely first. So please do exactly as I instruct.

Oh and one other thing . . .

I didn't tell you what the product was that you will be presenting as a solution. Let me do that now: The product you are writing this sales letter for is a toothpick! Have fun!

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

Practice Exercise:

The product you are writing this sales letter for is a toothpick!

- 1) Create a headline. (Any type you choose, but keep in mind what kind of opening you are going to be using.)
- 2) Write a salutation. ("Dear Colleague" is fine.)
- 3) Set the premise using on of my five template openings. Either write about a benefit they will get, or a problem they will want to avoid.
- **4) Introduce the toothpick (product) as the solution.** Just present what the product is, and write a sentence or three, on how it can help the prospect. Stop writing there. Then do step five:

portions of the type to be the "internal message."					

5) Go back to what you have written so far, and **select**

Lesson Seven:

The Offer Elements

Making an Offer Only a Moron Could Refuse

This lesson I would like to look at some other critical elements in the copywriting process. More specifically, the ones related to your offer. These elements are necessary to all successful copy messages. The first of these is the price.

Obviously you must give the price of the product or service you are selling if you want to get an order. But just giving a price isn't enough. You must lead up to it, and justify it. In fact, you want to do much more than justify it. You want to show that your value many times exceeds the price. (And if it doesn't, you need to rethink your product.)

Remember that when you write a sales letter or website copy, the prospect won't be there to ask you questions. And if she has unanswered questions, she won't buy. So you have to ask and answer the questions for her. So to lead to the price, I often just ask the question:

"So what's the cost?"

Because at that point in the letter, that's the question the prospect will want to ask. So when it gets to that point, you must say that or something similar. Here are some other examples of price segues:

"So you may be wondering about the cost..."

"So what's the investment?"

"At this point, you're probably wondering how much it will cost to get started."

You might do a special offer on the price. You may have a list price of \$47, but be offering a special launch or introductory price of only \$37. You might have one price but offer an early bird special for five days. Or a discount price for preferred customers.

Of course if the price is a special offer only available for a limited time, that helps create a sense of urgency and usually builds response. It's

almost always good to put the word "only" before the price. Even if your price is \$5,000, it's still "only" if you have demonstrated that you are going to give more value than that.

So here is an example of what that might look like:

* * * * *

So what's the cost?

A lot less than you may think. Because you are a preferred customer of Gage Direct, you can purchase the widget for only \$497. Which will pay for itself the first time you use it to perform open heart surgery on yourself. In fact, it will save you thousands of dollars in medical bills!

* * * * *

Here is another example:

* * * * *

So what's the investment?

Glad you asked. Because I think you'll agree that this widget may be the best investment you make in your business this year. You can get our widget for only \$497. Which is a savings of \$50 off the regular retail price.

And of course the widget pays for itself every time you use it. A one-time invest of \$497 may end up saving you \$5,000.00 or \$10,000.00 a year!

* * * * *

Here is another example. One where the value provided isn't a cash return, but simply the pleasure the product provides. And it's an example of creating urgency with the price:

* * * * *

So what's the cost?

So low, it will probably shock you. You can buy this original painting by Andrew Wyland for only \$89.000. Which is nothing, when you think of the joy having it in your home will bring you over the years. And the prestige of owning a Wyland original.

You'll beam with pride every time you entertain in your home, as guests "oh" and "ah" over this beautiful work of art.

But you have to act quickly...

Our annual gallery sale lasts only five days. And of course there is only one original. Once it's gone, it's gone.

* * * *

Now the next element, closely related to price, is the offer. In addition to giving the product a price and justifying it, you might sweeten the deal with a special free gift or bonus premium to enhance the offer. This is more of a direct marketing lesson than a copywriting one. But I wanted to share it with you. Because when you are in charge of creating the product, or developing your own, offering a premium almost always boosts response.

Many of you are information entrepreneurs, where this strategy is very effective. If you are selling a CD album, book or multi-media product, a Special Report can jack up response greatly. And a Special Report can usually be produced for a very low cost, but have a high perceived value.

Even better...

You can offer your product with a premium and a guarantee. And then tell your prospect that if he doesn't like the product, he can send it back for a complete refund, but keep the bonus for his trouble. This makes your offer even better than risk free – and is the kind of offer only a brain-dead moron could resist!

So here's an example of doing this:

* * * * *

So by this point, you're probably wondering about the cost...

I think you're going to be pleasantly surprised. Because the publisher is offering a special introductory price. For the next five days (5), you can purchase "Secrets of Becoming a Pool Boy" for only \$297. And that includes, the five DVDs showing you exactly what kind of Speedo to wear, the audio CDs explaining when a thong suit is appropriate, and the 112-page binder, which details how much sun block to use, which chaise

lounges offer the most comfort, and the best pick up lines to get chicks.

