

# COPYWRITING From A to Z

26 Ways to  
Increase Response



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# ***Copywriting From “A” to “Z”***

## **INTRODUCTION**

A few years ago, I read that one way to remember a large quantity of information was to make an alphabetical list out of it.

I tried it with some things I wanted to remember and keep in mind about copywriting and found it extremely useful.

For the past couple years, I have refined the list.

I turned that list into this Special Report that I hope you'll find useful.

Of course, feel free to refine it, make substitutions, and customize it for yourself.

— David Deutsch

## **A – Attack**

Think through what you want to say first. But when you start to write, attack. Attack the page. Attack the reader’s passivity. Attack the reader’s skepticism. Attack the reader’s imagination.

Attack so fervently that you don’t let up or stop until you reach the end. (*Do not edit as you write—it’s like driving with the brakes on.*)

## **B – Be the Prospect**

One of the most important things you can do to help your writing is to be able to step into your prospect’s shoes.

Know your best prospect’s attitudes, beliefs, concerns, hot buttons and deepest desires.

When you’re done writing, read the copy while you “be the prospect”.

How does it make you feel? Are you convinced?

What questions do you have at what points? What’s missing?

## **C – Curiosity**

Curiosity is a very powerful human emotion, and people will go to great lengths to satisfy it.

Use it to make your prospect read and continue reading your copy.

Use it to make your prospect want your product—either because they are curious about some information contained in the product, or because they are curious as to what life will be like if only they possess what you offer.

Find the aspect of what you’re writing about that you can portray as a “secret.” (*People have ordered books from my clients just to satisfy their curiosity about a single “secret” they just had to know.*)

## D – Dimensionalize

Don’t write one-dimensional copy.

Always dimensionalize what you’re trying to say, for example, by showing how problems cause your prospect pain, how benefits will help your prospect, and the consequences of not responding.

Don’t just say your product makes you thin or rich. Dimensionalize everything that means, all the implications, and all the ways your product helps your prospect attain it.

## E – Energy

Energetic copy gets read and acted on. How do you give copy energy?

First, make sure you are overflowing with energy—well-rested and raring to get your ideas onto the page. (*Run around the block if you need to get your blood flowing.*)

Then fill your writing with colorful, energetic words and phrases and plenty of active verbs.

Make sure your copy shows people doing things (*which helps avoid the unenergetic “passive” voice*).

Add conflict between people or ideas. Use plenty of emotion.

Show instead of tell.

(*This sentence is devoid of energy. This one packs a punch!*)

## **F – Fresh**

Good copy is fresh. Fresh ideas. Fresh ways of looking at things.

Interesting. Different. Not boring.

You never want your reader to say: *“I’ve seen or heard this before.”*

Be the news!

## **G – Gun to the Head**

Write copy as if your life depended on it.

Would you use that clever headline if your life depended on it, or would you go with a more compelling one?

Would you pack more urgency into your copy?

And envision your success!

## **H – Heart**

Don’t just use logic. Write with emotion. To your reader’s heart from yours. Talk about your feelings. Talk about their feelings.

Stir up what Denny Hatch calls “the emotional hot buttons of copywriting: guilt, flattery, anger, exclusivity, greed, fear and salvation.”

## **I – Impressive**

Be ruthless about requiring that your copy be impressive.

Is the offer, the headline, the copy itself impressive to you?

Will it make your prospect say “Wow” or turn to their spouse and say, “Honey, look at this?”

Do not settle for less. (*Remember: There’s a gun to your head!*)

## **J – Judge**

Picture a judge. He isn’t swayed by your claims and promises. He wants proof—lots of proof. (*Along with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.*) Give it to him.

Substantiate every fact and opinion. Be authentic or he’ll see right through you. (*One trick: Use the word “because” as much as possible.*)

## **K – Keep Converting**

You’re not a copywriter, you’re a converter!

Keep converting features into benefits. Keep converting benefits into deeper benefits (by asking: What’s the benefit of the benefit?).

