How To Obliterate The Blank Page

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See More Here: https://OnlyOneMike.com/courses

Just face it. The blank page is a beast few of us look forward to facing. When we're starting from zero, it causes enough fear and doubt in us that we postpone getting started.

I believe this is what the professionals call procrastination. And if you don't get started sooner or later - the procrastination can turn into full-blown "writer's block".

Now, the the truth is… I don't really believe in writer's block. I believe many times we just choose to put off the pain of writing and instead do something (read: anything) other than putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard).

I'll be the first to admit that I myself have struggled with the blank page for years of my life. And it's all the more ironic because I'm a copywriter. I am literally paid to write words and even I sometimes put it off or push deadlines to the limit (and then some.)

Thankfully though - I have a system I use that helps me OBLITERATE the blank page and start writing. And therein lies the secret to destroying the blank page - you simply have to start writing.

It doesn't even matter if it's good, it just has to exist. They say that writing is rewriting, and that's true. But even before you can edit, you have to write something. Anything. That's what we're going to do now.

Well, let's take it back one step. Let's do the work which gets you writing. Let's do the work that gets you moving in the right direction allowing you to take action. Let's brainstorm the 5 different areas you need so you can start writing sales copy.

Sales copy is (in my opinion) the hardest copy to write because not only do you have to get someone to read what you're writing, you have to move them so much that they bust out their credit card, and actually send you money right away to buy whatever it is you're selling.

We aren't trying to make a reader cry because we killed off their favorite character… no, that would be too easy. We are tasked with one of the hardest jobs on earth - getting people to part with their money WITHOUT speaking to someone. In most cases without them having seeked us out in the first place.

We are intruders begging for a buck in the minds of most of our prospects. First, we need their attention, than their time, then their focus, then their commitment, and finally their money.

And each of these is another "sale of sorts" we must make down the grease chute known as a sales letter (or webinar, or article, or VSL - whatever our marketing vehicle may be).

So, without further philosophizing from me… let's dive in. What you are about to experience is the same process I go through when I am tasked with writing a sales letter from scratch about a product or service I know little about.

Hopefully, if you're lucky - you are writing the copy for your own product, service, or idea. This will save you time at least. Though I always suggest you do thorough research before you ever start writing.

Research is all the inspiration you need to start writing high converting copy.

With that said, let's get inspired!

PART 1 - THE PROSPECT

When I talk about the prospect, I am talking about WHO you are selling to. This is the person who will be experiencing your sales message. It's important that you know who they are.

There are some who take this to the extreme. They know EVERYTHING about their potential customer. They even create an avatar of this person. Now, I am not saying that you shouldn't create an avatar. Though, I do this myself sometimes.

But for the purposes of obliterating the blank page, let's look at simpler solutions to ideally get you writing now.

The research I'm looking for here is just enough to get you writing down some notes that you'll be able to use in your sales messages. We'll save the avatar stuff for another course.

There are really two main questions you need to ask yourself about your prospect.

1) Who are they?
2) How do they talk?

These seem like very simple questions, but the answers really help you write better, higher-converting copy. Let's take for example the first question. Who is your prospect?

Without going full-blown avatar, you can work up the demographics of your customer. This simply means writing down who your prospect is most likely going to be.

So, if you're selling a creatine supplement you could probably surmise that this product will be bought by a male age 18-40. This person is probably looking to get bigger muscles and may hang out on bodybuilding forums or in bodybuilding Facebook groups.

And just like that we have at least started down the path of demographic research. You can also use tools like Google Analytics or Alexa.com to study the demographics of the people visiting websites similar to what you are going to be selling.

You want to look for gender, age, marital status, college education, income level, home ownership, and any other data you can gather.

Why is this important? Because you can use it when the time comes. You can do further research on the age and gender of your prospect to look for the types of cultural references they would most likely respond to.

And when you've done this, that will bring you one step closer to talking like your prospect, which is the greatest copywriting secret of them all.

And that brings us to question # 2. How does your prospect talk? Or even more specifically, what are some actual phrases and words they use?

You can sit around and guess at what this might be or you can gather this intelligence the old fashioned way - Google.

You can search for your niche + forum in google and start reading the posts from people in your niche. You can also search for groups on Facebook.

A method I especially like is to look on Youtube for raw video diaries of your demographic talking about the niche (or their problem - but we are coming to that in our next section.)

You really want to build up your prospect in your mind. Make sure you know who she is and how she talks. This information is invaluable.

Now it's time to officially start obliterating the blank page.

Let's write down some words…

PART 1A - THE PROSPECT WORKSHEET

Go ahead and start writing. If you want to be old school like me you can print this page out and use this thing called a pen.
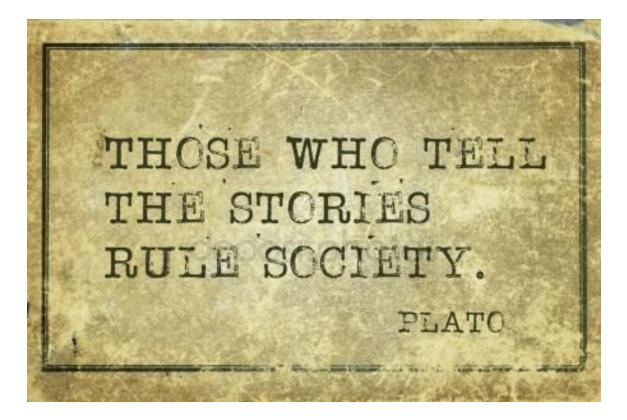
Fun Fact: Pens were actually the first wireless printers.

1) Who is your prospect? Write down everything you've learned about them. If you want extra credit you can even give your prospect a name (avatar)…

2) How does your prospect talk? Right out some words or phrases you know they would use. You can also write down some experiences or cultural references your prospect would most likely understand. This is called "Nostalgia".

PART 1B - THE STORY

Think of this section as a bonus. It's really important and it ties in under the idea of the prospect. I'm just angry cause I couldn't come up with a good P word to label it as. If you come up with one - let me know and I'll crown you with riches - or maybe I'll just say thanks. Either way.

THOSE WHO TELL THE STORIES RULE SOCIETY.

PLATO

So, a very important element (I may even say the most important) is the story you use to draw your prospect into your sales message. I hate to break it to you, but only the most desperate people are ready and willing to buy something with just a straight up offer.

The rest of us need to be flirted with. And how do we do this? Easy... with story. A well placed story is worth 1,000 facts. No doubt about it.

So if you are writing your sales message for someone else's product, just pretend I'm talking about finding the story of that company or guru. But for the ease of reading, I'm going to talk about how to draw out your own story which you can use in your sales message.

The first rule is that everyone has a million stories. The key is to find the right story for the right situation. So, think about what it is you will be selling. What is the product or service?

You want to look for a story that you can connect to that product or service.

See, I've sold a lot of stuff to people who want to start their own internet business. I got my start online with blogging when I was 24 years old. At the time, I lived at home with my mom. My brother and I shared a tiny bedroom.

Our whole house - with 5 of us living in it - was less than 1,000 square feet. You had to go outside to change your mind. I didn't have a car. I was close to 500 pounds. I had recently quit my job as a stock clerk working overnights at Walmart.

I had no girlfriend, in fact I had never been kissed or even been on a date with a girl. I had no prospects for a job, or a girlfriend, or really even for a life.

I was at an all-time low.

And that's when I found a book laying on the counter at my Aunt Carolyn's house. The book was cheap looking, I could tell it wasn't a "real" book... it looked like the kind that was printed at some local print shop.

But the title called out to me and I picked it up and read the first page. Light bulbs started going off in my head. What was I reading? I took the book home and read it completely - twice.

This book gave me a new focus and most importantly it gave me a belief in myself. It was a self-help book all about taking responsibility for your own life and choosing to focus on the life you want, instead of staying bitter about the life you don't have.

It was right after I read this book that I started my first blog. My whole life changed. I started making money online, and ultimately, the person who wrote the book offered to mentor me for 2 years.

My life has never been the same since. Now, here it is 11 years later and I'm the co-founder and partner of a $25 million dollar a year business. I weigh 205 pounds. I have a WIFE, I am building my dream home - a 3,500 square foot house right next door to that tiny house I grew up in.

And all this happened for me because of the internet. And that book I stumbled upon all those years ago.

STOP.

Ok, did you just get pulled into that story? Do you feel like you know me better now? Possibly you even relate to what I've gone through? Maybe you feel that we are connected now in a way we weren't connected before?

Good. That is the point of a great story. And if you look at the story I just told (yes it's all true)... I could basically set you up for a few different things to sell.

I could sell my newest, latest and greatest internet business course, or perhaps a self-help course based on that book that changed my life. The key takeaway for you here is to think of the story you want to tell and tie it into the product you want to sell.

