

Exclusive Course

10-Day Copywriting Challenge

Day 2

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Day #2: Problem

If your headline did a good job of getting attention, then your prospect has now slid his eyes down to start reading your opener. And it's here in your opener that you *present the problem that's plaguing your prospects*.

You see, your headline offered a benefit and at least hinted that you had the solution to the problem. But in order to make your letter really effective, you need to "agitate" this problem.

That is:

- You need to make your prospect really feel the pain of this problem.
- You need to dredge up some painful emotions.
- You need to make your prospect feel a little desperate for a solution.

Here's why...

Most people like to ignore their problems.

They DON'T like to think about them, because it's too painful. They'd rather stick their heads in the sand like an ostrich and hope the problem will simply go away on its own.

Of course it won't. And deep down, your prospect knows that.

So when you put your prospect's problem right in front of him and make him face it, he's going to get a little emotional. And he's going to want a solution.

Later on, your letter will not only offer the solution, it will make him feel better.

Now that you know the purpose of this section of your letter, let's talk about the keys to creating your opener...

Make it Easy on the Eyes

First things first – not only should your letter be easy to read, it should *look* easy to read. If you use large blocks of text, your prospect may just start skimming the letter or put it aside altogether.

So here's what you need to do:

- **Create a short first paragraph.** I'm talking one short sentence or a few words. If it looks easy to read, the prospect will read it. Very simple, yet very effective.
- **Use "regular" words.** Don't make your prospects pull out a dictionary just to read your letter. Big words don't impress – they just confuse. So make it easy to read by avoiding your \$100 words.
- **Offer variety.** Generally, you should offer short sentences and paragraphs. However, don't make them all one length. Instead, offer some variety so that the letter looks more visually interesting.

Get Emotional

You DON'T merely remind your prospect of the problem in your opener. Instead, you agitate the problem so that your prospect feels the pain of this problem.

You need your prospect to feel something – to get emotional – because prospects don't buy unless you've triggered their emotions.

Now, there are a few ways to do this. One way is to tell a story about a person (maybe even you) who's suffered from the same problem.

Examples:

- Suzy's house was an absolute mess. Old newspapers piled up two feet high in the living room. Dirty dishes covered the counter. It had gotten so bad that Suzy was too embarrassed to invite guests over.
- The airlines used to make Rod buy two seats on the airplane. Not only was it expensive, it was humiliating...

- I know what it's like to have asthma. You see, I was the kid who couldn't breathe in gym class...

Another way to do it is to "agitate" the problem. In other words, you talk about it, being sure to really focus in on the pain of this problem.

Examples:

- You toss and turn all night, staring at your alarm clock, counting down the hours until it goes off. If only you could just fall asleep!
- Acne is no fun. It's no fun being called "pizza face." It sucks when you're the only guy who can't get a date for the homecoming dance.
- You told yourself last New Year's that this is the year you'd lose weight. And here we are nine months later and nothing has changed. You still can't fit into your favorite jeans. You still get laughed at when you walk down the street. And you still get winded when you climb a simple flight of stairs.

Yet another way to do it is by outright asking your prospect to imagine the pain of the problem... OR imagining how great it would feel to not have this problem anymore.

Examples:

- Imagine what it would be like to get rid of your stretch marks and scars...
- Imagine if you made at least \$100,000 per year. You could finally take all those vacations you've been dreaming about. You could remodel the house (or buy a new one)...
- I don't have to tell you how embarrassing it is to have bad breath. But imagine if you discovered the secret to having fresh breath all the time. Imagine how your confidence would soar...

Empathize With the Prospect

In addition to getting your prospect to identify with your story (i.e., by self-identifying with the problem you're referring to), *you also need to immediately show the prospects that you understand, care and empathize with them.*

You see, your prospects have been trying to solve this problem for some time. They feel alone. They feel like most sales letter authors don't really "get" them or "get" their problem. So if you can show that you do indeed understand the problem – and that you care about the prospect – you'll gain a big edge over your competition.

But here's the thing...

Fake empathy does NOT work.

You can't just placate the prospect with platitudes and other word magic. You need to actually care about helping the prospect. Because when you actually do care, this "vibe" oozes out of your copy and connects with the prospect.

Once you do genuinely care, then any stories you share will reflect the fact that you care and understand.

Indeed, you can even build rapport with your prospect by coming right out and saying that you understand.

Examples:

- I know what it's like to be a caretaker to someone with Alzheimer's disease. You see, I spent five years caring for my mom before she died.
- You can remember the joy on the day your baby was born. You had so many hopes and dreams for him. But the day he was diagnosed with autism, many of these hopes came crashing down. I understand that, because I'm the mom to two autistic twins.
- It's humiliating to have guests over when you're a borderline hoarder. I should know – because I lived in isolation for ten years due to my hoarding. I understand what it's like to [talk about more of the pain here]...

Assignment: Day #2

Today you need to think about your prospect and what **emotion** he most identifies with in relation to his problem.

Example: Is it anger? Humiliation or embarrassment? Dread? Or perhaps he most identifies with the joy of his solution?

Whatever it is, *that's the emotion you need to elicit in your opener* when you present the problem.

Your assignment today is to craft an opener (perhaps a story) that taps into that emotion and makes your prospects feel the pain of their biggest problem.

You can use the 20 opener templates to help you craft your own!

God bless,
Jimmy D. Brown & Paul Evans