But you have to act fast...

This special introductory offer is only available from the publisher for the next five days. After that, the price goes to the normal cost of \$397. So you'll save \$100.00 if you get it now. I'll even sweeten the deal for you...

If we receive your order within those five days, I'll even throe in an extra bonus for you. It's a 68-page Special Report titled, "Poolside Drinks: How to Get Drunk for the Least Amount of Money." This information-packed Report compares margaritas with pina coladas and everything in between. You'll know when you're getting a great value, and when you're just paying to get an umbrella stir stick. You'll discover which drinks have the highest alcohol content at the lowest cost. This Report will help you get the most enjoyment possible out of your life as a poolside gigolo.

So I think you'll agree, that "Secrets of Becoming a Pool Boy" is the best investment you'll make this year. In fact, I'm so confident you'll love this powerful resource...

I'll take all the risk!

Order "Secrets of Becoming a Pool Boy" today, for the special introductory price of only \$297. Use it for 30 days and see for yourself. If you don't think it can make you a rich, lazy pool boy, send it back and we'll send you a complete refund. And you can keep the bonus Special Report, "Poolside Drinks: How to Get Drunk for the Least Amount of Money" for your trouble. I can't be fairer than that!

* * * * *

Now you see in that example, we:

- Led into the price
- Justified it.
- Created an incentive to act fast
- Reversed the risk with a guarantee
- Improved the offer with a free bonus

Now it's time for you to work on the Practice Exercise.

Practice Exercise Instructions:

I have started a sales letter on the next page. I want you to continue it. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FINISH IT. I don't want you to, as there are other elements you'll learn about in future lessons. But I do want you to finish all of the offer elements we worked on this lesson.

So start with the copy on the next page, "Will You Own This One-in-the-World Treasure?", then add:

- 1) The price segue.
- 2) Justify the price.
- 3) Give an incentive to buy now.
- 4) Offer a guarantee—or tell them why you aren't offering one.
- 5) Add a bonus premium.

Stop there and when you feel you've covered those elements you're ready for the next lesson. Remember, just one to two of new pages of practice max..

You will find that after the headline, these offer elements are probably the most important ones in your copy. So don't rush these. Take your time, edit ruthlessly, and make sure you keep the flow strong here. Show the prospect why your product or service is something she simply can't refuse.

Please follow these instructions exactly. Don't try to finish the letter yet. I know you want to naturally finish the process and write the whole letter. But you are not ready to do that yet. There are many other components of world class copy I haven't introduced to you yet. And I want you to learn these offer elements completely first. So please just go as far as I ask until you've practiced these components.

Practice Exercise:

Start with the copy on the below, then add:

- The price segue.
- Justify the price.
- Give an incentive to buy now.
- Offer a guarantee—or tell them why you aren't offering one.
- Add a bonus premium.

Will You Own this One-in-the-World Treasure?

Dear Colleague,

It's been immortalized in song, highlighted in movies, featured on TV, and sought after by people around the world. It turns heads wherever it goes. It stops conversations in mid-sentence.

Wherever it is, crowds draw, and the buzz starts. It's partly the object itself, and a generous dose of the man who owned her. Because even decades after his death, that man has an influence that transcends time.

That man is Elvis. And the object I'm referring to, is the legendary pink Cadillac he drove around in. The actual car that graced the driveway of Graceland.

This extraordinary car has carried movie starlets and presidents. Lovers and friends. And of course, "the King."

This is the car Elvis drove until his untimely death. The car that holds more history than probably any other. The unique, bold, and breathtaking car that is instantly identifiable to millions around the world.

And now, it could be parked in YOUR driveway. You could sit in the very seat Elvis sat in, shift the very gear lever he shifted, and turn the very steering wheel he turned.

Because this extraordinary automobile is now available for purchase...

The Presley Estate has engaged me to sell this national treasure to one very lucky individual. And that individual could be you...

Lesson Eight:

Two Steps You Can't Afford to Miss

The Guarantee and the Call to Action

You grabbed the prospect's attention with your headline. Made her go deep into your copy with a strong opening and copy flow. Without a doubt established that your product or service is teeming with benefits she wants.

You've already told her the price. You've made a case for the value being worth ten times the price. She is figuratively panting for getting those benefits in her life. So what stands between you and the order?

Two very simple, but very profound steps in the process.

