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From:

W-A-Y West of Jewfish Creek

Dear Friend & Subscriber,

**"There I Was At 15,000
Feet, Both Engines On
Fire And My Parachute
In The Laundry. . . .**

You ever feel like that? You've got a marketing emergency on your hands and you've got to solve it right now!

Listen: I get calls nearly every day from people who need instant marketing solutions. They're not copywriters and they have no advertising experience. They don't trust ad agencies (and rightly so) and they haven't the luxury of enough time to become grounded in marketing theory by reading Robert Collier, Claude Hopkins and so on. In fact, they have no desire to become marketing experts. No. It's just that every "expert" they've ever hired has disappointed them and, since I'm usually too booked up to do any new jobs on a "right now" basis, they want to know... *"What should I do?"*

"Do it by numbers," I tell them.

Here's what I mean. Look: If you have a good product or service, you probably already know exactly how to sell it when you are talking to someone during a "one-on-one" situation. Whether you are talking to someone in person or, perhaps, on the telephone, it probably doesn't matter; my bet is you know exactly what words to use and what buttons to push to most impress your prospective customer.

Am I right? Aha, I thought so.

However, here is a curious fact: most people who are very good in a personal selling situation "freeze up" when it comes to transferring their sales pitch to the printed word.

Or else they struggle to "get creative."

Forget that rubbish. Here's a better way. The first thing you do is you begin to record (with the other party's permission) all of your conversations whenever you are talking to one of your prospects on the phone. Keep doing this until you are able to forget you are doing it. Why? The reason is simple. You see, at first, when you are aware that what you are saying is being recorded, you will stifle yourself. You'll try to make sure what you are saying is grammatically correct. Or you'll try to be clever. Or more dramatic. Or less dramatic.

Or whatever.

But if you keep doing it long enough, you'll eventually forget about the damn tape recorder and you'll revert to being your own natural wonderful self and you'll deliver your usual compelling sales presentation.

And hopefully, after awhile, we'll have a recording of you talking to a prospect when you are at "concert pitch."

Goody. But what's next? This: What we do next is take that recording to a typist and have it transcribed. Then, after it has been transcribed, we take a copy of that typed transcription and number each one of the paragraphs. By the way, for our purposes, a paragraph is one or more sentences that express a single idea or aspect of a subject.

O.K., now let's say we have the first draft of our "sales-pitch-in-print" and it contains 47 paragraphs and you have duly numbered them 1 through 47.

Next, we carefully go over each one of these paragraphs and give each of them another number that is based on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the highest. What we are doing here is "ranking" each paragraph as to how much favorable influence that paragraph has on our prospect. For example, let's say we are pitching a 31 foot Bertram sportfishing boat (one of the best) and we know from previous experience that our customers are very interested in the fact that the boat has a wide beam and a hull configuration that makes it extremely seaworthy and very uninterested in the fact that it comes with matching curtains and towels.

So, let's say the paragraphs about the seaworthiness of the boat get a rank of 8 and the ones about matching curtains and towels get a ranking of 2.

Whatever. So, what we've got now is a "sales-pitch-in-print" that is 47 paragraphs long and wherein each paragraph has been rated for wonderfulness on a scale of 1 to 10.

Now, what I want you to do next is to cut out all those paragraphs with a pair of scissors and divide them into three groups. The first group will consist of those paragraphs that describe the benefits of owning a Bertram and the second group will consist of those paragraphs that tell "interesting facts" about the boat. The third group will be those paragraphs that don't say anything about the Bertram or else paragraphs that do not advance your sales presentation in any way whatsoever.

Now, throw the third group away and arrange the other two groups in rank from 10 on down. Next, throw out all paragraphs with a rating of 5 or less. Next, rewrite the remaining paragraphs. But BEWARE: don't change them much. Just more or less "clean them up." Take out the ers and ums, the redundant words and sentences and sort of tighten up your sentence structure and grammar.

