

Use an 'Inverted Triangle' in Your Introduction

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By Ron Sathoff

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When I was teaching public speaking, one of the biggest complaints I heard from my students was, "I don't know how to start!" This is a problem that goes well beyond classroom speeches, however. Many of the questions I get from business speakers are also about introductions: Should I use a joke? Should I just state my position right away? How do I get the audience's attention?

One tool that I have found to be very useful when trying to write an introduction is called the "Inverted Triangle." This concept is used mainly in journalism, but it works great for speech introductions as well. When writing your introduction, visualize it as a triangle with its widest part at the top and the point at the bottom.

This triangle represents how specific your information is at any given time in your introduction. The wide part at the top represents fairly general information, and, as the triangle becomes narrower, the information becomes more specific. In essence, the inverted triangle is just a way to remember that you should go from the general to the specific in your introduction.

I've found that the best way to put this into practice is to start off by talking about some general issue or problem. Then, I try to apply it more specifically to the audience that I am talking to. Then I become even more specific by advocating a particular plan or solution.

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As an example, if you were giving a presentation on your business opportunity, you might begin by talking about the economy (general), and how hard it is for some people to make ends meet (a little more specific). Then, you would discuss how nice it would be for your audience to have some extra money to pay bills or buy that luxury item they've always wanted (more specific). Then, finally, you would introduce your opportunity as a way that they could accomplish this (even more specific).

As you can see, this format is a nice way of leading into a subject. By using the triangle, you can "ease" your way into making your main point at the end of the introduction. The inverted triangle certainly isn't the only way to structure an

introduction, but it is very helpful when an introduction doesn't spring instantly to mind.

Ron Sathoff, manager of <http://InternetWriters.com>, offers a full range of services to business and professional speakers, including speech writing and editing, personal coaching, and presentation development. You can reach him at [ron@drnunley.com](mailto:ron@drnunley.com) or 801-328-9006.

### **Does this Headline "Grab" Your Attention?**

**By David McKenzie**

#### **Does this Headline "Grab" Your Attention? by David McKenzie**

If you are reading this first sentence then the answer is yes.

You see, the objective of the headline is to get the reader to keep reading.

Whether it's an article, a sales letter, an ezine ad or just the subject heading in an email, the objective of the headline is to get the reader to read more than just the headline. To read the next 'bit'.

So what makes this headline an attention grabber?

Let's look at 4 points within this headline that makes it "grab" the readers attention.

1. Ask a Question

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If you ask a question in your headline then the reader is inclined to want to answer the question themselves. The reader is intrigued. This prompts the reader to read on. Asking a question is one of the best ways to `grab' the attention.

### 2. Use Inverted Commas

Use inverted commas around a single word as I have done, or around a group of words or the whole headline. The inverted commas themselves actually highlight something that the reader can latch on to. If you had 10 headlines and 1 had inverted commas around it, then it's more likely it would be the most read headline.

There is another benefit to using inverted commas around the whole headline. It often means that in an alphabetical list of headlines you will be near the top. This is because inverted commas come before the letter "A".

### 3. Capitalize the First Letter of Each Major Word in the Headline

Capitalizing each `major' word in the headline grabs the readers attention. However do not capitalize every word. Do not

capitalize words such as `a', `the', `of', `to', `on', `in' and `an' unless they are the first word of the headline. It's just not necessary.

Take a look at the `headline' above for point 3. The words `the', `of' and `in' are not capitalized. Let's see what this headline would look like if they were:

#### Capitalize The First Letter Of Each Major Word In The Headline

It just does not impress as much. There is no distinction between the words. The `major' words do not stand out as much.

However, in the headline under point 3 the following groups of words stand out more because they are separated by the not so important words:

Capitalize

First Letter

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Each Major Word

Headline

### 4. Use powerful words

"Grab" is a powerful word. So is "Free". Even "Powerful" is a powerful word for that matter. Try and have at least 1 and maybe 2 powerful words in your headline. These powerful words will draw in the readers attention and prompt them to keep reading.

Use these 4 techniques to help you write better headlines. Get the headline wrong and there is no use writing the article, the ezine ad or the sales letter.

Get the headline right and you are half way to making the sale or obtaining a new ezine subscriber.

David McKenzie is the author of a new e-book titled "How To Write Free Articles and Market Them With a \$0 Marketing Budget" Get a Free 5 Day Email Course <http://www.brisney.com/how-to-write-free-articles.htm>



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