The first of these is the guarantee. Which we worked on a little last lesson. But we are going to work on some more, because it is so important. Here's why:

In some of the mediums you work, the prospect's trust is going to be fleeting or skeptical. Some people are nervous giving their credit card over the phone. Others are afraid to enter it on a website. And depending on the offer you are making and the kind of product you are selling—they may just be nervous about your ability to deliver.

They are thinking, "Well that all sounds great. But I've bought stuff before that sounded great, but when I actually got it, it wasn't what was promised. What's going to happen to my money if this isn't what I am really looking for?"

You are asking them to take a risk. And the size of the risk will determine the number of prospects who are afraid to take it. Thus, the higher price point your product is, the more risky it is. And the more people who will be afraid to take that risk. So your formula as a marketer is a very simple one:

The more you negate the risk, the better your response is likely to be!

It's really that simple. The more you invert the risk, the larger the pool of prospects is that will be willing to take that risk. And if you can eliminate the risk entirely, you dramatically expand your prospect universe. And the way to do both these things is with your guarantee.

Here are some different examples of how that can be done. You could do a limited guarantee. Here's an example of that for a carpet cleaning system:

Performance Guarantee...

Try our carpet cleaning system in your home for a week. Test it on your toughest stains. If you have a stain it can't remove, we will pick up the system and return your money.

Now that guarantee is limited to seven days, and is strictly on performance. You can only return the product if it doesn't work on a stain in your carpet. We could make it less limiting and probably attract more customers of we 30 or 60 days instead of seven.

We could make a guarantee unconditional and risk-free. Here's an example:

Unconditional Risk-Free Guarantee...

Try our carpet cleaning system in your home for a week. Test it on your toughest stains. If you are not absolutely delighted – for any reason – return it for a complete refund. There are no conditions. If you are not happy, we won't take your money.

Like the previous guarantee, this one would be stronger if we extended out the time frame. The longer we make it, the less skeptical the prospect is going to be. Now here's a million-dollar bonus tip for you. It's more of a marketing issue than a copywriting one, but one that can make you rich nonetheless.

The longer your guarantee is, the less returns you will get.

Now this flies in the face of conventional wisdom. Most people think you would get more returns with a 60 day guarantee than with a 30 day one. But it's actually the opposite.

No one knows the reason why for sure, but I do have a theory. I think when a guarantee is short, people feel a sense of urgency to make a decision. So they look at your product more critically early on. They want to make sure it's perfect right away, to make sure they can return it in the limited amount of time they have to do so.

If the guarantee is longer, they don't have that panicky feeling about the product right out of the box. They're more relaxed; knowing they have plenty of time to take care of things. So as a rule, you'll get less returns with a 90 day guarantee than a 60 day one, and even less for a one year guarantee than a 90 day one.

Now the thing to keep in mind is this: The longer guarantee has a less likelihood of the prospect returning the product—and the longer a guarantee is, the safer they feel about ordering the product. So if you have say in creating the guarantee, you want to go for as long as possible, knowing that it will help your response.

You can also boost response further by making your guarantee even better than risk free. You can do this by offering some kind of bonus or premium, and letting the prospect know that even if they use the guarantee to return the product—they can keep the bonus for their trouble. You can take this to whatever extreme you want to. I once did a Boot Camp and offered a 100% money back guarantee, plus \$5,000! Here is the actual copy from that sales letter below:

In fact, I'm so sure that this training can help you break out and make an extra \$250,000.00, \$500,000.00 or more—I will give you a...

Twice-Protected, \$5,000.00-Better-Than-Risk-Free, Money Back Guarantee!

Come to the event and experience the first day and a half. Participate for all of Wednesday, and till 6 pm on Thursday. If that exposure doesn't convince you that staying through the whole program will add hundreds of thousands of dollars to your sales, let the staff know you are leaving and turn in your materials.

Not only will I refund all monies you have paid – I will pay you an additional \$5,000.00 to go home!

Now I didn't just leave it at that. As you'll see, I slapped the prospect upside the head, challenging them with the next copy in the letter:

Now if you attend the first day and a half, and don't see how what I teach will help you earn at least a quarter or half a million dollars—you are too stupid to be there!

I'll give you the five grand because I figure you can make back your airfare, hotel room, and still have a couple thousand left to enroll at your local vocational college. Hopefully it will give you a head start for your new career as a welder, air conditioning mechanic, or data entry person.

You do this when you want to set a certain tone and make a bold impression. Of course you have to have total faith in your product and be prepared to back up your guarantee. In the case of my Boot Camp, I was certain that no one would take me up on my offer.

Any one of the 55 people who attended could have left and asked for the \$5,000. But I was betting that they wouldn't, knowing that they would be missing out on learning how to earn hundreds of thousands of dollars more. I was right, as no one took me up on the deal.

