

## E-LESSON #11: Creative: Use an Emotional Headline

### GENERAL AGENDA

#### *EXPLAIN TO THE CLIENT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GOOD SPOT AND A BAD SPOT*

*By Paul Weyland*

If you know what you're doing and the local direct client KNOWS you know what you're doing, YOU will "drive the bus" when it comes to the creative part of the business. Instead of the CLIENT telling YOU what to do, you'll be in control, with an iron-clad and logical creative plan. You may become the client's expert when it comes to creative expertise. Consequently, the client will begin looking at you as though you are an expert rather than just another Chiquita pest. This gives you power and influence. The creative process will go much smoother. The client will rely on your creative expertise and you will save valuable time rewriting copy.

Think about it this way. If you went to the doctor and the doctor told you to "take two of these pills each day," it is unlikely that you would say, "No! I'm going to take FOUR." And, if you had legal or tax problems you would listen very carefully to your attorney or your accountant. We pay these professionals very well, because we *perceive* them as being experts in a particular field and a valuable asset.

However, in our business the CLIENT, again usually uneducated, tells US what should or should not go into a spot. Consequently, our commercials wind up looking and sounding like...well...commercials. There is no headline to grab attention immediately. They are riddled with clichés. The call-to-action may be vague or hidden.

With the average person exposed to a minimum of 2,500 commercial impressions per day, ***IF ADVERTISING ISN'T OUTSTANDING IT WON'T STAND OUT AT ALL.***

Like we discussed last time, good spot always contains four important elements:

1. An Identifiable Difference
2. An Emotional Headline
3. Benefits and results WITHOUT cliches
4. A crystal-clear CALL-TO-ACTION.

## **EXPLAINING THE ELEMENTS OF A GOOD COMMERCIAL...RULE NUMBER TWO...HEADLINES**

### **Get the target market's attention immediately**

First, you must *get the attention of the narrowcast target market immediately in the spot*. Remember, we're not trying to reach *everybody*. We don't have to do that. All we have to do is get the *immediate attention* of those viewers or listeners who are *ON* for your client's product or service and will make a buying decision *this week*.

### **Use a headline**

You notice that I say we should begin every spot with a *headline*. Why a headline? Well, think about why newspapers use headlines. They use them to get your attention, right? We should also use *headlines* at the beginning of our spots if we want to get the attention of the viewer or listener who will buy what your client is selling from somebody this week. For everyone else, we're starting the *BRANDING* process. So, our spot must *STAND OUT* enough to break through the clutter for listeners and viewers who are not *ON* right now, but might be soon.

### **Make it an EMOTIONAL headline**

A great TV and radio spot producer named Tony Schwartz discovered many years ago that virtually *all people share common emotions*. Tony says that inside everybody's heart there is a resonant chord...like guitar strings. If you "strum" people's emotions correctly, then *instead of a target*, you could *turn an audience into an emotional "workforce."* That is, actively mentally and emotionally participating in the commercial. Tony discovered that people respond very well to commercials that stir up common emotions.

Remember that although we like to think that we buy *logically*, we really buy *emotionally*. So, we actually use *emotion* to connect with people to help convince them that buying from your client is the *logical* thing to do. Here's what I mean.

Let's say I was trying to sell you a burglar alarm system for your home. What emotion would I pick to get your attention? How about fear? How about shame? I might begin a spot this way:

"Your mother gave you that ring when she got married. Her mother gave it to her when she got married. It was her hope that you'd give it to your daughter when she gets married. But that's not going to happen. Because right now a creep with a drug habit is selling it for less than \$100. Too bad you made it so easy for him. You had no alarm system. All he had to do was break a window in the back and he had full access to everything in your house."

If you lived in a high-crime area, you'd be ON and highly likely to see or hear that spot.

### ***A few common emotions***

- Guilt
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Envy
- Sorrow
- Pity
- Rage
- Frustration
- Disgust
- Lust
- Desire
- Elation
- Greed
- Anticipation
- Skepticism
- Responsibility

### ***Use EMOTION to make an illogical purchase seem logical***

We have many common emotions.

