

Chapter Fifteen

Flu shots? Marcus was suddenly worried the old man was already losing his mind. What in the world did flu shots have to do with copywriting?

The old man smiled at his confused look and quickly asked, “Do you know how flu shots, or any other vaccination for that matter works to keep us from getting sick?”

Marcus nodded. “Yeah, they shoot a little bit of the germ into us and our body creates antibodies and we become immune to getting the disease again.”

“If I shot a “little bit” of the flu virus into you Marcus, believe me would get very sick, but the general idea is correct.”

“What actually happens is that we use a flu virus that has been weakened by a fancy pants process called cell culture adaptation. Scientist found that if you grow the flu virus in chicken embryo cells, the genes that instruct the virus on how to reproduce are changed which causes the virus to reproduce poorly in the human body.”

“You shoot that weakened, poorly reproducing virus into your arm and your body reacts as if it is the full blown version and attacks the virus and kills it, becoming resistant to that specific virus for the rest of your life... your body actually becomes stronger having fought off the disease.”

Marcus found that interesting and informative but was not sure what it had to do with Internet Marketing.

The old man continued, “In Advertising we have a technique used to reinforce a prospect’s existing attitudes toward a particular product, service or idea called the “Inoculation Theory” that works in much the same way as a vaccine does.”

“We can use this in Article Marketing to reinforce our prospects beliefs in a certain solution to a particular problem they may have. For example, they may feel (which we want to turn into a fact) that a natural cure for toenail fungus

exists and we use the inoculation theory to reinforce and strengthen those beliefs in hopes they will let their “caution guard” down and buy our solution.”

“Now stay with me here Marcus, this is a little tricky to explain.” The old man said, rubbing the stubble on his chin. “Here is how the theory works. First, we must warn our prospects of an impending attack on what they believe to be true about a product. Second, we make a weak attack and third, we encourage our prospect to make a strong defense.”

“Here is an example of how this is used to reinforce someone’s belief that they could make money online...

“First, we warn of an impending attack by saying something like: ***When you let your wife or friends know you will be trying to make money with Internet Marketing, they may likely tell you making money online is a scam, that you could never make enough to amount to anything or that you will spend more learning how to do it than you will ever make selling anything online.***”

“Second, we make a weak attack saying something like: ***You know, it is true that a lot of people fail to make money online because they are quitters and there are certainly enough predators out there willing to take the money from all the gullible people looking to get rich quick, so your wife or friend may have a point.***”

“Third, we now hope in their minds they make a strong defense (and subtly help them do this) because they are not quitters or gullible and their wife and friends just need to shut their yaps, they know what they are doing and dang it, they’ll show them and they are going to make money online even if it kills them!”

The old man was really getting into this stuff!

“Now, you can’t make the attack too strong or it will possibly push them in the other direction, but do you see how this could work to strengthen their belief about something and cause them to defend their position and take action?”

Marcus figured it might be tricky to apply but it was just another weapon in his growing arsenal of copywriting techniques and pretty darn interesting if nothing else.

Marcus was really finding all these methods of persuading people to do things fascinating and couldn't wait to learn even more.

The two took a break and got something to eat now that the long lines and dinner rush had subsided.

They chatted a bit, getting to know a little more about each other and Marcus had been right, the old man could have spent the next ten years telling him stories about his life that would have kept Marcus on the edge of his seat.

After another pretty bad meal was finished they got back to work.

The old man reminded him that there was one other part to article writing that was extremely important to get right and that was the resource box.

"We will go over that quite a bit later on but I did not want you to lose sight of the fact that our first objective is to stop our reader's dead in their tracks with our opening paragraph and then spend the rest of the article building up to the message in our resource box." he said wiping a few crumbs from his neatly pressed shirt.

"Okay, did you bring your laptop down with you Marcus?" the old man asked, looking under his chair and beneath the table.

"Yeah, I sure did." Marcus said, pulling the case off the back of his chair and taking out the computer. "What do we need it for?"