Now you can be just as bold and send the same kind of statement with your guarantee—by not offering one.

You don't just leave it out, however. You tell the prospect that you aren't offering one, and you tell him why.

I did this about five years ago when I was selling a home study version of another one of my Boot Camps. I got right in the prospect's face and basically told him he was a moron if he was even looking for a guarantee. Here's what I wrote:

Let's talk about the guarantee. There is none.

If you can't get at least \$50,000 worth of information from this resource, you are so hapless, hopeless, and helpless, I want nothing to do with you. If you call me for a refund, I will shriek in your ear and hang up the phone.

Since then I have used a similar approach numerous times. As you know, I'm quite confident in my products and am not afraid to call people on their stuff. I think it actually enhances the credibility of my product, even though I am not offering a guarantee. This is the type of approach I would use with a product like the Elvis Cadillac you were working on last lesson.

Theoretically, this should mean more risk for your prospect and reduce response. But I've had just the opposite experience. People buy into my confidence and decide it is worth the risk. If you've got the balls to

pull this off, it can work quite well for you. If you are the timid type, don't even try it.

Having said all that, let's go to the second step in the process of getting your prospect to buy: the call to action.

You would think that having an "order now" button on your website or a toll free number on your brochure would be enough. You would be wrong.

If you want your prospect to take action, you must tell him to take action. And you must tell him exactly what action to take. The vast majority of people arte stupid. I mean dumb as a post stupid. And yes I am referring to those sophisticated educated prospects that you are selling to. The ones you think are smart enough to figure things out. They're not.

<u>So you have to give them a call to action</u>. You have to say something like the examples below:

'So click on the link below, or cut and paste it into your browser"

"Pick up the phone right now and call 1-800432-4243 to place your order."

"Fax the order form back to (316) 942-5313, or for faster service, call 1-800-432-4243."

Your call to action will work even better, if you create a sense of urgency with it. If you have a limited time offer, tell the prospect. If supplies are limited, let her know. If your event is likely to sell out, make her aware of that.

So you might say something like the examples below:

"Please pick up the phone right now and call 1-800-432-4243 to get your copy of this powerful resource. As I mentioned, there were only 49 left when I started writing this letter. Get yours before they are all gone."

"Please pick up the phone right now and call 1-800-432-4243 to get your copy of this powerful resource. Supplies are limited and I expect them to be gone in a matter of days. If it is already sold out by the time you call, please accept my apologies."

LESSON EIGHT

"As you can probably imagine, I'm sure this event will be a complete sell out. So call now at 1-800-432-4243, and reserve your space before they are all gone."

The right guarantee, a strong call to action, and a reason to act right away are a solid way to boost response, and get your prospect taking out his credit cared. Do these things well and your copy is sure to pull powerful results. Now let's put them into action with the practice exercise on the next page.

Practice Exercise Instructions:

Once again, I'm providing you with the start of a letter. This time I am including the offer, the price and the price validation I want you to pick it up from there, add the guarantee copy, and the call to action. Read the start of the letter below then add:

- 6) Offer a guarantee or tell them why you aren't offering one
- 7) Make the call to action.
- 8) End the letter.

This is exactly the practice you need right now. So jump into it. Then next lesson we'll look at the power of the P.S.

Here's the letter for Lesson 8's Practice Exercise.

Will It Be in Your Trophy Case?

Dear baseball fan,

I bet you can remember it as vividly as I can. Two outs, ninth inning. Scored tied at zero, as two of the most dominating pitchers in baseball dueled it out in Game 7 of the 2005 World Series.

Six foot seven, Randy Johnson on the hill for the Yankees, in enemy territory at the Marlins home stadium. Slugger Carlos Delgado is at the plate for the Fish, with a 2-2 count. Johnson throws his slider, which comes down and in to Delgado. Swing and a drive...

Deep right field. ..

Back, back, back....gone!

The Marlins win the World Series again, the third time in less than ten years. 70,000 screaming fans in the stadium, millions more watching, as history was made.

As you may know by now, the ball didn't land until the 33 row of the right field bleachers, where it was caught by Casey Selvin, a 12 year

old Little Leaguer who brought his glove to the park. Casey caught history that night, and one of the most sought after mementoes ever.

Which is why I am writing you...

I have been engaged by the Selvin family to sell this unique piece of history, to ensure Casey's future education. And since I know what a true baseball fan you are, I wanted you o have a shot.

What's the price?

Hard to believe, but you can own this piece of immortal baseball history for only \$145,000. Which is a pittance to pay for the one piece of memorabilia of the most dramatic and powerful ending of a World Series ever.