Let us press on. What I'd like you to do now is try to forget you are trying to write an ad or a sales letter. Instead, what I want you to do is to concentrate on writing a memo.

A long memo.

Write it to someone you can easily visualize in your mind's eye, someone who is a good prospect for a good, relatively cheap sportfishing boat. Someone extremely good-looking and modest.

Someone like me, Sir Gary of Halbert, Ace of Space, Prince of Print, Count of Cable and all around Bon Vivant.

Your memo should read something like this:

Memo

Dear Gary,

I hear you are looking for a good, seaworthy, sportfishing boat.

Listen: I've got a good one for sale. It's really a humdinger. Here are seven interesting facts about this boat:

1. (Insert highest ranked interesting fact.)
2. (Insert second highest ranked fact.)
3. (Insert third highest ranked fact.)
4. (You've got the idea, right?)
5. (Ditto)
6. (Et Cetera)
7. (and so forth)

Hey, Gary, what about those apples? Maybe now, you can see why this particular boat is such a honey. There are many benefits to owning a boat like this. Here are five of the main ones:

1. (Insert paragraph on highest ranked benefits of
owning this boat.)
2. (Insert second highest ranked paragraph.)
3. (Ditto)
4. (Et Cetera)
5. (and so forth)

Well anyway, Gary, those are just a few of the "highlights" about the wonderfulness of this boat but, actually, there are many more reasons it makes sense for you to own a vessel like this and I'd love to explain them to you in person.

So here's the deal. I know you're busy, what with all your clients and writing your newsletter and scuba diving with Paulette and so forth, so I'm gonna give

you a chance to digest this memo and then, in a few days, I'll give you a call and see if you are interested.

In the meantime, if you want more info sooner, you can call me at (000) 000-0000.

By the way, I love your newsletter and I really enjoy reading it every month in spite of your conceited, egomaniacal ramblings.

Sincerely,
Joe Subscriber
An Astute Student

Now listen: I want to know something. It is this: Did you think that little "lesson" was a bit too simple? If so, you are doing yourself a great disservice. You see, if you can grasp the essence of what I've just imparted, you will have learned an enormously important marketing lesson.

Here is that lesson:

**Forget Trying To
Be Creative!**

**Forget Trying To
Be Clever!**

**Stop Worrying About
Those Awards You'd
Like To Win!**

Hark unto me: Your job is not to be creative, clever or win awards. No. Your job is to sell, damn it.

Selling is not yelling. Selling is not tricks. Selling is an impressive, forceful communication of facts and benefits. What I have just taught you is a far cry from being the end-all and be-all of how to create advertising. However, that simple little process of recording your person-to-person sales presentations and then, transferring them to paper as I have outlined works

far better than trying to "dream up" some award winning vapidness.

Check this out: There's a guy named Bruce Horovitz who writes a column on marketing which appears in the Business Section of the Los Angeles Times every Tuesday. Recently, on June 9th, one of his articles was about a gentleman named Sean Kevin Fitzpatrick who is executive vice president and creative director of an ad firm named Cambell-Ewald Co. The article is about Fitzpatrick's "Heartbeat of America" commercial (which consists mostly of a catchy song) that he created for the Chevrolet division of General Motors.

The article tells how "successful" this campaign is and how Chevrolet's current series of car and truck ads have been nominated for 10 Clio awards.

It's a stupid commercial.

In fact, this campaign is so stupid it would appear to me that Fitzpatrick doesn't even know what advertising is. (Or at least what it's supposed to be!) Advertising is not to remind someone of your existence; it is not songwriting, dancing bears, and tricky words and catchy music.

No! Good advertising is simply....

Salesmanship Multiplied!

I don't know how much money has been wasted on this moronic campaign. However, I do know that, according to this same article that, during the first quarter of 1987, Chevrolet sales are down 12.1% compared to what they were last year!

Is it any wonder?