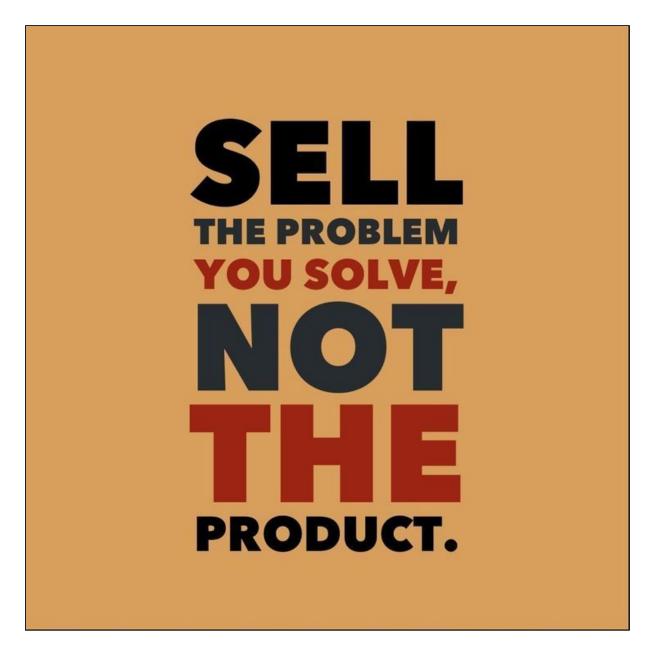"The story you tell should be tied to the product you sell."

So, right now it's time to brainstorm some stories. I'll give you some questions to ask yourself so you can start writing these thoughts down.

PART 1C - STORY BRAINSTORM WORKSHEET

1) What is something unique about you?
2) What is something unique about your childhood?
3) How did you invent your product/service?
4) How has your product/service changed your life?
5) What was life like for you at its worst?
6) What was life like for you at its best?
7) What's a limiting belief or fear you've had to overcome
8) What are you most ashamed of in your life?
9) What are you the most proud of?
10) What was it like for you in school?
11) Did you go to college? Why or why not?
12) What was your first job?
13) Talk about a time you did something amazing...
14) Talk about a time you did something foolish. What did you learn?
15) What is the best first date you've ever been on? Why?
16) What's the worst first date you've ever been on? Why?
17) Are you a spiritual person? Why or why not?
18) What is your biggest goal with your product or service?
19) Tell a story about why you created this product (or why you chose to sell it)
20) Talk about how you climbed out of rock bottom to get to where you are now...

PART 2 - THE PROBLEM

The top priority when selling is solving a person's problems. That's why a customer is interested in a product. It helps with a particular issue, whether it is their current clothes are out of style or they're trying to drop weight. By solving your prospect's problems, you instantly form a connection, which in turn turns to brand loyalty with the satisfied customer.

People, in general, are always looking for ways to make themselves feel better. They don't even consider the fact that you solving their problem actually aids your bottom line and boosts your own sales. So solving a customer's current problems, in reality, is a win-win for all parties involved.

The key to all of this though, (and it's a big one) is while you care about your business and you put your company above all others in order to help a prospect, every other business does the same (at least any business that wants to remain in business). So I want you to take it a step

further. You want you to look for ways to not only solve a customer's problems but to identify ways to make their lives easier.

> "Marketing to real issues experienced by your buyers is a great way to capture audience attention and inspire them to investigate the service further, before ultimately making a purchase."

Now how can you do this? How can you make a prospect's life both better and easier? I'll tell you. The better you are at identifying the problem your customer is currently facing; the better you'll be able to solve it. That's it! By identifying the real problem, you'll always have a better solution. That is why, and I can't stress this enough, you need to really dig deep and focus on identifying that problem! Don't skimp on the research or looking into the situation. Because the better you are at this, the better your sales copy will be, and the better your bottom line will end up becoming!

PART 2A - WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOUR PROSPECT IS FACING

Before you can sell to someone, you need to know how it will make his or her life better. In order to make their lives better, you need to identify a problem and show them how your product or service can fix this issue.

Problems come in all shapes and sizes. We typically look at problems as more annoyance, like spilling coffee on the computer or the dog just went on the rug again. If your company specializes in fixing these problems, that's fantastic! But every product solves some kind of problem. You just need to identify what it is.

The issue you're likely having is you don't really know what kind of problem your product solves. You opened your business and you sell products because you have a passion for it, not because you wanted to address a customer's situation.

So how do you identify the consumer problem? Think of your product like a consumer would. Did customers really need to order razors online? No, but it solved the problem of overpaying and making an extra trip to the store.

Perhaps you offer something at a greater value than the competition. You might offer nutritional food without the headache of looking over nutrition facts. Advertising and selling your products is all about making a connection with your customers. The best way to do this, after you know your customer inside and out, is to help them with something they are struggling with (even if they didn't realize they were struggling with it until after seeing your advertisement).

Let's brainstorm some ideas here. Remember, there's no wrong answers at this stage. You can write it down and, if you come back and find it really isn't a problem your key demographic faces, you can cross it off. Just let your mind flow through your pen and write down anything and everything you think of:

EXAMPLE

As you brainstorm how your products and services help customers, you may stumble upon something rather interesting. You'll identify several problems your product solves. Don't worry; you don't need to pick one over the other. In fact, solving multiple problems is great as it gives you a variety of advertising opportunities.

So why would you come across multiple solutions to varying problems? This often comes up when your product and service is used by varying demographics. Senior citizens will likely use your product in a different way than college-aged students.

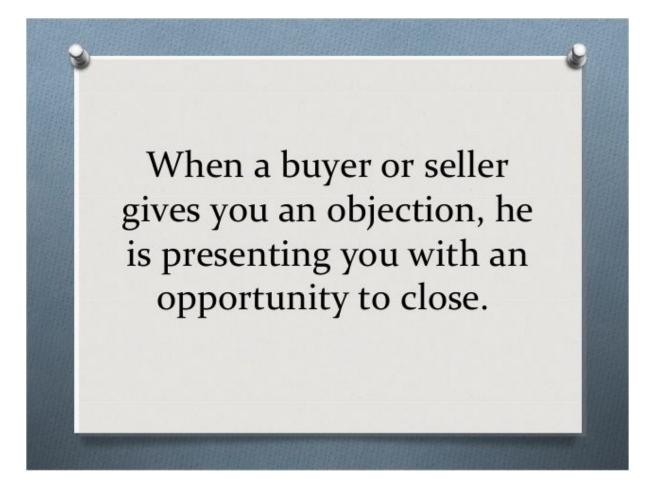Because of this, your product solves two distinct problems.

Once you've identified the problems your prospect is facing you'll then have the ability to begin formulating your advertising approach. You know your demographics and target audience inside and out from the exercises provided in Part 1. You'll use this information in creating the advertising approach for Part 2.

With the inside knowledge of your key demographics and now the problems your product solves, you'll need to identify ways in which your product can reach this key demographic. Remember, creating sales copy that sells needs to focus on what your demographic connects with. Are they wealthy? Educated? Do they own a home or do they rent? Are they likely to have a pet or children? All of this makes a big difference in how you showcase your product solving their problems.

You are off to an excellent start. You know your demographics. You know the problems they solve. We can now move forward and consider the objections your prospects will come up with as they learn how your product/service solves their problem.

Have you ever found yourself watching a television advertisement and, following the ad, you just shake your head and say, "That would never work?" Why did you say (or think that?). I know I do that all the time. Of course, I think I do it more so now because I've trained myself to look at the problems within advertisements that make me feel this way.

When a buyer or seller gives you an objection, he is presenting you with an opportunity to close.

When watching these commercials that cause an objection, I myself have to stop and think why I'm objecting to it. Maybe I've tried other skin care products so why would this be any different? Or perhaps it's a new "miracle weight loss pill" and yet I know all too well there's no such thing as a magic pill. These are all objections I form in my mind during a commercial. I can almost guarantee that you do the same.

There's nothing wrong with having objections to advertisements, no matter what form these come in. These objections really come from two different areas of thought. First, there is the fact that I've used similar products before and nothing has worked. It's a preconceived notion of failure before ever trying the product. It would be like if I drove nothing but a GEO and never saw any other cars but GEOs growing up, so naturally, how could a Ferrari actually be better? All I know is a GEO?

The second area objections come from is just bad advertising. It didn't answer my question or address my issue. Perhaps it even caused me to come up with additional questions. Whatever the reason though, I have formed mental objections that may ultimately prevent me from buying the product or service.

As you write your copy, you need to consider these objections. What kind of objection may your target audience have to the product/service while reading your copy?

It's important to brainstorm any and every possible objection someone might have. Ask friends and family members to help with this. I know after I write copy sometimes it's difficult to see any possible outsider objection. After all, I wrote the content so naturally, I think it would sell to everyone!

Also, I want to make sure you list out the objections separately for different demographics if you plan on pitching to them. If you have copy for seniors and copy for college students, each will have different objections. So keep all of this separate and organized.

