

Five easy ways to add punch to your words

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Five easy ways to add punch to your words

By Angela Booth

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Summary: Writing is hard, even for writers. These five techniques will make your writing chores easier, and your writing livelier.

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Writing is hard, even for writers. These five techniques will make your writing chores easier, and your writing livelier.

It's time to write something important, and your palms sweat. You force yourself to write, while gritting your teeth and hating every moment of the process. Your palms sweat some more. And your head aches, because you realize that your words have all the life of roadkill. Why is it that the more important the writing task, the more lifeless your words? Maybe it's performance anxiety. You tense up, instead of letting the words flow.

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Try these five easy ways to add punch to your words:

1. Get conversational, and write fast

When you're writing, imagine you're talking to someone. Just having a quiet chat. You want to tell them about whatever it is you're writing about.

To make this easier, write in the form of a letter: "Dear Joanne
Let me tell you about..."

Write quickly, exactly as you'd speak. Don't worry about grammar, spelling and typos. Just blurt out whatever you have to say.

Force yourself to do this by setting a time limit. Set a timer for five minutes. Tap out (or write, if you're using pen and paper) any kind of gibberish at all for five minutes. Turning off your monitor helps, because it stops you seeing the words and going back to correct typos.

2. Get specific

Want to write waffle? Generalize. Like in this sentence from a real estate agent's ad for a house:

"You are certain to be impressed by the space in this three bedroom family home."

I looked at the photo of the house, and wrote:

"Shaded by palms and eucalypts and surrounded by a well-maintained garden, this three bedroom, honey-gold brick mini-mansion offers your family space to play and grow. "

Not Shakespeare, but the words describe this house specifically.

3. Get sensuous

Be a reporter. Use your senses. What can you see, hear, smell, touch and taste?

When you report what's happening, your reader is right there with you.

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Let's say you're writing a letter to your bank, whining about the latest foul-up with your account.

"Unfortunately I was climbing my front steps when I opened my card statement, and I was so surprised I tripped. The bruise on my shin's blossomed from red to blue to dark-blue, and I'm gulping painkillers every four hours. You need to put warning labels on your envelopes."

Not hard to write, and not boring either. You're just telling what happened.

4. Get enthusiastic

What you're feeling comes through in your words, always. So, to liven up your words, you have to be interested in what you're writing about.

This can be hard, but luckily enthusiasm is transferable. For example, let's say that you're writing a presentation for your latest product. You don't like the product, you can't imagine that anyone will ever like it, much less pay money for it. In that frame of mind, guess how the presentation will sound?

OK, close your eyes and imagine your favourite pastime, let's say it's swimming. You're doing lazy laps in the pool, the sun is shining, you've got the whole day to yourself, maybe a movie later...

Hold that feeling! Keep the feeling, and dive into writing the presentation. (Try this, I swear it works.)

5. Tell the reader what to do

Always tell the reader what you want him to do.

If you're writing an ad, don't forget to give the address of the store, or give a phone number. You'd be amazed at how much advertising is happily inserted into everything from newspapers and Web sites to the Yellow Pages without giving basic contact information.

If you're writing a letter, or an e-mail message, do the same thing. You may think that what you want the reader to do is obvious, and it may be, but give the instruction anyway.

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Try these five techniques, and please send me a message (sun818_98@yahoo.com) to tell me about your results. If you've got other techniques that work for you, tell me about those too. I'm always looking for ways to make writing easier. If I use your technique in a future article, I'll happily give you credit.

Resource box: if using, please include

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Australian author, journalist and copywriter Angela Booth has been writing professionally for over twenty years. She writes business books and copy for businesses.

Power Words And Phrases

By Al Martinovic

Power Words And Phrases by Al Martinovic

I like to use power phrases when writing sales material. These power phrases add punch to a line or a paragraph and I usually use them to start off a sentence.

You can generally find a lot of "power phrases" when reading good sales copy. I usually keep a notebook nearby so that whenever I come across a line or a phrase that I like in sales material, I write it down for possible future use.

They are also great for writer's block too. When I am stuck in the middle of writing, I'll usually refer to my power phrases, and the next thing I know, the sentences sometimes start writing themselves.

Some examples of the power phrases I use include:

"Listen closely..."

"As you may already know..."

"Now, I don't know about you..."

"Well, I've got news for you..."

"Let me explain..."

"And best of all..."

"In fact..."

"Here's the bottom line..."

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"Quite frankly..."

"Now, I know what you're thinking..."

"Take a deep breathe and relax..."

"The answer is yes..."

Power phrases can be used to grab and hold people's attention so that they keep reading. Some may even call these "hypnotic" phrases.

Even single words can invoke a reaction in some people that can be used to add "punch" to your sales material. I call these power words.

Some power words to use in your marketing include:

Free, Powerful, Incredible, Easy, Shocking, Cheap, Revealed, Best, Uncovered, Hidden, Proven, Results, Revolutionary, Profits, Fantastic, Inside, Learn, Enhance, Hottest, New, Improved, Unbelievable, Ultimate, Offer, Master, Scientific, Private, Breakthrough, Save, Guaranteed, Tricks, You, Love, Limited, Special, Secrets

You can use power words to add punch to a headline, sentence, a short ad, or whatever fancies you.

Those are just a few of the power words and phrases that I have collected over the years.

Do yourself a favor:

Another power phrase...?

No really... do yourself a favor:

Always keep a notebook nearby and look out for words or phrases that capture your attention in sales material. Then write it down. If it captured your attention, it's sure to capture other people's attention too.

And over time, you'll have plenty of power words and phrases to choose from when writing your sales material.

They sure make life alot easier...

And profitable too!

Al Martinovic publishes a popular internet marketing newsletter at <http://www.milleniummarketers.com> and runs a successful home business at <http://www.ineedsmokes.com>

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