But you know what? People who can't produce results often get very creative when it comes to creating cop-outs. And, in the ad business, if you can't produce sales, what you do is you tell your client that you are building his "image." You can tell him how all this money he's spending will pay off sometime in "years-to-come."

Listen to this quote from another "advertising expert" in the same article: "But this campaign can't be measured in short-term

results. It is an image building campaign. Image is the key issue of the car market.. blah, blah, blah."

What garbage. You know what Fitzpatrick should have done instead of writing a song? It's simple: he should have found out who the 10 best Chevy salesmen are in the entire U.S. Then, he should have met with these men and watched them sell cars and he should have recorded their sales presentations and taken notes.

And then, he should have created an intelligent campaign built around the best parts of those effective sales presentations!

Maybe this guy deserves to win a Grammy but he sure as hell shouldn't get any awards based on his ability to create advertising that sells cars!

Oh, well. I suppose if it wasn't for guys like him, there wouldn't be so much demand for guys like me.

Onward. Look, I'm coming to the close of this month's letter and, before I do, I want to tell you about a couple of things that are not directly related to marketing. I hope you'll bear with me. I'm going to tell you about one of these items because it is so potentially important and the other because it is so utterly delightful.

Item 1:

Back in the 70's, someone told me about a doctor who became wealthy developing some industrial patents that were used in Europe. Apparently, he used his wealth to set up a clinic in Paris to treat patients and do research. However, when the Nazis invaded Paris, he found it necessary to flee to the U.S. When he got here he set up another clinic and began treating cancer patients and doing more research.

Anyway, I met this man sometime in 1971 or 1972 and I was very impressed with him. He showed me a book he had published with remarkable before and after pictures of patients he had cured of cancer. In fact, he autographed the book for me and he also showed me letters from some of the authorities in "establishment medicine" that said, in effect, that although his ideas may have some merit, any real cure for cancer will come from the establishment.

What this doctor told me is that most MD's and hospitals don't want to treat cancer patients the way he does because it is too expensive and time-consuming.

Now, let's flash forward to a few days ago. I'm sitting in my office when I get a call from one of my clients (an international publisher) who says: *"Gary I'm thinking about doing a book on this doctor in Manhattan. He's 91 years old and he's been treating AIDS patients with a 100% success rate!"*

"Listen," I said, *"is this guy's name Revici?"*

Well, guess what? It appears it's the same doctor I met!

Now, hold on. I can't vouch for the truth of what you have just read. And, it is very cruel to hold out false hope for people who are seriously ill.

However, I've heard enough about this doctor from enough resources that, if you know someone with AIDS, you might suggest they check this guy out. He runs the Institute of Applied Biology in Manhattan and the number is (212)976-9669.

Once again, I'm not saying all this is true. I'm just saying it seems worthy of investigation.

Item 2: I had dinner last Saturday with an old scuba buddy of mine and he introduced me to an incredible restaurant that specializes in Southern cooking. This restaurant is called "AUNT KIZZY'S BACK PORCH" and it is owned by a black couple named Adolf and Mary Dulan. Let me tell you, Adolf Dulan absolutely bends over backwards to see that his guests are happy. It is a real joy to see a man with this much grace and caring.

And the food? It is, quite simply, the best I've ever eaten in any restaurant anywhere in the world.

Period.

By the way, don't look for fancy decor. AUNT KIZZY'S is located at 4371 Glencoe Avenue which is in the Villa Marina shopping center

Sincerely,



Gary C. Halbert
"The very most
semi-handsome ad man
who ever lived."

P.S. Someone once said that if all my newspaper ads were being run by one company (instead of separate clients) that that company would be the third largest newspaper advertiser in the U.S. I don't know if that statement was true back when it was uttered but I sure as hell have created a lot of newspaper ads that have produced phenomenal results!

Want to know some of my secrets? Tune in next month. I dare say Bruce Horovitz won't have revealed any of them by then.