With your list of objections, you need to find ways to address these objections within the copy. Maybe you're providing supplements to help guys put on muscle, but someone's objection is they've never been able to put on size before, so why would your product be any different? How would you address this objection? You can use scientific research indicating what makes your product different and better. Give the reader information so they believe, without a shadow of a doubt, what you offer really can do what it says.

You promise something with your copy. The client's objection is a direct reaction to your claim or promise.

Remember in high school science class where you had to put together a lab and, at the end of the lab, provide a proof to the question asked at the beginning? Well, you need to provide this proof to the reader of your copy. The better you do at this (and the better you identify the objections), the easier it will be to connect with consumers and sell your product.

PART 2C - ANTI-BENEFITS or BENEFITS

I really want to hammer home the importance of figuring out your customer's problem. Doing so will make or break your copy. So, let's take a look at the benefits and anti-benefits.

What exactly is the benefit? It's what your product does. It's why you're selling it. If you sell moisturizer, the benefit is it helps moisturize your skin. Pretty simple, right? Well on the flip side, the anti-benefit would be why a customer needs it. In this case, it's because they have dry skin (or want to avoid dry skin).

> **"CONSUMERS DO NOT BUY PRODUCTS. THEY BUY PRODUCT BENEFITS."**
>
> DAVID OGILVY

I have worked with all sorts of clients who just can't figure out the problem their product addresses. It's because they've never thought of their product in such a way. They've never looked at their customers with problems. Don't worry if you're in that boat as well. It's not something everyone considers. After all, you sell a product because you love doing it, not specifically because the customer has an issue. Papa Johns didn't start making pizza because people get hungry. He started making pizza because he enjoyed doing it.

Brainstorm what the benefit is for your product. Do you sell sunglasses? Your benefit is it keeps the sun out of people's eyes. It can also be it protects the eyes from UV rays, and it helps people look cool. Some products have one benefit. Others have several. You might not know the anti-benefit right off the bat, but I know you understand your product's benefits.

When I brainstorm the benefits of a product for a client, I like to go in fresh and just write out what I perceive as the benefit. After all, most other customers will go in fresh as well, so I like to think like a potential customer. Of course, you can't really do this yourself. You know the product inside and out. That is why you should consider bringing in friends, family or really anyone else within the target audience. Ask them what they perceive as the benefits. If they hear about the product, what do they think the benefits are?

Now, look at your benefits. Remember back in high school when in science class your teacher would say, "To every action, there is a reaction?" Well, you can use this old idea when coming up with the anti-benefits. The anti-benefits are basically the reverse of your benefits.

Maybe you sell products to help someone lose weight. The anti-benefit is the person is overweight. Or you sell dog collars that have lights built into them. The anti-benefit is people can't see their dogs outside at night. You may find it difficult to come up with anti-benefits initially. Trust me, that is perfectly okay. Just focus on the problem-solving benefits, brainstorm these, then look at what the opposite of the benefit is.

This entire step is all about trying to come up with the problem your customer has and how your product addresses it. I've run into all sorts of clients who have struggled with identifying the product of a customer. That's why I like to have them look at what their product does. It makes figuring out the problem so much easier!

PART 2D - STRUGGLES OF THE PROSPECT (AMAZON/YOUTUBE)

Alright, you have a solid understanding of the problem your prospect faces and you've even come up with a nice list of benefits and anti-benefits. If you were lucky, you might have even been able to talk with someone in your target audience to find out what they perceive as the benefits. Well now let's dig a little deeper.

Over the years, I've found a few different ways to dig up some "extra dirt" on what possible problems might be. I know I can't always get out there and conduct in-depth market research before writing copy, but I still want to make sure I have as much information at my disposal as possible. So what do I do? I turn to good 'ol Amazon and YouTube.

Amazon reviews provide a goldmine of information! But how can you use it? Head over to Amazon (YouTube works in a similar way, although I've always used Amazon as the go-to because it is a specific product retailer) and look up the niche your product is in. Check out the products online that, at the very least, are similar to yours. If you sell kitchen tables or wireless speakers or socks for cats, look up these products.
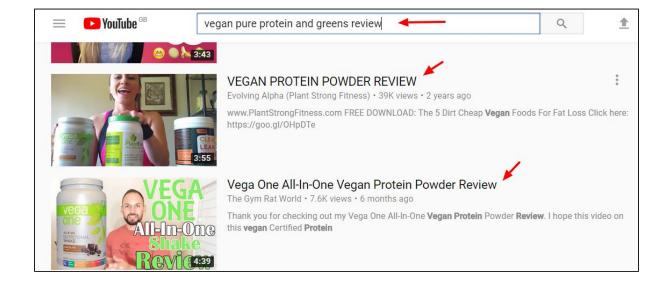
Once you've identified items similar to your own, scroll on down to the bottom and read over the product reviews and comments. However, don't just read everything. You don't need a five-star review saying, "It's great!" That does nothing for you. Instead, look at the one and two-star reviews. This is where the meat of the information is.

These reviews will dive into how the product in question didn't address the customer's problems. These are the struggles of the prospect. Now, you might not know if they used the product correctly or not, but that in itself is a problem you can address (provide easy to follow instructions!). These are all struggles you want to avoid, so take note of everything you read here.

YouTube is another option that can provide some great insights. I like to use it because people are always posting reviews and unboxing videos. You wouldn't believe how popular some of these unboxing videos have become! But these videos people give their first impressions of a product. Again, take note of this. They might offer some insights into their initial struggles. From there, watch the entire review videos. These are basically complete diaries of a product. While you might not have as many of these diary-like reviews as the negative reviews on Amazon, these video reviews are much more in-depth. It's almost like talking with a target audience directly on their opinion.

All the problems you hear people discuss on Amazon and YouTube are problems your copy needs to seek out to solve. After all, it is the goal of your product to solve these problems, right? Well with this very specific market research, you now have a better understanding as to the issues you need to address and the struggles you need to cover within the written copy.

<p style="text-align:center"><u>PART 2E - THE CORE EMOTIONS AND PERSUASION POINTS</u></p>

One thing I can't stress enough is connecting with your audience. If your copy fails to connect with your audience, your sales will fall flat along with it. No matter how amazing your product is, if the marketing doesn't connect with a consumer, they will never even try what you're selling.

So how do you connect with the target audience? It comes down to forging an emotional connection. If you think about it, many of the very best ad campaigns target key emotions. Budweiser, for example, often plays on the emotional connection people (especially Americans) have with pets. In a single, 30 second commercial, the company has successfully caused viewers to feel sadness, grief and joy, one right after another. Regardless of what you think of the product, Budweiser has repeatedly displayed the ability to emotionally connect with viewers.

Now, that doesn't mean you should go out and copy Budweiser's advertising campaign. That wouldn't really work if you offer mortuary services or deal in cancer research. Instead, you need to look at what CORE emotions your product ties into.

> "Every sale has five basic obstacles:
> no need, no money, no hurry,
> no desire, no trust."
>
> **ZIG ZIGLAR**

What are CORE emotions? When doing a bit of research, I found that during the mid 20th century, American psychologist Paul Ekman identified the six basic emotions as anger, happiness, sadness, surprise, disgust, and fear. Later, during the 1980s, Robert Plutchik took these six core emotions and created a wheel diagram to visually represent the shift of one

core emotion to another. His wheel diagram consists of eight core emotions, including rage, vigilance, ecstasy, admiration, terror, amazement and grief.

Each core emotion is the strongest, pure emotion felt by a human and from there, the less a human feels the emotion, the less intensity surrounds it. For example, while grief is the strongest core emotion of its group, sadness is slightly less powerful, followed by pensiveness. Ecstasy, when the emotion is reduced, is described as joy, followed by serenity. Within the wheel diagram, there are also transitional emotions. As ecstasy moves into admiration, it develops the emotion of love. Or as rage moves into vigilance it develops aggressiveness and so on. Consider looking up the 1980 Robert Plutchik wheel diagram for an enlightening look at human emotions.

For your copy to prove successful, you need to connect to your target audience through one of the CORE emotions. You need to stir up this emotional feeling within the key demographic. If you can successfully do this, your audience will form an emotional bond with your product without evening knowing it. This, in turn, helps increase the chance of developing a lead and boosting sales.

One thing I can't stress enough though is never force an emotion onto your product. Once a consumer has mentally formed a connection between your product and a specific emotion, it becomes extremely difficult to change that. So think long and hard about the kind of emotion you want to be associated with your product.

Come up with different emotional copy plans for your product. Perhaps when someone wears your designer pants it makes others feel envious. Or you sell a product that helps others make money and you want the consumer to feel jealous of the success of someone else. Maybe you offer muscle supplements that can help a person feel more attracted and discover love. Brainstorm different possible options for your product.

You and I and everyone else all experience different CORE emotions. It's part of what makes us human. We all feel many of these points every single day! It's just your job to create copy that connects to your customer. I promise you, if you can make a connection with the right emotion, you'll form a tighter bond with them.

I like to bunch these two sections together. I feel that CORE emotions work right into persuading someone. Long before you offer facts or proof on why a product is so great (we'll get into that later!), you need to persuade them. If you connected through an emotion, you're already on the right track! But now let's look at a few persuasion points.