The family isn't looking to make a killing. They just want Casey's college taken care of. So they authorized me to price the ball to sell fast.

No Series was ever closer than this one was, or fought harder. None ever had this kind of a pitcher's duel in a game seven. Never before had both starters worked games one, four, and seven, and both pitched nine shutout innings in the deciding game.

It was the most breathtaking, compelling and climatic ending to a Fall

it all	One for the ages.	•	

Lesson Nine:

P.S. Your Cat is Dead

Hi Guys,

Back in the seventies, I read a great book titled, "P.S. Your Cat is Dead." It's a great title (headline), because it really makes you curious to pick up the book. And that's exactly what a good *P.S.* does for you. It intrigues the prospect to read your letter.

Now you may be thinking that the *P.S.* is at the end of the letter, so the prospect will only see it after already reading it all. But often this is not true.

Much of the time, your prospect will remove your letter from the envelope, be intrigued by the headline, and then flip to the back of the letter to see who it is from. Then the *P.S.* catches their attention. So the *P.S.* is a good chance to restate the benefits in the letter or give a call to action for the prospect. Or both.

Here is an example of the BENEFIT RESTATEMENT approach. In this one, you repeat the basic premise of your offer.

Here are a few examples:

- **P.S.** Remember if you register for the program in the next 48 hours, you save \$200.00 and get the FREE Special Report, "7 Ways to Juice Up Your Sex Life."
- **P.S.** Order now and save \$50.00 off the regular retail price. And remember that you have an unconditional 60-day satisfaction guarantee. So you have nothing to lose. Call **1-800-432-4243** now.
- **P.S.** Order today and you qualify for the special introductory price, you get the bonus CD, "How to Grow Your Hair Back," and the extra bonus DVD, "How to Dream Away the Pounds While You Sleep." Call**1-800-432-4243** to claim your package now!

The next type of *P.S.* is the URGENT CALL TO ACTION version. As the name implies, this *P.S.* is best used when you are confident your

offer is understood and you want to push the prospect into immediate action. Here are some examples:

- **P.S.** As you know, this is a limited edition print, with only 200 being offered. Please reserve yours before they are all gone. Call **1-800-432-4243** now, as there is no time to waste.
- **P.S.** Space is limited and this seminar is certain to sell out. Once the seats are gone, they are gone. I'm sure you understand. Call **1-800-432-4243** to lock in your space while it is still available.
- **P.S.** We are offering only 400 sets of "Internet Marketing for Morons," to ensure the market doesn't become saturated. So act fast or lose your chance forever. Call **1-800-432-4243** to ensure you get your copy.

A third possible *P.S.*, one I personally almost never use, the NEW ELEMENT version. In this one, you are introducing something new; an element you haven't already mentioned in the letter. Usually I would rather include the element in the letter, and restate it in the *P.S.* But sometimes you just want a little surprise bonus to push the prospect over the fence.

Here are a few examples of that:

- **P. S.** If you border within 48 hours, I'll also throw in a FREE copy of my Special Report "How to Dream Away the Pounds While You Sleep."
- **P.S.** One more thing: Because I appreciate your business, I'll also throw in a FREE copy of my Special Report "How to Dream Away the Pounds While You Sleep."
- **P.S.** Take an extra 10 percent off your order if you place it within 48 hours. Call **1-800-432-4243** now.

By the way, you can do a *P.S.*, a *P.P.S.* and even a *P.P.P.S.* of you like. I don't usually do this for printed sales letters, because I want them to have a business correspondence feel. But this technique can work well on website offers.

Of course there are no rules to what you can do in the *P.S.* But the types I mentioned have been the most effective in my experience. One rule I do know for sure, however:

Always use a *P.S.*!

Even when it is read last, it's a great way to summarize and anchor your offer, and incite the prospect to act. BTW, did you notice that I still used the internal message techniques (bold, italics, underlines, etc) in the P.S.?

As a rule, I always bold the letters "P.S." I also like to bold the phone number or website URL if I am mentioning them in the copy. And if you have a special time sensitive offer or special price, you may want to italicize or underline it.

So let's get to your Practice Exercises:

We're going to go *P.S.* crazy this month. I want you to look back at the earlier lessons, and do some *P.S.*'s for them. Do four *P.S.* for the Elvis Pink Cadillac letter, and four for the Marlins World Series baseball letter. Then work up four more for a product or service of your own. Make sure you mix it up and do the different types, so you get some practice in each.

Next lesson, we'll explore how you weave emotion into your copy. Until then, you have my...

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage
- **P.S.** Remember that doing your practice exercises each month gets you that much closer to becoming a world class copywriter, making hundreds of thousands of dollars writing from your spare bedroom or sidewalk cafes around the world! So get on it now!

