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Funny Lines For Cash

By MalaMaal.com

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You can sell your good jokes to all kinds of comedian and cartoonists if you follow simple procedures when submitting. But like Greeting Card writing, this is an extremely competitive field and unless you are very good, you cannot expect to make a living at it.

Start by looking through the latest edition of the Writer's Market under Gag Writing.

You might be surprised at the large number of cartoonists looking for work, and even more surprised by the kind of work they're seeking. Make a study of this section of the book before you start writing gags and making submissions.

One idea: when making your first set of submissions, include a card that reads as follows: Thank you for the submission, but I am returning them because they are:

Not suitable for my markets Not professional Not funny enough Not funny at all I don't need new submissions at this time

Expect to see the last slot checked off frequently. What this card will do is show you who is most impressed by your work and who might be a better bet for a future sale. If you sent your best batch of gags to someone you thought could use them and he says they aren't funny at all, why waste postage trying to change his mind?

If you want to give this a try, start writing gags immediately and file a lot of them, several hundred if possible, before making your submissions. The more you have to choose from, the better your choices will be and the better your chances of making a sale. Be aware that payment for cartoon ideas is not as good as for greeting cards.

If you get some positive response from your submissions, you might even want to start hanging around at comedy clubs. Young comics need the very best material that they can get if they hope to make any sort of name for themselves, and many will be happy to pay two to five dollars for a good line.

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Provided, of course, that you don't turn around and resell it to someone else the next day.

Don't forget that many daily newspapers and magazines pay cash for good jokes but they tend to get swamped with submissions, so unless you have a lot of faith in your idea you just might be wasting postage.

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Did You Hear The One About The Funny Quiz That Was Walking Past a Graveyard?

By Brian Fong

Q. My company publishes a monthly employee newsletter. My boss asked me to write a funny quiz. I'm not exactly a stand–up comic. Help!

A. Ah, the funny quiz. Lucky you! It's not often that a company has an official sense of humor that they are willing to display for all to read. This is going to be a great assignment for you!

A funny quiz is typically one where the questions and answers have no real purpose other than to

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make the quiz taker laugh. Although almost anything goes, there are some taboo subjects. Off hand I'd say that anything that pokes fun at a specific person, or groups of people, as well as anything that's anti-semitic, racial, sexual, political, or religious should be off limits. Remember, what one person thinks is funny can offend someone else. Even seemingly innocuous subjects like "hillbilly" or "redneck" jokes might not be funny to someone who lives in the mountains or the deep South (like I do).

You can think of a funny quiz as a series of one-liners with multiple-choice punch lines. Because you are writing for a company publication you have a built-in "affinity group" as there is bound to be some common subjects that are company related and could be made into something funny.

For example, if you work for a software development company then you might have a question that asks:

What's longer: A CEO's week or a programmer's week?

If you're not laughing then you have never had a programmer tell you that the project will be ready in a week.

You need to walk a fine line even when using subjects like this in your funny quiz. Say that your company just posted a 4th quarter loss because a new software product missed its launch date by a "programmer's week". It doesn't take a rocket scientist to determine that you are about to tick off a lot of people if you add that question to your funny quiz.

Try to avoid wornout jokes or cliches. A funny quiz should be funny, not lame. For example, still on the software train of thought, a question like...

Q. How many programmers does it take to change a lightbulb? A. None. They don't do hardware.

...is older than the mystery meat in that Tupperware container in the back of the lunchroom refrigerator. No one is going to laugh at that one. No laughing = not a funny quiz!

The best thing to do is to keep an eye out for humorous, safe things to poke fun at and then write a funny quiz question. My advice is to start right now and don't wait until one hour before deadline. The

only thing that's less funny than a lame funny quiz is no funny quiz at all!

Brian Fong runs the popular quiz site

<http://www.QuizFaq.com>

Quiz Faq – Your solutions for the quiz.

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