Have you ever seen a comedy movie that just falls flat? They didn't persuade you to feel joy or laughter. Making someone feel a targeted emotion is not always easy. You have such a short amount of time to do it. Thankfully, there are a handful of persuasion points to consider assistance from. Don't leave anything up to chance.

I want you to understand just how important persuasion points are. These persuasion points will work alongside every other point of your copy. They go beyond just your CORE emotions

to offering stats on the product and even detailing specs on the product itself! Persuasion points will give your market more reason to look at the product as an answer to their problem!

According to Aristotle (when he's still being quoted thousands of years later, you know he was onto something way back then!), there are three elements of persuasion: logos, ethos, and pathos. Logos is logic, ethos is ethic, and pathos is emotion.

You're already creating an emotion (thanks to the last section), so now you need to look at the other two. Logic means everything you say in the copy has a logical connection as if you're building a puzzle with the pieces of copy.

The following point, or ethic, is the character of your business or the copy you write. Is it believable? Does it feel credible? If you make outlandish points and a person begins to question your credibility, you've failed the ethos element of persuasion.

Now, Aristotle is fine and good. I've actually learned a good deal from the old philosopher, but lets face it. He didn't major in 21st-century marketing. If he did, he probably would have added a few points. According to Dr. Robert Cialdini, a teacher, and author who penned the book "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion," there are six elements of persuasion, at least in terms of modern marketing. These six points are reciprocity, scarcity, authority, consistency, liking, and consensus.

You don't need to tap into every single one of these persuasion points, but it's really great to know what you have access to! It's kind of like being a painter with more colors to choose from. Mix, match or experiment! You'll find what works best for your copy and your product.

Reciprocity means someone feels obligated to give back after receiving something from others (this works well in multi-level marketing).

Scarcity means if someone finds out a product is limited, they become more likely to act.

Authority sets you up as an authority in the industry, which helps customers believe you thanks to credibility (you may have experience, degrees, proven results and so on).

Consistency exposes individuals repeatedly to your copy while actively asking the viewer for comments or other interactions, so then they continue to come back and interact with your content.

Liking is important because people are more likely to say "yes" or buy a product from a company they like and respect.

Lastly, consensus means someone is more likely to go along with his or her peers. Essentially, it's a form of consumer peer pressure.

By combining your persuasion points with the CORE emotions and detailing all the other points within this Part Two, you'll be well on your way to creating great copy that obliterates the blank page!

PART 3 - THE PROOF (PIMP!)

We all start our copy, staring off onto a blank page. I know the fear of just looking at that white, empty space, void of anything. It really can be a bit daunting to start off. Don't worry though. Because in Part Three we're going to look at some helpful insights to get you started.

Over the years, if I had to pick out the most underutilized aspect of writing copy, I'd say it is proof. It sounds so simple. The proof really is what pushes a customer into buying your product and believing your copy. After all, without proof, what is there? You'll never sell anything based on hope. You need proof. Concrete evidence into why the product can address a customer's problem. And that's exactly what this Part Three is all about.

PART 3A - STATS ABOUT THE PRODUCT

And here's the thing. I'm a bit of a sucker for acronyms. They were a major teaching element in school growing up. Basically, acronyms were hammered into me early on, and I've continued to use them. And I've got a great one for you regarding the proof. You ready?

Give me a "P!" Give me an "I!" Give me an "M!" Give me a "P!" What does that spell? PIMP! PIMP! PIMP!

Okay, so you probably won't hear your local high school cheer squad asking for a pimp. However, it's something you won't forget, which is exactly why it makes such an amazing acronym.

What does it stand for? Product, Industry, Market, and Problem. What does it have to do with proof? You're going to use stats regarding product, industry, market, and problem in order to provide your target audience with proof. Proof in these four different avenues will outline how it addresses their problem.

In this section, we're going to look at stats about the product.

Proof boils down to providing something that's true and explaining why it's true. "This is the greatest weight loss supplement ever!" is a fine statement. But what makes it true? Without proof, a customer has no reason to believe you. They've read false information and been tricked with fake advertisements before. Which is why providing proof is crucial.

Basically, a customer doesn't know you. They have no reason to trust you. Remember when your parents told you "never trust a stranger?" It's the same thing here. They won't trust you until you can provide proof as to why they should.

Alright, so you need to provide stats about your product. How in the world do you actually do that? You need to start by researching the product. Break the product down to its nuts and bolts.

Did you design a product? How did you design it? Who designed it? Where was it built? When was it created? Is there a story behind it? What kind of specs are involved? Every single little bit of information here is very important.

The online underwear company *MeUndies* markets its product as the most comfortable underwear you'll ever wear (in addition to being an easy online destination for monthly underwear). Why should you believe it's all that more comfortable than your current pairs? All of its products are made from modal. You may have never even heard of this material, but the company makes sure you know it is more breathable and soft than cotton. Well, now you're interested. The company provides you with instant proof as to why what it has is better than what you're used to, and it's based on what the product is made from.

Just remember the most important part of "The Proof" section is the more proof you have, the easier it will be to convince your customers of your product's benefits. That's what this entire part is all about and we'll continue to cover in each section.

PART 3B - STATS ABOUT THE MARKET

And now we've reached the "M" section of my PIMP acronym. The market is more or less whom you'll be selling to. But more than that, it is whom you'll sell to again and again. In other words, it is your key demographic, target audience, or however else you wish to refer to those you're targeting.

"Top Sales People Combine Intuition With Data To Outsell Their Competition"

As you may already know from other lessons in marketing, the more fine-tuned you are with your target audience, the easier it is to sell to them. Do you sell directly to just college-aged students, or do you sell to senior citizens? Perhaps your market consists of families making over $100,000 annually, or you sell to single individuals looking to save money. The more you know about your audience, the easier this becomes.

Remember, this is one of those areas where there's no such thing as too much information. The more you know about your market the easier it is to customize your copy for them.

Let's consider an example. Say you were going to write sales copy directed at farmers. You don't want to just create generic content for all farmers. That wouldn't work because there are so many different kinds of farmers. Instead, the more you know about who the farmers are, where they live and the way they live, the more you'll be able to research this key demographic. With the very specific research, you will be able to identify important statistics and use the stats as proof of your sales copy.

One thing to keep in mind is you may have a few different markets. If you do, that's great! The more markets you sell to the greater your potential revenue opportunities. However, you really need to keep in mind that it is necessary to look closely at every single market. Dig deeper into each category to find out the best way to connect with the individual markets. After all, the research you carry out for one particular market will not be the same as another target audience. When selling a steps counter, the average male college student likely walks a different amount than a post-retirement female. So while having different markets is great, you need to look at each market individually.

So why in the world do you need to research specific information about these markets? It gives you a way to directly bond with them. Let's just say, for discussion purposes, the average farmer wakes up at 4:00 a.m. every day (I'm just throwing that number out there). If most farmers wake up at this time and you include a reference to it within your copy, other farmers will instantly feel connected to your copy.

By using the research for your target market, they are far more likely to believe what you say. After all, you know when they wake up, the struggles of working before first light and other specifics.

I like to take advantage of the research (I try to research every single avenue and not leave any rock unturned to make sure I literally have everything available on the target market) by including some strong proof statement as early into the copy as possible.

If you tell a universal truth to the market early on, they instantly become more likely to connect and believe what you have to say after it. So, by the time they get to the point in your copy where you explain your product and how it solves their problem, they are already more likely to buy into what you have to say. You've proven you're someone they can trust, which is the entire purpose of providing proof.

PART 3C - STATS ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

When working with different clients, I'm always surprised as to how little some of these business owners know about their industry as a whole. They focus on their own business and

their own products but pay little mind to what is going on with other companies within their sector.

There is such a big difference between companies at the enterprise level and smaller, more localized business (maybe just like your own). These large enterprise corporations made it this far because they keep an ear to the ground and know what's going on in their own industry. You need to do exactly the same thing.

That is why stats about the industry are important (and why I've included it in The Proof section of this book).

Now, to me, industry doesn't refer to just your company. No, it instead refers to the other companies. Basically, the more you can learn about other companies and the way things go within your own industry, the better off you'll be. Because here's the thing: every industry has its own imprinted rules that kind of dictate the natural ebb and flow of it.

Take a look at the auto industry. Next year's models hit your local storeroom often six-months ahead of time. Car companies all hit up the major auto shows (Detroit, LA, Berlin and so on). Even though these companies are separated by thousands of miles, each is on the same page with regards to the natural ebb and flow of the industry. You need to do the same with your own industry.

You also need to pay attention to the government. By this, I mean know what kind of regulations there are. Does the government get involved with the production? Does it regulate what you can or cannot make (or even say)?

A common problem I've seen is companies focus on their own governments, but don't look at what's going on in countries they ship to. Every country has different regulations you need to understand.