Practice Exercise:

Look back at the earlier lessons, and write *P.S.*'s for them.

Write four P.S.'s for:

- The Elvis Pink Cadillac letter;
- The Marlins World Series baseball letter; and,
- Work up four more for a product or service of your own. Make sure you mix it up and do the different types, so you get some practice in each.

Lesson Ten:

The Power of Emotion

Using the Internal Message and Emotion to Move the Prospect to Action!

Hi Guys,

Some years back, I went to the opening of the Disney MGM Studios Theme Park in Orlando. One of the stops I made was to the film editing show. What an eye opening experience that was!

They described the job of the film editor and talked about how important it is. Seemed pretty boring to me. Then they gave a demonstration...

They showed the lightsaber duel between Obi Wan Kenobi and Darth Vader from the first Star Wars film. It seemed quite boring. Which was amazing to me, because I am a Sci Fi fanatic, and I remembered the scene as quite dramatic and climatic when I saw the picture the first 18 times!

Then the guide explained that what we had seen was the "before" version. Simply one camera, pulled back to show both combatants. Next he showed the edited version, which had actually been in the film. It zoomed in for close ups, pulled back for effect, and used other camera angles. All of a sudden the same scene was filled with tension, suspense, and drama.

The internal message in your copy does the same thing as film editing. It takes a basic ordinary message, and imbues suspense, drama, and tension. When you do a half-sentence paragraph like:

"Which is why I am writing you..."

...You create suspense. When you **bold**, *italicize*, <u>underline</u> or use all CAPS, you add mystery, and intrigue. You create urgency; speed up the breathing and heart rate of the reader. Or you slow it down, and make him reflective.

But most importantly, you are creating a message within a message. If a prospect were to simply scan your copy, and notice only the internal message, she should still know the main benefits of your product or service, understand your offer, and be motivated to act.

Next lesson we are going to work more on just the emotion. But for this lesson, I want you to create an internal message from some existing copy. It's your job to decide what should be:

- Italicized
- Underlined
- Done in All Title Caps or ALL CAPS.
- Bolded

One more thought...

The internal message should make for a natural progression in the letter, even if it is read alone. So as an example, the flow of an internal message might go something like these:

Which is why I am writing you...

You too, can benefit from this amazing discovery.

Proven with Nobel Prize winning research...

No matter how old you are, it will still increase your sex drive.

And there is a limited time offer right now...

And your second bottle is FREE.

...a 100% money back guarantee.

Order within five days and receive a special bonus.

Call 1-800-432-4243 NOW to get your supply.

Make sure your internal message carries a flow like this. Thus it doesn't make sense to bold or underline just a word here and there. Highlight THOUGHTS and you'll have a much greater flow.

When I study copywriters, this is the area I see that most could improve on the most. The internal message is an intuition thing, but I do believe there are some guidelines which will serve you here.

Only use one way to highlight things, otherwise it is overkill. If you bold, underline and capitalize something, it seems like you are shouting at the reader. Not necessarily a bad thing, but certainly a technique that must be used very judiciously.

You want to highlight things that pull the reader through the sales process, so benefit statements are best. Occasional words highlighted don't give you that. Remember the point of the internal message: You want the "scanners" to get the gist of your message, just by reading the internal message that jumps out at them.

That won't happen if you just bold occasional words throughout the copy. In fact, it will do the opposite. And never underline punctuation at the end of a sentence.

For example: If you want to underline the sentence:

You have the chance to save over \$1,0000.00!

You would not continue the underline below the exclamation point.

See the practice lesson on the next page...

Practice Exercise:

I have started a letter. In it, I have introduced a product and a benefit. I have set the reader up, ready to buy. But unfortunately, it won't be that easy for you...

Because I have not formatted the copy. It is all together, sentence after sentence. You have to do some work.

- Divide the existing copy into paragraphs that make sense.
- 2) Finish the letter by creating the offer, guarantee, call to action, closing, etc.
- 3) Make a P.S. at the end
- 4) Format an internal message throughout the copy.

So I recommend you re-write the letter below and place it in a new WORD document or hand write it on your worksheet pages—using the instructions above.

Next lesson, we'll work on putting it all together. Until then, you have my...