Keep converting claims and opinions into proof, patter into persuasion, the commonplace into exciting drama, what’s old into what’s new, generalizations into specifics, statements into analogies, facts into stories (*everybody loves stories, and if ‘S’ weren’t taken already, I’d use it for ‘stories’*).

## **L – Lead**

People want a leader. So lead! Don’t be wishy-washy.

Give definitive advice. But don’t command people about.

Take them by the hand and lead them gently to the conclusions you would like them to arrive at, to the order you would like them to place, or to the idea that you’re the one to follow.

## **M** – Mindset

Your mindset may be the single most important determinate of how good your copy is.

Are you enthusiastic about the product?

Do you believe in and are you fired up about your own abilities?

Are you envisioning the inevitability of the copy’s success?

Have you cleared your mind of extraneous concerns?

Do you genuinely care about the prospect and want to help him or her arrive at the best decision?

## **N** – Name

There’s tremendous power in giving something a name.

Listerine made a fortune by naming bad breath “*Halitosis*.”

The “*12-cent cure*” for back pain sounds more specific and intriguing than “*a cure for back pain*.” “*The Lazy Man’s Way to Riches*” is light-years ahead of “*How to Get Rich*.”

So when possible, give names to your prospect’s problems, your solutions, your techniques, your methods, your ingredients.

## **O** – Overboard

Go overboard in almost everything.

Most copywriters err on the side of too little rather than too much—too little emotion, too little persuasion, too little energy, too little proof, too little urgency.

Go overboard in getting your prospect’s attention, in your promises and benefits (promise quantum leaps, not small steps), in creating urgency, in your guarantee, in your enthusiasm, in dramatizing the problem and your solution.

Then go back and adjust your copy where necessary. *(After the copy is written, it’s a lot easier to edit down where you’ve gone overboard than to pump up what is too weak.)*

## **P – Paint Pictures**

Paint pictures for your prospect: Of the problems caused by the lack of your product or service. Of what it will be like when they have your product or service.

Dramatize: With picturesque stories and analogies. And remember to make your pictures as *specific* as possible. *(Don’t expect your reader to do your picturizing work for you.)*

## **Q – Quash Objections**

Buying your product involves risk. Which is why if a prospect can find a reason not to buy, he will. So leave no objection unquashed!

Make a list of every objection your prospect might conceivably have and be sure your copy addresses them—by raising and dealing with them outright, or in more subtle ways *(such as by implication, or with a testimonial that deals with it)*.

Remember that objections aren’t just standard ones such as “*the product is too expensive.*” They’re also: “*I should get this from the competition instead.*” Show them it’s not even close.

Or: that they should do nothing *(show them the pain that will cause)*.

Objections can also be more subconscious, such as the fear of ridicule if they make the wrong decision (*give them enough ammunition to convince their spouse and friends*).

Or objecting to being told what to do (*make them feel like they're selling themselves*).

Objections are like doors. Once you've closed off all of them, the only door that remains for a prospect is to go through is the one that leads to the sale.

## **R – Royalty**

Envision your prospect as a king.

Do as you would do for a king: Serve and represent him (*even over your client or your company*).

Adore. Flatter. Make him look and feel good. Bestow gifts. Show concern. Make his enemies your enemies.

If you make your prospects feel like royalty, don't you think they might be more inclined to buy from you?

## **S – Salesmanship**

People who are good at writing don't make the best copywriters. People who are good at selling make the best copywriters.

Study salesmanship. Be a salesperson when you write by doing what salespeople do, such as bonding with your customer, continually closing, and not taking “no” for an answer.

## **T – Time**

Think about time in relation to your prospect and your product.

Include more dimensions of time in your copy.

What happened in the past? What’s happening in the present? What *will* happen in the future—if they use the product, or if they don’t?

## **U – Unique**

Have you convincingly portrayed your company, your product or service, or yourself as unique in some way?

If not, why should anyone elect to use that product or service?

## **V – Very Simple**

Simple sells. Very simple sells very well.

Scientific studies show that what is simple is more convincing than what is complex.

So kill all gobbledygook and flab.

Use simple words, simple sentences, and simple logic.