This is especially true if you deal with anything regarding food and beverage. Let's take an interesting look at the alcoholic beverage Fireball. This cinnamon flavored whiskey is popular in the United States. However, in 2014 the company accidentally sent its U.S. product to Europe. The thing is, Fireball contains propylene glycol in it. In case this ingredient just looks Greek to you, it's commonly found in antifreeze. Europe has much stricter standards for how much of this ingredient can be found in beverages than the United States. So while "perfectly fine" for U.S. consumption, it was recalled in Europe.

Honestly, this was probably just an error in shipping or mislabeling, but I can't stress this enough that you need to understand not only the industry but also all forms of government involved.

As you look at the industry as a whole, research it and come up with statistics with regards to how your copy can sell your product. Perhaps you're in the weight loss industry and you look up how much money the average person spends on weight loss gear every year. Or maybe

you sell cushions for shoes and you research just how much time people spend walking every day.

The more you know about your industry, how it functions and who the major players are, the more insights you can take and put into your sales copy. Trust me, there's never such a thing as too much research. So dig up everything you can!

PART 3D - STATS ABOUT THE PROBLEM

We've now come full-circle. We are back to where we started, which is the problem (the problem your customer's face). It's the final "P" in "PIMP." This is where you'll begin investigating and looking up statistics for the problem your customer faces.

Like the P…I…M… sections, the more stats you can uncover the more ways you can provide helpful information for your customer. After all, the entire key for this Part 3 "The Proof" section is uncovering stats, articles and looking up experts who discuss the particular problem in question.

In your copy, you're going to say a good deal about the problem your customer faces and, in return, about the benefits your product offers. And every single time you make any kind of statement you want to be passed off as fact; you need to provide stats and a proof backing up the statement.

Remember those research papers you wrote back in high school and maybe even college? You know how if you included anything within the text beyond common knowledge you had to include some sort of source supporting the claim? Well, guess what. That's exactly what you need to do here.

Now, you don't need to head out to the library and start flipping through research textbooks. The research game has changed enough to where you can find just about anything you need online. However, you still need to make sure everything you say is supported.

Maybe you sell a product regarding weight loss. Maybe the problem is your target market is overweight, looking for ways to drop the pounds. The stats you come up with regarding the problem can cover the percentage of people overweight in the country. How this number will increase by 2030, or how much money is spent on the industry. All of this provides some insights into how many other people suffer from the problem.

Like the other areas of PIMP, look at the problem from every angle. Don't leave a stone unturned and look for quality research. I can't stress that enough. Beyond just researching the problem, you need quality, reliable information.

This is the day of "fake news." There's so much nonsense online you need to make sure what you're passing off as fact actually is fact. So how do you do that? A few different ways. First,

disregard anything you read on a personal blog. It's not hard to have a blog. People's pets have blogs. So don't use this. Second, don't use Wikipedia. Much like a personal blog, anyone can input and edit Wikipedia. You want scientifically backed articles, news websites and educational journals. Anything with a .gov or .edu within the URL is likely a solid reference.

Also, I can't stress this enough: look for recent news releases. There are some instances where slightly dated research journals might prove helpful. However, if you're looking at the percentage of Americans who are obese, or the number of school children who play after school sports, you want up to date research. Content 10 years old doesn't do you much good as these numbers have changed.

One of my secret little research tricks is I type in what I'm searching for and then I include "PDF" at the end of the search. This is because research journals and educational publications are released in PDF format. This increases the chance of finding great research from quality sources.

Just remember, the purpose of this entire Part Three is to dive into the product, the industry, the market and the problem in order to develop stats, charts and find helpful research. All of this gives you so much more power and a few different ways to present a copy to your target audience(s).

PART 3E - FAMOUS TESTIMONIALS

When I turn on the television and commercials pop up, you know what's the first thing I see? Celebrity endorsements. Whether it is Lebron James popping up on a Sprite commercial, a big name actor offering their voice talent for a car spot, or Peyton Manning in, well, every other commercial, everyone loves a great famous endorsement.

Do you know any famous celebrities who are willing to go out on a limb and give a testimonial for your product? Well, that would be fantastic! Of course, we all can't rub shoulders with the rich and famous. Don't worry though! You don't need a high-priced celeb to talk about your kitten mittens or hamster toys. Thankfully, bringing in an average Joe to talk about your product is often just as good, (if not better)!

One question I've often been asked is, "How in the world can I have a testimonial if the product hasn't even gone live yet?" My answer is, hold off on going live for a few weeks.

Will it kill you to wait for your product in order to bring in quality testimonials? Unless you're selling makeup for Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) and you need it out by a very specific time, chances are waiting a bit will do you more good than bad.

Testimonials are a great way to educate your market on how the product solves their problems. Let a handful of people test out your product ahead of time. While it might not look great to have your mom pop up in the testimonial (consumers are smart enough to see when

names match up…or if you look just like them), having friends or workers test out the product and offer their personal testimonial can really go a long way.

Of course, I want you to make sure these testimonials come from people who are in the same target audience. It won't help much if you're trying to pitch how cool and hip a new shoe is, then show a 75-year-old rocking out in the shoes. It might be funny, but it's not going to connect with your market audience.

Have the person give their testimonial but make sure it addresses the consumer's problem, how it solves it, and also any other benefits/anti-benefits of the product. Remember, this is The Proof section, so make sure the testimonial offers plenty of proof regarding the product.

Okay, so let's say you're able to snag some sort of famous person! That's really great if the famous person has credibility. Don't just bring someone on for the sake of having a big name. Their credibility rubs off onto your company. So if you bring in someone who was just arrested or is connected to serious allegations, that's not going to help your product or brand equity (how people view your company) at all. So I always say famous people are great at giving testimonials, as long as they are seen as quality people.

How do you land famous people? You'd be surprised as to just how easy it is to connect with some through social media. There are a handful of celebs that will openly interact and respond to fans. They will vet your business before ever agreeing to anything, but hey, the worst thing that can happen is they don't reply to a tweet or Instagram post. So give it a try! It may just blow up your product exposure and take it to heights you never even dreamed were possible in the first place.

PART 3F - NEWS ARTICLES ABOUT THE PROBLEM/PRODUCT

To close out The Proof section, I want you to take a step back and look at your product, the problem and all the odds and ends regarding your copy through the eyes of the world. How do you do that? Through current news articles on the topic.

Sometimes there really is nothing like the phrase "According to The New York Times" or "According to Forbes Magazine." Copy openings like this instantly grab the attention of your market, it lets them know you're serious and that you have major credibility on your side! And after all, that's all we're going for with The Proof. Credibility.

But wait, you have a new product. The chances of the Washington Post or the New Yorker picking up a story on what you're selling isn't all that likely. This is when researching similar products or the problem your product addresses comes in handy. Remember, and I can't hammer this home enough: don't leave a single rock unturned while researching The Proof. You never know when you might uncover a diamond in the rough.

Think of taking that Forbes article or the post on Business Insider as your own celebrity endorsement (just way cheaper). In the world of fake news, consumers desperately want content they can trust. JoeSmoe.blog.com doesn't really instill very much credibility, so it won't help you much. But flash that New York Times badge or toss out how the BBC covered it and you have the credibility of your news source.

You have a new company. You want people to believe you. If you're like me, I don't put all my trust into someone I just met off the street. Yeah, they might seem like a nice person, but nice and trustworthy are two totally different things! That's one of your biggest challenges when writing copy. You need to instill trust in someone who may be seeing your company and product for the very first time. So they probably won't believe what you're saying, but they are more likely to believe what USA Today has to say.

Just remember to check the date on your news articles. I can't tell you how many times I've read through copy, seen "according to the Chicago Tribune" and then saw the cited article is like 20 years old. Unless you're talking about something that happened 20 years ago, or there hasn't been any kind of advancement within the industry (I really, really doubt it), you need up to date research.

Ideally, you want something that came out the same year as your copy, but I know this isn't always possible. Just try to do the best you can at finding material as close to your copywriting date as possible. I always listen more to a company using the most recent news articles over one with dated insights.

In fact, everything I've gone into in this part stems from building your credibility with your target markets. PIMP is all about uncovering important information, stats and data regarding your product, the given industry, the market you're selling to and the problem your target market faces. From there, bringing in testimonials and news articles just goes and helps build your credibility even further.

As long as you put in the research, you'll have all sorts of great material to work with when creating your copy. And from here, I know you're ready to move into Part Four!

PART 4 - THE PRODUCT

For Part Four, we're focusing on the product. We kind of started on here earlier when going over proof in Part Three. However, I really feel like focusing on the product is so important it needs to have its own section.

In a very similar way to the previous section, you really need to know everything you possibly can about the product. After all, it's yours. If you don't know it, the customer surely won't know it.

Throughout this section, we're going to talk about the different characteristics of the product. If it's a physical product, what's the size? How about the color? Are there different versions? Basically, it's what makes this product and what makes it unique? That is extremely important. What does the product do for the market?