Warm Regards,

- Randy Gage

Here's Your Practice Exercise Copy to Work With:

Announcing: A New Scientific Breakthrough in Weight Reduction Dear Colleague, If you have ever struggled with maintaining your weight, burning fat, or following a diet, there is some important new medical news you should be aware of. A new discovery that helps your body melt away fat while you watch the Jerry Springer show. Amazing, but true. This new breakthrough was developed in the laboratories of Saddam Hussein, right after the first Gulf War. He had his scientists working on a drug that would allow him to lose 30 pounds quickly, so he could slip out of the country undetected. He figured (rightly so) that were he to lose that much weight and shave his mustache, he would be completely unrecognizable. So he had his researchers working night and day on the research, and how this drug could be applied. They experimented on animals with limited success. The first trials on humans didn't produce much more encouraging results. But then something amazing happened. During one of the research trials, there was a TV in the room turned on to FOX News channel. And an unprecedented thing happened: The people in the study showed dramatically increased levels of metabolic activity. Frankly, the researchers were puzzled. In all previous studies, this had not happened. And no one made the connection to the TV being on. That is, until one of the doctors turned the channel. He put on a National Geographic special, and the metabolic activity levels of the participants returned to normal levels. Again, no one made the TV connection. That is, until the station was turned to "Friends." Immediately the metabolic levels increased. Suddenly an alert doctor realized what was happening. He switched the channel to the Jerry Springer Show, and the metabolism of the study participants went to the highest level yet. He realized they were on to an amazing and profound scientific breakthrough! There definitely was a correlation between what channel was on, and the fat-burning levels of the participants. Much more testing and tracking was done. And then the breakthrough was discovered. The researchers found that the more vapid and mindless the TV program was, the higher the metabolic rate of the people watching it became. It was discovered that the energy normally used for brainwave activity, was redirected to metabolism. Thus the "brain off, fat burner on" syndrome was discovered. And Hussein immediately suppressed the evidence. Where it remained undiscovered, until his regime was toppled recently. Which is why I am writing you.

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD!

LESSON TEN

Lesson Eleven:

Putting it all Together

Hi Guys,

This lesson I want you to start putting all of the pieces together. Your practice exercise is to write a complete sales letter, from start to finish. What you are selling is a product or service of your own. So make it good, because you are going to be able to use this copy on your website, brochure, mail out or other marketing materials.

If you don't have a product of your own, then do the letter selling an allexpense-paid trip to Hollywood, to attend a filming of "American Idol," followed by a private dinner with judge Simon Cowell.

Now as fun as the "America Idol" letter would be, if you do have your own product or service, I would prefer you write for that. Practical application is always better. And I want you able to use the skills you are developing to earn some money.

Make sure you include the following elements:

- 1) Headline
- 2) Subhead
- 3) One of the five template openings
- 4) Introduce the product
- 5) Provide the benefits of the product
- 6) Give the price
- 7) Validate the price if need be
- 8) Give a guarantee or tell the reader why you are not
- 9) Give a call to action and close the letter
- 10) Create a P.S.

But we're not finished yet. There is another very critical element to really impact our prospect: Emotion.

Emotion is what separates ordinary copy from the world class writing. Emotion is the driver that causes people to act. So I want you to make sure you find the emotion of the situation.

Either paint the picture of the joy they will feel by getting the benefits of your product. Or connect them with the pain they will feel if they don't get your product. Or both. Or something similar, but I want you to make sure you cause the prospect to feel a strong emotion as a result of your writing. An emotion that will cause the prospect to act!

Have some fun with this, but don't lose sight of your outcome: You need copy that makes sales. So have at it!

Warm regards,

- Randy Gage

P.S. This is a great chance to keep up the positive momentum you have going from the earlier lessons.

Practice Exercise:

Your practice exercise is to write a complete sales letter, from start to finish.

Make sure you include the following elements:				
1)	Headline			
2)	Subhead			
3)	One of the five template openings			
4)	Introduce the product			
5)	Provide the benefits of the product			
6)	Give the price			
7)	Validate the price if need be			
8)	Give a guarantee or tell the reader why you are not			
9)	Give a call to action and close the letter			
10	Create a P.S.			

Lesson Twelve:

The Gut Wrenching Emotion that Drives People to Act!

Hi Guys,

Now we get to the end of the road. I have taught you the essential elements and the nuances. You know how to write in a conversational style. You have specific techniques to pull the reader through. And you know an order to use elements to create a string copy flow.

But you aren't done yet...

There is one last element. Something we have talked about more than a few times. Something that turbo-charges all of the other elements, and increases their effectiveness.

Of course I am talking about emotion.

The world class copywriters look at each situation, and dig deep searching for the emotion of the situation. Selling a restaurant seems pedestrian enough. But a world class writer would plumb the depths for the emotion that might come up if you had a romantic dinner at that location. Or perhaps the joy of a family dining together having an adventure with their kids.