And keep your offer simple as well, because a complex decision is often a delayed decision.

## **W – What Are You Really Selling?**

Cosmetic manufacturer Charles Revson said: *“In the factory, we make lipstick. In the drugstore, we sell hope.”*

Marketing guru Ted Levitt said: *“People don’t buy quarter-inch drill bits, they buy quarter-inch holes.”*

What are you really selling—what end result or state of mind?

Many information products are bought not just for the information, but because of how they make the buyer *feel*—like they’re action-takers, protected or knowledgeable.

Cars, of course, are often bought because of how they make the buyer feel. Dig deep and find out what you really sell.

## **X** – ray

Show your readers what they usually don’t see: a new way of looking at something — insights and revelations into themselves, their world, their problems, possible solutions.

Show what’s beneath the surface. Give order to their chaos.

## **Y** – “You” and “Your”

Your copy should be less about you and your company and your product than about your prospect.

Talk about them—their wants, their needs, their hopes, their dreams.

What would you rather read: A page of copy all about you, or a page of copy all about some other person or company?

Take note of how many times your copy says “I” or “we”. Make sure that palls in comparison to the amount of times it says “you” or “your.”

## **Z** – Zero in

Focus is a wonderful thing. Like a magnifying glass that focuses the sun’s rays and can burn through paper, copy focus burns through resistance, objections and inertia.

So when you write, zero in on a single, specific prospect.

Zero in on that prospect's biggest problem and zero in on the biggest benefits you have that solve that problem.

Don't try to shotgun your message to everyone who might possibly be interested. Don't try to be all things to all people.

Don't dump a laundry list of benefits in their lap hoping they'll find the ones that will appeal to them.

Zero in on your best prospects and your best benefits.

## About David L. Deutsch

- Started his career on Madison Avenue at **David Ogilvy’s Ogilvy & Mather**—one of the top advertising agencies in the world.
- Has been a **creative director** at both a traditional advertising agency, as well as a large direct response agency.
- Was one of the **top go-to A-list writers for the pinnacle of direct response writing: Boardroom Inc.’s Bottom Line Publications**. Has had an incredible 6 controls running for them at one time and is responsible for one of their most successful launches ever.
- All told, his ads and promotions have **sold over a BILLION dollars’ worth goods and services** for his clients.
- He has **had huge successes in all forms of direct response** — including envelope and “magalog” mailings, Internet sales letters and promotions, and video sales letters (VSLs) — for products from Maxwell House Coffee to M.I.T. to laundry detergent and toilet cleaner.
- Recent Fortune 50 clients have included **Procter & Gamble** and **Intuit (TurboTax)**.
- Has **written for virtually all of the major health and financial publishers**, including Boardroom/Bottom Line, Rodale, Agora, Investor place Media, Soundview, Healthy Directions, as well as many leading supplement marketers, such as Golden Hippo (Beverly Hills, MD).
- For a book on the deadly dull subject of estate planning, he did a promotion that was so compelling that the book **became one of the company’s best-selling books ever**.
- In the 1990’s, he was **on the faculty of the famous (and infamous) Gary Halbert “Key West College of Millionaires” seminars**.
- David **has mentored, coached, trained, and creative directed writers and copy teams both in the U.S. and around the world** (including Germany, China, Singapore, England, Columbia, Brazil, Scotland, and Romania).

**For more information on...**

**My *A-List Copywriting Secrets* course:**

[www.SpeakingOfWriting.com/alcs](http://www.SpeakingOfWriting.com/alcs)

**My *Idea Power* training on coming up with all the great life-changing, money-making ideas you'll ever need:**

<http://www.speakingofwriting.com/IP>

**My Inner Circle coaching group, where I'll review your copy, answer your question, and send your copywriting and business into high gear:**

<http://www.speakingofwriting.com/DDIC>

**On working with me or speaking engagements:**

[www.SpeakingOfWriting.com/contact/](http://www.SpeakingOfWriting.com/contact/)

**To get on my FREE email newsletter (if I sent you this report directly, you've already getting it):**

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