PART 4A - THE PRODUCT SIZE

When writing copy, it is so easy to focus on the functionality of the product. That's fine and all, but really you need to focus on what the product does for your prospect and what the desired outcome is.

I find at this point in writing out ideas for my copy, it's so much easier to go into bullet point form here. Sometimes shelling out long-winded sentences for product specifications really isn't the way to go. After all, if you check out something (anything) on Amazon, the specs typically appear as a rundown of bullet points.

I think we as humans want to get to the meat of any subject fast. Have you ever gone to a movie you really, really wanted to see, but they don't get to the major story points for what seems like forever? At some point, it becomes like pulling teeth in the theater. Like, come on already! Well with your copy, you won't have someone stuffed into a chair and nothing else around them. They will just turn to something else. It's exactly why you need to give them the quick points of what happens with your product. BAM! BAM! BAM! You can go into more detail later, but bullet points are so important.

For size, what can you write about the size? Start out with the measurements. Are you selling a cookbook? How many pages is it? What are the dimensions of the book? A person needs to know if it will fit on their kitchen counter or if it's more a coffee table book. Selling custom t-shirts? Don't just list "Small," "Medium" or "Large." Post the physical measurements of the clothing (trust me, people will contact you and ask what the exact size is because let's face it, small for one company could be large for another).

Size for smaller items, or items that may shift in size during shipment, will only really require you to include the product size. However, when you ship something, the package size often changes. Maybe you sell camera equipment and you need to protect it during shipment? You'll put it in a larger box. If you can, offer up shipment sizes for the boxes as well. When looking for items back at Amazon, you'll often see it includes shipment dimensions. Now, I'd bet most consumers are not going to skip out on a purchase based on the shipment dimensions and weight. However, it really is helpful to know, especially for people who live in smaller housing units where doors are not all that big. If they are ordering a custom sofa from you, they really do need to know if it'll fit through the front door or they will need to break out the circular saw and widen the door frame manually.

You want to paint a full picture for your market. The more educated they are, the easier it becomes to buy what you're selling and writing copy on.

PART 4B - THE PRODUCT COLOR

As we stick with writing about the product itself, let's dive into color.

Why is it so important to mention color? After all, can't people just look at the picture included? It sure would save text space, wouldn't it? In a perfect world, yes that would work out very well. However, it's not a perfect world and you really do need to mention color.

This is something I've run into previously. Now, I haven't made the mistake in years. It was one of those things where it happened once and I learned from it. But basically, the color display on my computer screen may not match the color display on your computer screen. It's why when I go to print something professionally I bring in the hard file so I can edit colors in order to match what the printer produces. With so many computers, tablets, phones and TVs out there, color doesn't always match.

blue	red	black	green
TRUST	LOVE	BOLD	SOOTHING
SMART	IMMEDIACY	RICH	ECO-FREINDLY
CALM	ENERGY	POWER	NATURAL
FAITH	SALE	MYSTERY	ENVY
NATURAL	PASSION	ELEGANCE	JEALOUSY
STABLE	ANGER	EVIL	BALANCE
POWER	HUNGER	STRENGTH	RESTFUL

yellow	orange	pink	purple
CHEER	HEALTH	TENDERNESS	ROYAL
ATTENTION	ATTRACTION	SENSITIVE	MYSTERIOUS
CHILDISH	STAND OUT	CARING	ARROGANT
FRESH	THIRST	EMOTIONAL	LUXURY
WARMTH	WEALTH	SYMPATHETIC	CHILDISH
ENERGY	YOUTHFUL	LOVE	CREATIVE
OPTIMISM	HAPPINESS	SEXUALITY	SADNESS

You don't want someone thinking they are buying a black t-shirt, only to receive a dark navy blue t-shirt in the mail. That just leads to all sorts of problems (including you having to pay to ship out a new shirt). It's why you really do need to indicate the color in your copy.

Head over to really any online clothing retailer website. You can check out Target or Nordstrom or Walmart or really any website that sells clothes. If the clothing item comes in multiple color variations, each thumbnail includes not only a different picture but also a clear, precise color name next to it. This way, whether someone has a funky color on their screen or they don't see color well themselves, they instantly know the color.

It's pretty basic, but the color is so important to your product. After all, you picked out the color for a reason, so why not give the color some time in the spotlight? Let the world know in your copy exactly what the color is.

Okay, so there's one thing I want you to avoid with color. Have you shopped for a new car online before? Or at least fiddled with some of the online design features where you can customize your own car (I know I do)? Well if you have, you've probably discovered the colors are not just "red" or "silver." Car companies like to use very specific color names. It's like Crayola named their car colors!

This trickles down into other colors. The University of Michigan's school and team colors are maize and blue. However, when Nike took the rights to the team's uniforms back over a few years ago, the official "maize" color is "Amarillo." Amarillo and blue doesn't really have a sexy ring to it now, does it? And yes, amarillo is Spanish for yellow, and Nike was probably connecting Spanish yellow with maize, the corn. Realistically it's all because certain shades of colors are copy protected and so major companies need unique names connected to colors in order to copy protect it. All of that is just so over the top for a simple color. So, for you, please don't try to get fancy and over the top with the colors. Everyone who reads your copy needs to understand it. Because if you're talking about a pair of headphones you sell and call it "Amarillo," unless you're selling to a predominately Spanish speaking audience, it just causes a bunch of confusion.

Keep your colors straight to the point, but make sure to include it in the copy. As one of my business professors constantly said to me, "Keep it simple, stupid." It's so much better to keep it simple. More people will understand.

PART 4C - THE PRODUCT TYPE

Your product is unique. It's different from what your competition sells. You know it and you want your market to know it. Well, now's the time to really hammer that home!

The Product is all about setting your product apart from the competition. You're discussing what separates it away from the rest of the pack. In this particular section, we'll look at "the type."

There are a few different ways to look at the type. For starters, is it a follow up to a previous release? You need to make sure the market can easily identify it from previous items. A great

way to consider this is through the eyes of the smartphone industry. Let's face it, most smartphones look pretty identical. Even if you compare the last several iPhones, when stacked next to one another most look almost spot on the same. It's what's under the screen that makes the newer phones an upgrade. That's why each release comes with a type. The iPhone 8, or iPhone X. It all has a type in order to separate itself from previous models. (Samsung, LG, Sony and everyone else does the same).

It isn't just cell phones though. I have a friend who's a huge sneakerhead. He not only needs to have the latest Jordan's but he even collects the Kobe's. He has boxes of shoes, each marked with the type number (Jordan 16s, Kobe 11s and so on). I'm not a sneaker guy so that's a bit over my head, but the type clearly indicates which release it is.

There are other conditions you need to consider when looking at type though. Maybe the industry you're in has different versions and segments. You need to let people know the type your product fits in. When checking out cars, you can look at a sedan or a coupe. Each is a different type of the same model. You might not be selling cars, but maybe you're selling socks. Is it a sports sock type or a dress sock type? That little inclusion really makes such a big difference!

When I create copy, I want to make sure I really give the audience the full breadth of what is being sold. If they still have questions about the item, I didn't do my job (or they just didn't read it).

I really want to drive this point home here. When you write copy about the product, you need to fully describe it, so someone reading the copy, without ever seeing a picture, can visualize what it is you're talking about. You're painting a picture with words. If you had to describe the Golden Gate Bridge to someone who had never seen or heard of it before, how would you paint it with words?

When working with people who are focused on writing copy, I can't tell you how many times I hear the phrase, "But I'm not a writer." Alright, so we all didn't major in creative writing in college, nor do we write award-winning poetry on the side. The great thing about writing copy for a product or service is it doesn't matter! You're not trying to wow anyone with an extensive vocabulary or smooth as silk descriptions. In fact, that can sometimes come across as pretentious.

Sales copy is all about making it easy to understand while providing a solid description and insights into the product. You're educating the market on the product, giving them proof as to why it addresses a given problem while describing what the product does, how it looks and its performance.

You don't need to be a classically trained writer to create great copy!

PART 4D - WHAT DOES IT DO FOR THE PROSPECT?

Whatever you sell, whatever you make and whatever you're writing copy on, it all boils down to one simple question: what does it do for the prospect? This is where we get into the meat of "The Product." It's also where we really get to dive into those bullet points.

Let's say you sell something for weight loss. It's a major money maker as just about everyone out there wants to drop weight. Even the super ripped and buff guys and gals out there are looking for new ways to challenge themselves! It's what makes the industry so financially accessible. But anyway, if you're focusing on weight loss, you can say your product is going to help the prospect feel healthier and look better! However, there are some problems with that statement.

The issue with just saying, "My product will help you feel good" is that it's too simplistic of a benefit. It doesn't explain why. You can't just tell someone this pill is going to make him or her feel better. This isn't The Matrix. It's not a red pill or blue pill kind of decision. If you sell a laser hair-growth product, you can't just say, "Wear this laser hat and you'll look great later!" No, you need to go behind all of that and really dig deep. You need to talk about how the product is going to do it! You need to tell them how it is going to play out emotionally.

