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HOW TO GIVE YOUR BUSINESS WRITING A TWIST OF THE NOSE

By Doug C. Grant

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What happens when you twist someone's nose?

To begin with, you get their full attention. No distractions. No mind wandering.

That's why it's important to put a nose-twist into your own 'important' business communications.

HERE'S HOW NOSE-TWISTING WORKS

You have a brilliant idea for marketing a new product. Now, it needs to be put into writing for consideration by other decision makers.

(Note: I'm not suggesting that only marketing people have this type of writing challenge. Anyone...including you...will one day have to distribute some important information, sell something [perhaps yourself], or encourage the adoption of an idea. Effective business writing is an important skill for any successful business person...no matter what career path you've chosen.)

Many people might start out their idea proposal something like this. 'Following is an idea I feel will be effective in helping to market the new Axtex product.' Now doesn't that get the blood pumping.

Instead of this kind of ho hum opening, try saying something provocative, such as: 'Six months after launch,

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our new Axtec product could capture a 20% market share by putting into action the following promotional idea.'

Or, you could ask a question like, 'What is the one feature about the new Axtec product that could catapult it above all competition?'

Naturally, you need to have some basis for your claims or questions. You don't want to be caught exaggerating. If people suspect you are trying to con them into reading something, your day on the stage is over.

Here are several other excellent ways of giving your imcoms a nose-twist in addition to the provocative statement or question:

1. Open with a story – The story might setup a problem your proposal would help solve. If you're uncertain how this works, read a copy of Reader's Digest. Many of their articles begin with a narration.
2. Provide a startling statistic – Just make certain it is startling. Conventional statistics seldom deliver much of a nose-twist.

(The following suggestions assume your imcom is being distributed as hard copy.)

3. Include a sample – If the subject of your imcom involves a product or product sample that is easily glued to a letter or first page of a proposal, this is an excellent attention getter. Products might include a new grade of sandpaper, stronger plastic, new fabric...etc.
4. Alter the paper – I have punched holes in letters, cut off corners, even burned the edges of an imcom in order to attract attention. Just make certain it ties in with your headline and subject.

None of these suggestions are considered standard business writing techniques. And that's the point. Being a little unconventional can make your imcom the standout business communication of the day. Just avoid being cute or clever. That almost never works.

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Remember, developing your skills as a business writer will put you miles ahead of the crowd, no matter what your job or business. It should be as much a part of your work-a-day world as the language you speak. Even a small investment in developing these skills will bring huge returns in future success.

Doug C. Grant is the author of the new e-book, 'How to Move from Cubicle to Corner Office with THE SECRETS OF POWER WRITING'. A FREE preview plus details on receiving a FREE Blue Pencil Edit for one of your own imcoms is available by e-mailing: <mailto:edit@newbieclub.com>

How To Overcome The Lyric Writing Hurdles That Are Keeping You Behind

By Mantius Cazaubon

The lyric writing side of songwriting is known to create an enormous number of problems for some folks. No matter how hard they try, they are unable to write a single line that they can be pleased with.

In many cases these very same people make phenomenal advancements in writing music and melodies. However they just can't seem to figure out how to come up with suitable lyrics to match them.

If you are facing such a situation, there's probably no need to worry. By taking certain appropriate steps you should be able to overcome lyric writing hurdles and write songs that deliver.

(1) Here are some essential ideas for overcoming these hurdles.

1. Collaboration

If you're very good at writing melodies but can't seem to write a single line, one solution might be collaboration. Instead of beating your head against the wall for ideas, find someone who is very good at writing lyrics and work together. You may be surprised at the wonders that can emanate from a combination of his excellence at writing lyrics and your brilliance at writing melodies.

2. Lyric writing tools

Perhaps you may be hoping for some other solution. While you don't mind the idea of collaboration, you want to allow yourself to get better at writing lyrics, instead of leaving it to someone else.

As far as I'm concerned, the importance of laying hold on good songwriting "tools" should never be underestimated. Educate yourself as much as you can. Make use of songwriting books, programs, courses, software, articles or whatever valuable resources that you have at your disposal.

3. Motivation

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You've probably heard it said a thousand times ... Without motivation, you won't go very far. This also applies to your lyric writing. While the songwriting "tools" outlined above can help you improve, without adequate motivation failure is inevitable.

(2) Here are a few tips to help you generate lyric writing ideas.

1. Use different lyrics to bring the same message across.

Choose a theme which is known to have made a few hits. What message does this theme bring across? Write different lyrics that bring the same message across. A typical example of this is John Denver's "I'm Leaving on a Jetplane" and Wyclef Jean's "Gone till November". These songs made hits

in different eras. Their basic message was similar ... Baby, you don't need to cry because I'll return.

2. Add a unique twist to a cliché.

Turn on your radio and you will hear clichés being repeated over and over. Using these very same clichés is simply a futile exercise. My suggestion is to add a unique twist to these clichés. This is something I am focusing on more and more.

A typical example of adding a unique twist to a cliché is found in Dianne Warren's "Unbreak my Heart" made popular by Toni Braxton. The ever popular cliché, "break my heart", was twisted.

(3) Here are three lyric writing suggestions.

1. Write a song about a particular incident. Your song should tell a story.

2. Write lyrics that have absolutely nothing to do with anything you've actually experienced.

3. Get lyric writing ideas from newspapers, magazines, movies, TV and so on.

Overcoming lyric writing hurdles involves a lot of determination, hard work and perseverance on your part. Implement the suggestions presented above and move one step closer to lyric writing success.

Mantius Cazaubon offers lots of valuable songwriting tips, techniques, suggestions and advice on his site

. Visit

for the ultimate truth

about lyric writing and songwriting.

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