Selling tires would seem pretty boring to most. But a world class writer might explore the emotion of what would happen if mom had a blowout on a dark highway at night, while the kids were in the back seat.

That's where we are going this month. I'm going to give you a finished letter. It will include all the proper elements of an effective sales letter. Except one.

Emotion.

It will be your job to edit it, adding emotion to make it better. This is your last trial. Face the dark side here, and you will come out a true Jedi Knight of Copywriting.

You are ready for this last exercise...

To take proper, hardworking copy—and energize it through the power of emotion.

So take the letter on the next page. Edit it in any way you see fit, to invigorate it with the addition of the emotional element. (Be sure and do the internal message too, with bold, italics and underline to make it even more effective.)

So re-write the letter below or create a new MS-WORD® document. Add your emotional handiwork and go to work.

And congratulations on getting this far. Now you have what it takes to write great, world-class copy. It's been a pleasure being your guide. Now go out and go crazy with it!

Warm Regards,

- RG

Practice Exercise Copy:

The Legend Lives...

The Pony Car is Back, and it's Better than Ever!

Dear Car Enthusiast,

The time is now. The car you have been waiting for is in! The all new, redesigned Ford Mustang is now in our showroom! Get down here quick and you can drive one home today.

This is the Mustang you have been waiting your whole life for. Guided only by its legacy, our engineers took a clean-sheet design approach to give birth to an all-new platform. This includes a new chassis, new suspension, re-engineered solid rear axle, new powertrain, new transmission, new interior and hot new styling.

It has the original soul of America's original ponycar, with all the technological advances that science can offer. Mustang gains some 6 inches in wheelbase and overall length vs. the 1999-2004 generation, and is about 100 lb heavier. The underbody structure replaces one that dated from 1979, though Mustang retains a solid rear axle rather than adopting independent rear suspension. Base V6 and GT V8 models return in Deluxe and Premium trim.

This is the state-of-the-art Mustang, like nothing you've ever driven before...

The 2005 Mustang GT is the first mainstream production Mustang to break into the 299-horsepower barrier. The 4.6-liter-aluminum V-8 has three-valve heads and cranks out 300 hp and 320 lb.-ft of torque, while the new SOHC V-6 engine generates 210 hp and 240 lb.-ft. of torque.

New options available this year include front side airbags that cover torso and head, and an Interior Upgrade Package, which includes a dashboard button to change instrument lighting from green to one of 125 other hues. All Mustangs come with air conditioning and CD player. The Coupe has 50/50 split folding rear seatbacks. Leather upholstery is standard on the GT Premium, optional on other models. The GTs include grille-mounted fog lamps and a rear spoiler.

Complete Warranty...

Your Mustang comes with a basic 3 Years or 36,000 Miles warranty. The drivetrain is also covered for 3 Years / 36,000 Miles and your Mustang is protected against corrosion for 5 Years / Unlimited Miles. It comes with a Roadside Assistance plan for 3 Years / 36,000 Miles as well.

What's the Cost?

The suggested list price for this dream car is only \$19,215. So for under twenty grand, you drive home in America's favorite muscle car. With all the warranty protection I mentioned above.

Special Offer...

Because you've purchased a car from us in the past, you qualify for a special discount. You can take \$500 of any Mustang model in stock.

But you have to act fast...

Your special \$500 discount only applies to the cars we have in the showroom. And we have four coupes and three convertibles ONLY. Once they are gone, the special discount disappears! And then you'll have to wait until we can get our hands on some more. And we expect this entire model year to sell out quickly. So you must move fast if you want to drive home the ponycar today!

Call me now at (305) 444-4444 and let me know what time you want to come in. I have a car fueled up for a test drive, and we can calculate the value of your trade in. But call me quick! Before these seven are gone.

Sincerely,

John Jones New Car representative

P.S. Remember that you get a \$500 discount as a loyal customer. But you have to get in before all seven Mustangs are gone!

RANDY GAGE'S HOW TO BECOME A COPYWRITING STUD!

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	LESSON TWELVE
	
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Recommended Resources:

Visit these sites for more resources on building your business, self-development and Prosperity Resources.

www.RandyGage.com

www.CashCopywriting.com

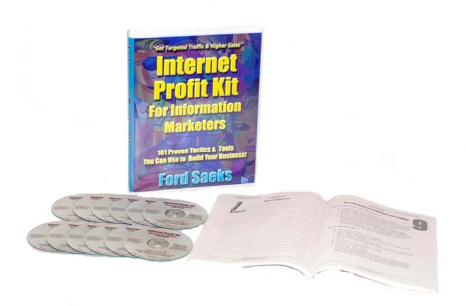
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by Ford Saeks



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