Maybe people are afraid of waking up and feeling bloated and tired. It drags them down. Remember how we discussed the CORE emotions earlier on? Well, it's time to really bring those in here. Talk about the core emotion your prospect feels when experiencing this. Maybe they are afraid of feeling it again. Or perhaps it makes them mad that they need to deal with it every single day. You're going to play off of this emotion and drive home the fact that your product will help them feel refreshed and at peak performance when they wake up. That is, after all, exactly what they are looking for!

Your product provides an emotional benefit. Now I know, if you're selling flip-flops you may not have really considered the emotional connection your product offers. But it really does! Maybe someone's feet hurt with other sandals and yours provide relief.

Try to sit down and write out four or five benefits your product offers the prospect. And with every benefit, write out an emotional connection to it. With all the research you've already done and the CORE emotions you've identified, you should be able to just line everything up (remember, keep organized notes!). In fact, the benefits your product offers the prospect is the very first bullet point you want to dive into considering what you're selling does for the target market.

The next bullet points I want you to focus on? Comparisons, product creation story, and testimonials.

Let's take a look at comparisons. Comparisons are a very good thing. They really allow you to kind of sort and compare what exactly your product is like and how it can help your target prospects. So look at how other, similar products have gone and helped customers.

Heading back over to Amazon reviews is great for this. This time, don't just focus on the bad reviews. Read the in-depth four and five-star reviews. You'll have to sift through some the company likely wrote (or commissioned), but there should be very specific reviews that can help you out with this.

Make sure to watch the YouTube product reviews as well. As you go through YouTube reviews, you'll eventually find some really great channels that provide non-partisan reviews. You can use all of this as comparisons for how your product can go and help someone.

Realistically, these comparisons are all designed to help you find ways to explain your product or service in a way the prospect can understand.

The problem I've found in many brand new eCommerce stores is the owners don't really know all of the components of it. They don't know the comparisons or what customers find beneficial in a product. You might be in this same boat, but thankfully all the answers are out there, waiting for you to find.

If you've ever tried to sit down and think about the inner workings of the Internet, it's pretty confusing. A lot of really smart coders and designers have built the Internet to where it is today. Attempting to understand all of this and why it sends traffic to your page is enough to make your head spin like a top! Don't try to think about this.

I like to compare it to driving a car. You know how to drive a car. You know what happens when you push the accelerator and the break. You may not know the inner workings of the engine, how the transmission works or anything else like that. You just know what it does when you tell it to. Well, think of the Internet like this. Understanding the finer elements of the Internet is not necessary. Just focus on what it does when you interact with it.

You see how you visualize driving a car? Sitting behind the wheel, pushing down on the gas and steering? You want your market to visualize your own product and how they interact with it. If you sell audio speakers, you don't need to tell them how the speaker works. You just need to tell them what the speaker does when they turn on their stereo.

Now, let's shift gears a bit and look at the creation of your company (or at the very least the product you're selling). People love creation stories! It helps bring them into your world and show them part of what went into everything. In fact, creation stories are becoming extremely popular these days.

Have you heard of Harry's, the online shaving retailer (although I believe they have displays up in Target now)? Well in their earlier commercials and copy, they explained how two brothers were fed up with overpriced razors, so they searched out a German razor company, purchased it and started to sell directly to the consumer.

Dyson, the vacuum company, did this previously as well. In sales copy, they underlined all the hard work that went into developing the Dyson vacuum in order to provide its excellent

suction. They tend to do this with every new product now (the company sells fans, hair dryers and all sorts of other items now). Basically, it's all about putting a face on the company.

The thing is people really, honestly, want to know how the product came to be. Did you ever see the movie *Back to the Future?* In the movie, Doc tells Marty how he came up with the idea of the flux-capacitor, which makes time travel possible. He gives a creation story, which Marty then has to use later on (after he goes back in time to prove to 1955 Doc that he really is from the future).

People love stories, especially a story as important as the production creation story. Consider where did it come from? Why did you create it? And interview people who were involved with the creation. Apple does this all the time when it releases a new update. It often shows videos of chief designers and programmers in regards to all the new features.

Maybe you created the product all on your own. If that's the case, don't just set up a camera and talk. You'll leave stuff out. Instead, have someone interview you. Some of the questions they ask might stir up memories you haven't thought of in years.

And finally, the last bullet point (and last part of Part Four!) is testimonials.

We covered a good deal of this in Part 3 – The Proof section, but it's important enough to bring up again. When you're doing this product section, you always want to collect as many testimonials as possible. Don't just bring in one or two and call it a day.

When doing testimonials, it's always great to video record everything. But here's the thing. I've often found the people who are most engaging and exciting are often those you least expect. Some people are extremely boring on camera. Like mind-numbing boring. You don't want that! You want excitement! You want people who love talking about your product! So record as many as possible. You'll eventually discover those people who are just great on camera, carry a weight about themselves and really put an exclamation point onto why your product is the answer to their problem!

PART 5 - THE PROPOSITION

The proposition really boils down to the offer. Basically, at the end of a successful sales pitch and the copy you write, the goal is to get your prospect to take an action. The action really depends on what you're hoping for. Do you want a sale? Do you want to generate leads? Expand your email-marketing list? Grow your social media presence? Everything you put into the copy boils down to this.

PART 5A - WHAT ACTION DO YOU WANT THE PROSPECT TO TAKE?

So you need to choose an action you want the prospect to take. Don't try to dance around it or sugarcoat it. That's a problem I see far too often. People are afraid of being direct because they think it's too forceful. It's not. Trust me. After you create a great copy, you need to explicitly tell them the exact action you want them to take.

Doesn't that sound simple? You created copy and now you tell them exactly what you want? It should be, but if you look online, you'll see most people don't do this at all. They might toss something in, but it's not strong. Or, on the opposite end, they might ask someone to do a half-dozen different things. It doesn't work that way. It's like you have a magic lamp, a genie and you have one wish. What's the one thing you want to happen?

If you want someone to contact you, tell them to contact you. Don't say "you can email me, text me, call me, tweet me…etc." That's no good. It offers up way too many options. Have you ever been at a restaurant where the menu is the size of a chapter book? It's hard to pick what to get, right? Of course, usually restaurants that have giant menus don't really do a good job at anything, but that's beside the point. You don't want a big menu. You want it small and specific. That way, the patron doesn't have an issue doing what you want. Because it's the only real option.

So why is it that giving options isn't a good idea? Because we're busy people. We don't want to take valuable time out of our day to make a decision on something like this. Back to that restaurant analogy, let's say you order something, you're good to go, and then you're asked what kind of side you want. You freeze! Wait, sides? What sides? You then look at a dozen different options and now you just don't know what to do. It would have been so much easier if they just picked something for you. That's what you want to do with your market and the action you want this key demographic to take. Don't give them options for sides. Tell them exactly what they are going to get and what they need to do.

This section of Part Five is all about you deciding the one action you want the prospect to take. There can only be one thing. If you want to ask them to do a second thing you'll have to create separate copy and produce a separate marketing approach for that.

Realistically, it all boils down to what would be a win for you and your copy? What is a win for the sales piece you're going to write? You need to determine what a win would be and, from there, you are able to determine what kind of action you want the prospect to take. There's no generalized "win" for all companies. What you might consider a win might not be what another company is looking for. So consider why you're writing the sales copy and what the entire purpose of connecting with consumers is, at this present time.

PART 5B - WHAT IS A "WIN" FOR THIS SALES PIECE?

We ended the previous section asking the question "what is a win for the sales piece?" I'm going to tell you this is something only you can figure out for yourself and your business.

So, let's say your "win" for the sales piece is to land someone's name and their email. Well, then that's it! You want to make sure and write that as clear as day at the end of the copy. This is your call to action (CTA). Every great sales copy does it. Whether it's McDonald's telling you to come out and discover the new dollar menu or a life insurance company telling you to call about a quote. Your call to action tells the prospect exactly what you want them to do (and identifies what a win is for your business).

Maybe you're still not totally sure how to do it? Not a problem. But don't worry, once you start writing out your CTAs it will become second nature to you. So let's say all you want is that name and email. In that case, you can write something like, "Enter your name and email in the form below." It's pretty straightforward and that's it.

You just want to be clear. I can't emphasize that enough! You need to be clear, clear, clear. You don't want to try and get fancy here. Trying to be cute has lost more people a "win" than I care to count. Are you a sports fan? Have you ever seen an American football player running towards the end zone to score, but then they start getting cute, showboating, and drop the ball before they actually score? They were so close! But they blew it because they got cute. Don't be that guy. Don't get to the finish line and try to get all fancy or aim for an award of some sort. What do you really want? Some kind of flashy piece of glass or metal on your desk, or more clients (aka more money)?

Alright, so are you catching on to just keep it simple and straight to the point? Remember that old saying my business professor use to say that I brought up? "Keep it simple, stupid." That's this in a nutshell.