"Well Marcus, sometimes in this life it is okay to steal from people; especially when it isn't against the law to do so. I want to show you how I will often get my opening paragraphs from others."

"I'm not talking about "borrowing" from other people's articles, although you could certainly do that if you changed them up enough, but what I'm really talking about is actually using headlines on sales pages for the products we want to

promote... a lot of these are proven winners and people have spent a lot of money getting them just right.”

“As I mentioned before, nearly 65% of the buying decisions are made after reading the headlines of a sales page so if we put the headline in our opening paragraph to our article it stands to reason we have a pretty good chance of achieving our goals, right?”

The old man took the computer from Marcus and typed in a few words and then turned it around so Marcus could see the screen.

“Here is an example of a headline we could build a paragraph around:”

"Who Else Wants To Find Out Exactly How To Cure Gout Pain From Home, Using 3 Simple Grocery Items???"

(used from <http://www.cureyourgout.com/>)

“Now I’m a little tired of the “Who else wants to” line but it still works and you should still use it in your articles.” The old man said, pointing to the screen.

This is a classic example of the **presupposition theory** we talked about earlier.

We ask a question, “who else wants to find out” and while the brain goes to work finding an answer, the second half of the sentence is assumed by the brain to be correct... **Gout can be cured from home by 3 simple grocery items.**”

“Also, notice that this statement is put into quotes... studies have shown that headlines in quotations draw nearly 30% more attention because the reader perceives it to be more important. We can often put certain phrases into quotes within our articles to make them draw attention to themselves and convey a cleverly placed influential message.”

“So Marcus, aside from the fact that we have broken a cardinal rule here and do not know our product inside and out, would you still be able to construct an

opening paragraph off of this headline using methods we have learned to this point?”

The pressure was on and Marcus was drawing a blank.

“I’ll give you a hint, use one of our copy connectors.” The old man said reassuringly.

Marcus wrote down the headline: **Who else wants to find out exactly how to cure gout pain from home, using 3 simple grocery items?**

Marcus added: **Imagine for a moment it is one week from today and your gout pain is completely gone. How is this going to change your life?**

He tried it again:

Now let me ask you... what if you were given a simple formula that you could safely make yourself at home to instantly cure your gout pain, would you be interested?

And again:

Everyone knows that pills and medications can be extremely dangerous. The fact that you decided to read this article tells me you know this to be true and are looking for a safe alternative to deadly prescription treatments, right?

The old man laughed. “Good Marcus, in that last one you threw in a fact statement... a couple of them actually and I really like the word deadly!”

The old man took the computer and did another search.

“How about this one?” he said, turning the computer back towards Marcus.

What would you do if you were free of your asthma and allergy symptoms?

Marcus looked at it for a moment and asked if the headline might be kind of weak.

“Weak?” the old man said sarcastically. “It is downright dreadful... now fix it up a bit!”

Marcus stared at the headline a moment and then wrote:

Can you remember a time when breathing was something you *didn't* think about? What would you do if you were suddenly free of your asthma and allergy symptoms? As you read every word of this article, I will share with you how you can safely and naturally become asthma free...

“Not bad, not bad.” The old man said. “You asked a question to involve the reader and stated clearly something they indeed did think about every day. You asked them “what would they do”, which the brain set out to answer and our good friend the presupposition made the second part of the sentence a fact that they were suddenly going to be free of their allergy and asthma symptoms. You then gave them a command to read every word of the article and told them they would find the answer to the original question somewhere in the article so the brain now has to read it word for word.”

Marcus was pretty proud of himself and then the old man said. “I gave you this bad example because I have another list for you, yeah!!” He laughed allowed.

“I like to call these my **really bad headline modifiers**. They are another way to transition out of the first paragraph’s sentence and into another sentence or from the first paragraph into the second paragraph.”

He wrote down the bad headline:

What would you do if you were suddenly free of your asthma and allergy symptoms?

He then added the following:

See yourself mastering 3 ways to...

