



The Ten Commandments of Successful Financial Copywriting

- 1) Study the financial markets: read about new stories, trends and developments that might impact your reader. Start with Bloomberg, the FT, ZeroHedge, Forbes, the WSJ.
- 2) Immerse yourself in your prospects' world. Read their newspaper, watch the same TV, listen to people they listen to. Learn to respect and empathize with your prospect.
- 3) What is your prospect thinking about? What scares them? What excites them? What are they suspicious about? Who do they hate? Who do they love?
- 4) You are searching for an important idea to tell your reader about. This search should take over your life. Your idea should relate to the first three bullets on this list. The best ideas solve a serious, emotional problem your prospect has.
- 5) Inability to spot and capture an important idea ends 75% of financial copywriters' careers. You must catch lightning in a bottle.
- 6) The next biggest trap new copywriters fall into is TOO MANY IDEAS. You're looking for one, bold, compelling idea. Focus on one dominant emotion. Don't scare me then try to excite me, or vice versa. One idea, one emotion.
- 7) Try to position your idea so that it appeals to a big, obvious segment of your audience. Don't try to persuade your reader of something they don't - on some level - already agree with.
- 8) Get your name on at least ten major financial publisher's free email lists. Look out for the financial promotions that are being sent out repeatedly. These are working. Study why they are working. Focus on how each promotion is structured and the ideas discussed.
- 9) Stealing the underlying structure of a working promotion is smart; cribbing phrases from other promotions isn't. No one wants to read a "Frankenstein" of copy taken from other promotions. (These are easy to spot.)
- 10) Be curious. Very, very curious. All the ideas you need are looking for are out there in the world. They're not in a Swipe File. Someone is going to find those ideas. Find them first.