I'm sorry if it sounds like I'm harping a bit, but I've just seen so many great pieces of copy fall flat because the writer or business owner fails to include this last simple and straightforward piece of information. I don't want you to fail or fall flat. Which is why we're spending so much time on it.

So after you give them that direct, to the point, CTA, you want to future pace them, if you can. What this means is you show them what will happen in the future, should they follow your CTA. Studies have shown this to be extremely helpful. People want to know what to expect after they give you their email or head over to your website. So tell them! Tell them that after they enter their name and email, you'll send a copy of your best selling book for free. Or that they receive a discount code off their next purchase, or so on. Tell them what happens. That's huge in attracting them to your CTA (and making sure they actually do what you want them to do!).

If you're still working out exactly how you want to write out your copy, consider starting with this first. In reality, you kind of need to know what you want before you start copy anyway. As a kid, you couldn't ask your parent for a holiday present and then not know what you want. It defeats the entire purpose of asking!

Steven Covey always said, "Begin with the end in mind." So you want to really think about what it is you are hoping for from the piece. Begin every single piece that you write with this. If

you're going for sales, great! Just make sure there's enough proof and insights to justify the sale in the copy that you write.

PART 5C - WRITE THE CTA 3 DIFFERENT WAYS

Did you ever see that game show called "The Weakest Link"? You know, the show with that really angry British woman who would say, "You are the weakest link. Good Bye!" and, with that, the person would be kicked off the show? It was a bit humorous, yet when you step back and think about it, you really are only as good as the weakest link.

I have a friend who works in IT. We like to talk computer shop from time to time (although it's kind of like a bicycle mechanic and an airplane mechanic talking because the kind of equipment he uses is way over my head). Anyway, he's always telling me these stories of major companies investing millions of dollars into IT security, and yet it all goes down the drain because an employee opened an email they thought contained the latest celebrity gossip, but instead contained a virus that infiltrated the entire network. As he would put it: you're only as strong as your weakest link.

So why am I bringing all of that up right now? Because the same holds true for your copy. You can have incredible proof statistics regarding what you're selling. You might have an amazing hook and you could have perfectly identified your target audience. All of this is great, but if your CTA falls flat, none of the rest matters. The CTA, the final aspect of your copy, is the weakest link. It doesn't drive the point home and, in the end, all of those potential prospects will leave and leave you with nothing.

There are so many examples I could use to illustrate this. Maybe you've seen a great movie with a horrible ending. Or perhaps you went to a concert that rocked your world, but the closing number just sounded so bad it ruined the entire concert experience. We as humans have almost been trained to focus on the negatives. It stands out like a sore thumb (and even a sore thumb is a negative!). So you need to nail that CTA. It needs to be perfect and it really needs to both capture the attention of the prospect while giving them clear instructions as to what they need to do.

I like to do just about everything in threes. After all, there has to be a firm bed, a soft bed, and a bed that's just right (just ask Goldilocks). When writing out a call to action, I do this in three different ways. I try to look at what my perspective target market finds interesting and what would connect with them. I then write out my CTAs in the three ways (you can always do more, of course).

It's so very important to actually write them out. There are times where you just don't realize how something looks or comes across until you see it physically written out. Did you ever see those pens by Bic labeled "For Her." That's something I have to imagine came to the board of directors and they thought designing a pen set for the average woman's more slender hands would be a good idea. And it might have started out that way. But once it went into

production with "For Her" slapped on the label, they became a laughing stock, with talk shows dedicating time to make fun of it. Trust me. You don't want to end up in that position. Which is why I really want you to write out the CTAs at least three different times.

Now that you have those three CTAs written out perfectly, I'd recommend having other people look it over. Get the opinion not only of others within your company but from people in the target audience. Having a business partner give you their opinion is great and all, but if they're a 25-year-old, recent college graduate, and you're targeting the senior crowd, they are going to see things differently.

Now, you don't need to just settle on three ways and that's it. Write your CTA out as many times until you get it perfect because you want it as strong as possible. Remember, your copy is only as strong as your weakest link. I want you to make sure there is no weakest link.

PART 5D - WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THEY DO THE "THING" YOU WANT THEM TO DO

The end is near! That's right, we're in the last section of the final part in How to Obliterate the Blank Page! We touched on this a little bit in an earlier section, but I want to dive a bit further in to make sure you have the bases covered and are ready to go.

We discussed the idea of providing some future proof to your prospect. In other words, you will let them know what will happen after they follow through with the call to action.

So what will happen? That is completely up to you, but you need to know before you start putting out your copy.

You've come up with what a "win" is for your copy now that you've made it this far. And you've come up with a great call to action to hook the reader into achieving that win. You now need to determine what happens after you win. How do you celebrate?

Think about it. When you are asked to give out your phone number, email address or any other kind of personal information, you want to know what's happening with it. What do you get in return? Well, your prospect wants to know the exact same thing. They will think in a very similar manner.

People, in general, are selfish individuals. They want to know what is in it for them. That's just how we are as humans. If we're going to give something we want to get something. Offering an email isn't much, but we want to know what we'll receive in return. Or at the very least, what will happen after we give that email.

So you really need to decide what is going to happen after they do what you ask. The example I used earlier was of a person supplying their email account to receive my book for free. That's a great opportunity for them because they get something that might prove helpful without paying a dime for it!

Of course, maybe you're not asking for an email address. Perhaps you're asking them to follow you on Facebook or Twitter. If that's the case, tell them they will receive a special discount code for future purchases, that they will have access to only social media promotions, or simply tell them you follow back! You need to use the "what will happen after" as a little bit of added incentive.

If you have followed all of the tips, tricks, and tools we've covered with the previous parts, you should be well on your way to creating excellent copy that grabs the market's attention, provides them with proof on how your product helps with a problem and draws them in with the CTA. All of this put together should deliver you with the "win" you want. But use this "what happens after" area as that little extra push. The cherry on top, if you will.

Well, there you have it. Part 5 – The Proposition, to me, is pretty straightforward, but such an important step. It's also an area where far too many business owners and writers run into problems. From leaving out a great CTA to not knowing what constitutes a "win," I've seen all sorts of slip-ups in this final stretch. When these mistakes happen, the client often tells me "well, I was close." The thing about sales is no, you're not. You either make a sale or you don't. You either win or you don't. Close is really only a thing in horseshoes and hand grenades. You don't want to come close and lose. You want to nail it and win!

That's why you need to go through each of these five parts (and the added ECOM Examples I have for you) and really take everything to heart. As long as you do, I promise you you'll discover how to obliterate the blank page!

ECOMMERCE EXAMPLE:

This is just a quick example of a brainstorm I did for a $2,000 ecommerce store product sale. I brainstormed a lot on the problems that the customer will face and also what the customer gets. By doing this, it made it a lot easier to create the actual sales copy.

And so far, using my script - we are making over $100,000 a month. I love words!

Problems people face with Starting an Ecommerce Store:

Technical setup is too hard
Don't know what products to choose
Don't know how to get traffic to their store
Don't know how to build a website
Don't know how to connect all the products to their site
Unsure of how to fulfill on the products they sell
Don't know how to design a logo
Don't have the time to learn everything on their own
Don't want to guess at what works and what doesn't
Unsure of what niche to choose
Don't know how to create ads
Don't understand building a brand
Don't want to go it alone

What you get:

Website built for you
Connected to shopify
50 products sourced and placed on your site for you
Custom logo and branding
Choose from over 1500 niches
Setup & implementation for your merchant processing (so you can take payments right away)
Custom theme implementation with PROVEN conversion elements
All product descriptions written for you
Connected to AliExpress for fulfillment so you can have true 1 click fulfillment
You never have to hold or buy any inventory

BONUSES:

We will DOUBLE the number of products in your store from 50 to 100
We will unlock our exclusive TRAFFIC training steps to show you how to get all the traffic and website visitors you could ever want
You will get to continue working with your coach through the next training sessions (steps 7-12)

If you purchase your store setup in the next 72 hours we will do something unheard of - we will GIVE you another store and website completely free - stocked with 100 products
You can have us build this store now or later - it's up to you. We can also give this store to a family member (like a kid or grandkid) if you want to teach them business and show them how to get started

What happens to the person AFTER they buy:

Life after the product purchase (what they will tangibly have):

Store is setup and online and ready to make sales
You'll be learning our best secrets of driving traffic
You'll have a custom logo and design and be legit
You'll have all your products in your store
You won't have to mess with anything technical
You can take payments via paypal and your own merchant account
You can fulfill on all your products with 1 click
You never have to store any products or buy inventory

Life after the product (how will they feel):

Proud of yourself for getting a real business online
Happy that you didn't waste time on stuff that takes months to do
Smart that you took a shortcut to getting your store online
Superior for having a quality website and product line

Who is this NOT FOR:

You want to get rich quick
You believe you will do no work whatsoever - that's not real life
You don't want to follow a proven system
You are extremely skeptical about everything
You don't take action
You suffer from "analysis paralysis"