

THE GARY HALBERT LETTER

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The Boron Letters - Chapter 24

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Dear Son,

Well, I'm feeling better today. I think these short, frequent days of fasting are really cleaning me out. I really feel a need now, more than ever, to shed my excess weight because it is starting to get really hot here. In fact, I'll be it's 80 degrees or so already this morning.

Anyhow. What I want to tell you this morning is that after tomorrow I am going to stop writing these letters for a while. There are several reasons: For example, I need to review some reference material and take notes and then, more or less outline, the future letters as my babblings seem to me to be getting too random. Another thing is that I want you to get this first batch of 25 letters typed up so I can easily review them and take notes from them also. And, also, I need to catch up on some of my other work like filing my rule 35 motion (a request for a modification of sentence) so I'll have a chance of getting out of here earlier.

And, finally, I have a couple of "bankers" who are eager for me to develop some promotions which they will finance and then we will split any profits 50/50.

And you know what? I think an excellent way for you to learn how to make money in this business is to watch over my shoulder as I begin to create one profitable promotion after another.

Here's how I'm going to start: First of all, I am going to go through the SRDS book and make a note of all the lists that look like hot markets. Then, I'm going to show Eric this list of lists and ask for his comments. I'm sure he will be able to add to my lists and maybe he will also be able to tell me that some of the lists are really not so hot.

In any case, after all that, I will have a page full of list selections and I will write you a letter telling you what lists I have selected. After that, I will put on my thinking cap and develop some product ideas to try and sell to the various lists. By the way, I would very much appreciate any ideas that pop into your head after you see my list of lists. Well, in

any case, after all this, I will sleep on it and then, pretty soon, I will codify (isn't that a neat word) and isolate the projects I want to work on.

Then I'll talk to my bankers.

Here's the way it works with my bankers. If they see a project they would like to be involved with, they will have to come up with a development fee of \$5,000.00. (Believe me, that's peanuts to these guys.) This \$5,000.00 will be used to create a DM piece and to make a test mailing of that piece to 2-5M names. We will also use some of the money for product development.

O.K. after that, if the response is no good, the banker will eat his \$5,000.00 loss and we will go on to the next project.

If, however, the results look good, we will then proceed to a larger mailing of perhaps 50,000 pieces. And then, after we get our results from the 50,000 pieces, if everything still looks good, we will start rolling out and taking care of business.

It's a good outline, I think. I intend to keep you informed every step of the way and I'll let you "live" the development of these projects with me. And, as a matter of fact, I think I will let you help me with some of these projects and give you a small cut of the action.

So, sharpen your driving skills. Do your roadwork and get cracking on all those other things I told you were good things to do. I'll join you again on my lunch hour.

Well, kiddo, it's past the lunch hour but better late than never, eh? Whatever. I'm stuck for a theme again. What do you suggest? O.K. How about the subject of IMPACT? Good, I'm glad you agree.

Impact is the impression you or your promotion makes on its intended target. Someone once said that the average American is subjected to about 1,500 commercial messages every day. Probably so. Especially when you count billboards, ads on TV, ads on radio, ads on the backs of buses, on taxicabs, on match covers, in newspapers, magazines, direct mail pieces, etc., etc.

However, out of all those ads very very few have any appreciable impact. And impact is one of the things I strive for.

And, what I want to talk about right now is my favorite way in all the world to achieve impact with my DM promotions. What I'm talking about is attaching things to the top of my letters. I've mentioned this before but now I want to go into it in considerably more detail.

The best letter ever to use this technique was the classic "dollar bill" letter featured in "The Robert Collier Letter Book." (must reread)

This was a first class letter that was designed to raise funds for a children's hospital. When the recipient opened the envelope he discovered a personal typed letter with a real honest-to-goodness dollar bill attached to it. The copy explained that the writer wanted to donate a thousand dollars to a certain children's hospital but that he realized that a thousand dollars wouldn't go very far. So, what he (the writer) had decided to do was divide his \$1,000.00 contribution into 1,000 - one dollar bills and then mail these bills to

1,000 different people. Now, he went on to say, what he hoped is that everybody who received one of these dollar bills would decide not to keep it and, instead, send it straight to the hospital with one or more dollars of their own.

Did it work? Oh my! It was probably the most effective direct mail promotion ever mailed. It got better than a 90% response and the people to whom it was mailed eventually contributed tens of millions of dollars!

That's Impact!

Today, in the mail, I received a copy of my Japanese "Penny" promotion. This promotion, as you know, has a Japanese "Penny" attached to the top of the letter and the copy says that the writer is attaching the penny to the letter for two important reasons.

The first reason is to get attention. And, secondly, because what the letter has to talk about was discovered in Japan, the writer felt that some sort of "Japanese" eyecatcher was appropriate.

This letter is working like crazy. It has impact.

But, be careful. Whatever you attach to the top of your letters should tie in with the rest of your letter and what you are selling. It should make sense and fit into the promotion in a natural way.

Here is an example of how not to use impact: Some companies print up advertising that, at first glance, looks like a traffic ticket. Then, they hire kids to put these traffic ticket type ads on the windshields of parked cars.

What happens is, that the owner of the car comes back to discover what seems to be a traffic ticket on his windshield and he, naturally, grabs it forthwith and starts to read it.

It sure gets his attention. It sure achieves impact. The guy will sure remember that company.

**But He Will Remember The
Company With Distaste!
He Will Remember That This
Is A Company That Scared
Him And Made Him Angry!**

You know what all that adds up to?

No Sale!

The message is clear: You must not use "cheap tricks". Make what you attach to the letter "fit in". All it takes is a little imagination. Let's see if I can come up with a couple of original examples:

How about attaching an eagle feather to a letter that tells how these birds are in danger of becoming extinct?

How about attaching a Mexican Peso to a letter that talks about inflation? I did it and it was a great puller.

How about a computer microchip attached to a letter that explains why a certain new electronic product is superior to the competition?

How about my son attaching a picture of himself to a letter to his old man that tells him how he is getting into good shape?

How about you send me some ideas along these lines?

I Love You and Good Luck

Dad