“You see how we can modify the sentence and slide into another method of persuasion by using any of the following headline modifiers?”

Marcus looked at the rest of the list and added each one to the original headline:

Visualize yourself finding out about 4 amazing...

In less than 2 minutes you will learn...

Shortly, you will discover...

Imagine learning...

In just a moment, you will find out...

Wouldn't it be amazing if...

Imagine what it might be like...

Envision yourself being able to...

Feel yourself using...

“We could also add a few words to the headline to create more excitement than the headline alone created.”

Just add these to the end of the headline:

What would you do if you were suddenly free of your asthma and allergy symptoms?

You don't want to miss this!

This tip is truly amazing!

You won't believe this, but I swear to you it is the truth!

Simply unbelievable!

Take advantage of this right now!

You be the judge!

“You see Marcus, there is a lot we can do with our choice of words to build off of the work someone else has already done.”

“Now here is another invaluable tip,” the old man said, finishing off his cup of coffee. “In the course you went over, you learned about the “Dummies” series of books and how they could help you come up with niche ideas, right?”

Marcus nodded.

“It was also said that you could read the table of contents and a sample chapter as well in a lot of those books to get article title ideas. You can also use this method for opening paragraph ideas as well... heck, you could actually write your entire articles from these freebies!”

“Another place that is great to find well written copy that you can “borrow” is from Amazon Books. They also give you descriptions of what you will find in each book but they also include comments from folks who have read the book.”

“You can use these comments to join the conversations going on in your reader’s head and address their concerns, it is totally awesome!”

This made a lot of sense to Marcus. He loved going to the bookstore and would spend hours there, reading just about anything he found interesting and he always made the decision to read the book or not based on the “overview” on the back of the book or in the first couple of pages of the introduction.

Publishers spent a lot of money paying people to write the copy that encapsulates the entire idea of the book so why not borrow it?

He asked the old man about copyright infringement.

“Titles of books cannot be copyrighted,” he said with a wink. “And it stands to reason that a lot of book titles would try and let the reader know what the benefit of reading the book is, right?”

Marcus agreed and thought how easy it might be to find some great titles of books in his particular niche and just use them for his own article titles or use them combined with some of the copywriting methods he was learning for his opening paragraphs!

“How do people who don’t know about all this stuff make money online?” Marcus suddenly asked.

The old man looked at him and smiled, “They don’t!”

It was getting late and the old man stretched and rubbed his temples. “I know you want to get back to be with your wife before visitors hours are over but I want to go over just one more thing before we call it a night, okay?”

Marcus nodded and turned to a clean sheet of paper in his notebook.

“Ready when you are.”

The old man took out a piece of paper and laid it on the table.

“I want you to always remember that we are talking to people with real feelings and real problems, Marcus. Sometimes when we rely on lists of words and try to use these really cool theories we forget that we are talking to human beings... believe me, it is easy to do.”

He pointed to the piece of paper lying on the table. “Now, way back in 1935, a fellow goes by the name of H. E. Warren wrote an article entitled “How to Understand Why People Buy” that will help you keep your focus. Every time you sit down to write an article I want you to read this. It will help you focus on bringing theory and real life together, okay?”

Marcus read the piece of paper:

To understand why people buy, we should know people and have a keen sense of human nature. We should know how people think... how people live, and be acquainted with the standards and customs affecting their everyday lives... We should fully know their needs and their wants and be able to distinguish between the two. An understanding of why people buy is gained by a willingness to acquire proved and tested principles of commercial psychology to selling.

The old man said, “Now when you get home you pin that up where you can see it, okay?”

Marcus agreed he would do as the old man had asked.

“The next time we talk, I’ll be going over a really important and interesting subject that has to do with understanding why people buy. I know you are going to love this... it is a real eye opener and will help you connect with your prospects in a way that will give you several legs up on the competition!

They said goodnight and arranged to meet again for dinner the next day.

Marcus headed up to the ICU, his head swimming with possibilities.