

THE GARY HALBERT LETTER

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The Boron Letters - Chapter 17

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Dear Bond,

Yesterday, the last thing I wrote about was how I want you to take the Tova "facelift ad" and copy it in your handwriting. I also said you should do this just as you would if you were going to take it to a secretarial service and have it typed.

Here's more: From now on, for the next 4 or 5 months I want you to do this same thing with other ads and DM pieces. But I don't want you to just copy any old ad or DM piece. I want you to copy only the best.

Now, here's why I want you to do all this: You see, what happens when you actually write out a good ad in your own handwriting is that the words and the flow and the sentence structure and the sequence of information and everything else about the writing of that ad becomes a part of you.

This isn't just an empty experience. This is a way of internally imprinting on your mind and body, the process of good writing. If you do this often enough you will soon have a deep "inside out" understanding of what it takes and what it feels like to write a good piece of copy. Now, in the beginning I want you to allow me and Blade to pick which ads and DM pieces for you to copy. And, of course, the ones we will select for you to write out in your own handwriting will be those that we already know to be the cream of the crop. Ads and DM pieces that are proven winners. Ones that have brought in millions and even tons of dollars.

It is important to do this. It is one of the many disciplines that other lazy "would be" marketing geniuses will not suffer. That's too bad for them and good for us. I love that my so called "competition" is so lazy. I love it that so many people in advertising and marketing are too sophisticated, too "above" this sort of thing.

Let me tell you a little tale about a man I very much respect who was not above doing this sort of thing. He wanted to become a great writer (he was!) and so what he did was take great books and copy them (in a sense he was actually writing them) in his own handwriting just as I am instructing you to do. He did this for a long time. Now here is

something else he took the trouble to do: Since one of the books he wanted to write involved what it was like to cross the ocean under horrible conditions, what he did was travel the ocean himself in the bowels of rusty old freighters.

Well, naturally, before he was finished he had an internal deep rooted “cellular” knowledge of the process of writing a good book and he also knew what it was like to travel the ocean in misery.

Did all of this pay off? You bet it did. This man’s name is Arthur Haley and his book “Roots” is one of the best sellers of all time.

End of sermon. Do it. Here is a short list of “killer” promotions to get you started.

Tova Ad

How To Burn Off Body Fat Hour By Hour

The Beverly Hills Diamond Ad

The Original Family Coat-Of-Arms Letter

How To Collect From Social Security At Any Age

How To Get What The U.S. Government Owes You

The Famous Dollar Bill Letter From The Robert Collier Letter Book

The Amazing Blackjack Secret

Of A Las Vegas Mystery Man

The Original Astrology Today Ad Written By Ben Suarez

There's more. But the above (at the rate of one per week) will keep you busy for a couple of months.

Now, here are a few other tips on how to write good copy or, as a matter of fact, "good anything". Use simple common everyday words. Use "get" instead of "procure." Write short sentences and short paragraphs. Use "transition" words and phrases to make your writing flow smoothly. Do you notice how I use transition words and phrases such as the following?

Well, as a matter of fact, I first blah...

Now, naturally, we don't want to blah, blah...

And, of course, here is what she said blah, blah, blah...

Now, here's a few more great ideas: Ask questions once in a while and then answer them yourself. Like this:

Bond, do you understand what I am saying? You do. Good, then let's go on. Etc.

How do we get the benefits? The answer is simple. All we have to do is etc., etc.

Can you imagine that? I know it seems unbelievable but facts are facts! Etc., etc., etc.

And so on. God I love to write "And so on." Kurt Vonnegut uses it quite often and he is one of the best writers I've read.

What is a good writer? Well, in my opinion a good writer is one who makes things perfectly clear. He makes it easy for the reader. Easy-to-understand what he is saying, easy to keep reading. And, if you want a treat, if you want to read an entertaining book written with great clarity, then read Vonnegut's "Breakfast of Champions."

Now, don't get me wrong. I said the book was written clearly, I did not say it was written by a sane person.

Onward.

By the way, do you notice how little one word transition sentences like “onward.” keep the flow going? You say you do notice? O.k., smarty, see if you can answer this question:

Question: **What is the best way of becoming a good writer?**

Aha! You’re not absolutely certain about this one, are you?

Here is the answer:

**The Best Way To Become
A Good Writer... Is By...
Writing Good Writing!**

And, of course, that’s what the subject of this entire letter is all about. Don’t worry about developing a “style.” Your own peculiarities will emerge soon enough.

But remember this. (Ran out of ink) The very best writing goes unnoticed. That’s right. You don’t want someone to read one of your ads and say “Gosh, that advertisement was sure well written!”

No. What you really want is for the reader to order from your ad. Listen up dummy. “*If you are writing for applause... you will go home with empty pockets!*”

Write for money!

Here is something else to keep in mind: It is a good idea to know “word pictures” that will help your reader vicariously experience the wonderful benefits of owning your product or service. Like this:

“And, just wait till you step into that warm inviting jacuzzi that comes with every apartment. Man oh man! The feel of that soothing bubbling water against your bare skin is just plain heaven.”

*“You’ve heard of the expression about how you won’t believe your eyes? Well, this is one time you won’t believe your eyes. No kidding. The delightful aroma of these charcoal broiled steaks will remind you how good it feels to be **genuinely** hungry”*

“Wow! When I first felt her tongue going around and around on my skin I thought I was going to scream!”

Etc. (I’m tired. These are not great examples but they’ll do for now.)

I’ve got 4 minutes to go. What can I teach you in that amount of time?

Here’s a little something: You can make your copy easier to read by the judicious use of parentheses. For example, if you want to tell people that your offer is good anywhere

in the U.S. (except Alaska) the proper use of parentheses, as I just did, makes the copy easier-to-read, easier to understand and provides a little “eye relief” for your reader.

That’s it.

I Love You and Good Luck!

Dad