Let's say I was trying to sell computers. I might use GUILT as an emotion to reach parents. Perhaps something like this:

“Are you the last family on your street that still doesn't have a computer for your children's education? Shame on you.”

What I'm doing here is using guilt or shame as a motivator to get a person to make what appeared to be an illogical purchase seem logical and practical.

### ***Sleeping with monsters?***

I had a client who was selling allergy relief products. They said they had advertised some of the products in the paper but there was little response to the ad. I looked at the ad...it mentioned a brand of allergy relief pillow and mattress covers that were supposed to keep dust mites off of you. The ad headline mentioned a discount on the covers. It went into some detail of product features...for example, that the covers were woven with special threads that were spaced “X” microns apart, to keep dust mites off of you.

That, essentially, was the content of the ad. It was pretty boring. No wonder it didn't work.

When I asked the client what dust mites were, he said they were microscopic creatures that lived inside your pillow and mattress. When I asked him what they looked like, he pulled out an enlarged photo. They looked like monsters. I asked him how they caused allergies. He told me that every night while you sleep, millions of these dust mites come out of your pillow and mattress and crawl all over you, feeding on your dead skin cells.

I said, "Wow...and that causes your allergies?"

He said, "No, it's much worse than that."

"What could be worse?" I asked.

"Well, it's disgusting," he continued. "You see, it's their fecal matter."

I said, "You mean they poo-poo on you?"

"Yes," he continued. "And when you inhale the poo-poo, your allergies get bad. Why? Do you think you could do something with this?" he asked.

"Absolutely. In fact, I look forward to it," I said with a grin.

What emotions would you use to make a headline for your commercial in this case? I used fear and disgust. My target was fastidious women. The script began like this.

IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF WHO YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH EVERY NIGHT...BUT WHAT AND HOW MANY. EVERY NIGHT WHILE YOU SLEEP, MILLIONS OF DUSTMITES...UP CLOSE THEY LOOK LIKE GIANT COCKROACHES...COME OUT OF YOUR PILLOW AND MATTRESS AND CRAWL ALL OVER YOU...FEEDING ON YOUR DEAD SKIN CELLS. BUT IT'S NOT THE DUST MITES THEMSELVES THAT CAUSE YOUR ALLERGIES...NO...IT'S MUCH WORSE THAN THAT...IT'S...HOW CAN I SAY THIS...IT'S THEIR...FECAL MATTER. (SFX WOMAN SCREAMING)

The rest of the script described the benefits of using the product, and we never had to discuss price. It worked. The client called and said he got a great response to the advertising. In this case, *fear and disgust* were excellent motivators to help the client sell his product.

### ***Use an emotional headline immediately***

Always use EMOTIONAL HEADLINES at the beginning of your spot. Do it right away. In fact, you must get the attention of members of your audience who are ON for your client's product or service very quickly or you will lose their attention.

When you discuss creative with a client, always try to put yourself in the shoes of the person who would buy your client's product or service. What emotion would you use to immediately get the attention of those people?

- Emotional headlines work well when you're trying to get an appointment, as well. When you have trouble getting a client to return a call, try using GUILT. Say something like, "Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ again. I called you a couple of times and you haven't returned my call. I must have done something or said something that offended you but I can't imagine what that could have been. Could you please call me back and just tell me what I might have said or done to offend you so I won't make the same mistake again?"
- Remember the logic in using the word "LOGIC". Remember that people don't necessarily buy logically, but they want to THINK they are. The word "LOGICAL" seems to connote another word, "RESPONSIBLE." That's why I use the word "LOGICAL" often, when I'm making a presentation to a client. I'll make a point and then say, "Look...it's LOGICAL." You'll notice that many people automatically nod their heads when they hear that word, and **a head nod is usually a buying signal.**

*There is an on-line companion video provided with this lesson.*

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