



**Fast and Furious Creative - Herschell Gordon Lewis, President, Lewis Enterprises**

**Notes taken by Chris Maloney – [www.maloneyonmarketing.com](http://www.maloneyonmarketing.com)**

The purpose is to convince the customer to act in response to the message.

Words have octane – are we using 87% or 93%?

The writer always has a stronger way to begin a sales argument than the neutral phrase “there is” or “there are”

Sales writers should earn more than technical writers – we contribute to the bottom line.

Trends for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

- Increasing informality
- Increasing emphatic persuasion
- Inclusion of validation (prove it)
- Promise of fast action (6-8 weeks delivery is not good enough)

We are in the fourth era of mass communication

- Hieroglyphics, cave paintings
- 1439 – Gutenberg invented moveable type (bibles)
- 1888 – Machine that set type automatically (linotype). Before that no newspaper was more than 8 pages
- 3<sup>rd</sup> era wireless transmission (1920 –radio)
- Mid 1990s – world wide web
- 5<sup>th</sup> generation – plug straight into brain

Buyer’s remorse sets in faster than ever. 60% of orders drop out at checkout.

Instant action/gratification is what people are demanding.

Move the action/click up in the email – it’s just like when you meet someone they are attractive at first but the more you get to know them the less interesting you become.

Think outside the box? Who was thinking inside the box?

DM more likely to be opened than email (who did the research?)

Avoid

- Generalisable words – quality, service and value.
- Needs as a noun (for all you insurance needs – implies we don't know what you need)
- Act now (cliché)
- See your Toyota dealer today (showing at 11pm)
- Southwest Airlines means business

There's just one place for all you copy and graphic design needs. Your one stop copy and design shop.

"You" is the most powerful word in direct marketing.

What is the difference between "3" and "three"? It depends on the consumer. We optimise the facts for the recipient.

Don't use words people don't say, use emotional impact – commence (start), utilise (use), omit (leave it out), receive (get), we would like to (we want to), large (big), you incur no risk (risk-free), circular (round), donate (give), purchase (own or acquire), fortunate (lucky), requested (the information you asked for – You asked for this (brings in guilt)), error (mistake), however (arms length - but)

Anyone can do direct communication, not many can do direct **response**.

The role of the envelope is to get itself opened.

Baseballers get paid 8 million a year to bat at 3/10. No-one bats at 100% so take risks.

Autumn is poetic, fall is a fact.

A 4 year old can make something, manufacturing requires talent. Built by is the next step above made by.

"That person is not relevant" is stronger than "that person is irrelevant".

An audience is involved, a viewer is passive.

Guaranteed for 20 years is more effective than lifetime guarantee as it is specific. And "20 years" will outperform "twenty years".

Spelling out a word adds dignity, formality, and importance. It also may add distance between the writer and reader. Dr. Smith or Doctor Smith?

The senator declined to comment, or the senator declined to answer. Fox News "the senator refused to answer."

Massive difference between "Can you?" and "Will you?" People prefer to say "no I can't" than "no I won't".

Politeness loses to impoliteness because it is clearer “Tighten your tummy” vs. “Get rid of that gut”

A reply from you would be appreciated. Reply now or Reply ASAP.

You can complete your application form in less than one minute. You can apply in less than 60 seconds (a lot less time than one minute. A minute is shorter than one minute). Change application form to acceptance form.

Emotion over intellect rule. When emotion and intellect come into conflict, emotion always wins.

Lawyers and accountants can't sell anything. They are used to intellectual arguments.

Three basis of success in direct response writing

- The appearance of truth
- Clarity
- Benefit

Not what will it do (seller), what will it do FOR ME (sellee).

Present tense outsells future sense because the present is NOW and your prospect wants benefits now.

“If you think that” is a more potent opening than “If you thought that”

“When” is superior to “if” for suggesting something will happen. “If” is superior to “when” for suggesting something will not happen.

The Generic Determination Rule: The generic determines reaction more than the numbers.

Quarter pounder sounds bigger than 4 ounce. One hour seems longer than 60 minutes.

You can communicate in any language in just 600 words.

Free trial for 30 days, or free trial for one month. We ship next day or we ship within 24 hours.

The belt I have on is not leather, it is genuine leather.

We'll ship your order the next day, and it is guaranteed for 30 days. We'll ship within 24 hours and guarantee for a month.

The chronology rule: Number of years is more powerful than dates. A history of success since 1994 is weaker than a 15 year success story.

We don't change the facts, we optimize them.

If your lawyers says you need an asterix, get another lawyer. An asterix accentuates the negative. If you are announcing a positive do not use an asterix, instead use brackets if there is an exception.

The five types of comparatives

- We're better than they are
- Unlike so-called competitors who...
- We're the greatest
- The best just got better
- Intended to sell for x-amount...yours for y-amount

Parity advertising – doesn't claim superiority. No bank pays higher interest. Nobody sells for less.

The restoration/preservation rule. When promoting personal improvement products, restoration outpulls preservation. It puts your product as the cause.

This is what you want, isn't it? Is more powerful than "Is this what you want?"

The three components of successful force-communication

1. Basic psychology
2. Vocabulary suppression
3. Salesmanship equivalent to that of a vacuum cleaner salesman in a department store.