

**The Ultimate
Write Killer Copy
FAST Toolkit**



**MINDSET - Lesson 3:
Stop Thinking Like a “Writer”
TRANSCRIPT**



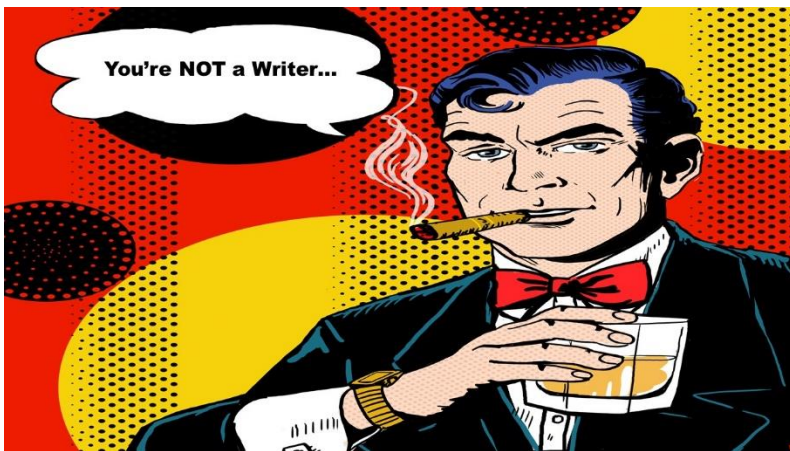
Module 1: MINDSET

Lesson 3: Stop Thinking Like a "Writer"



Welcome to Lesson Number 3 within Module 1 on Mindset, which is “Stop thinking like a writer.”

You're NOT a Writer...



Because you're NOT a writer and this is important to understand in order to write great copy as fast as possible.

You need to stop thinking that you ARE a writer and stop thinking LIKE a writer.



Writers tend to think that they're artists. They sit around waiting for the muse to appear and for the words to come down from on high. This is not a winning strategy.

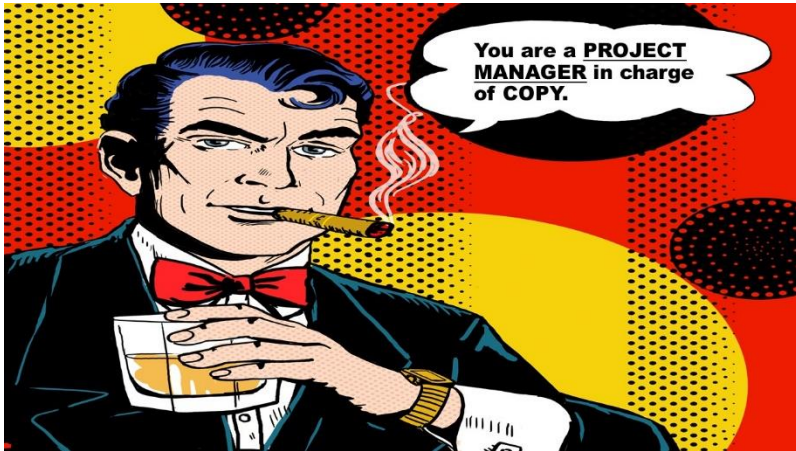
Long ago, I fell for the idea that every word, sentence, paragraph, page had to be labored over bit by bit. Therefore you had to write, stop, read, rewrite, edit every sentence, every word, everything that hit the page to ensure it was the very best quality possible.

You will drive yourself nuts doing this, but I guarantee it's a tendency that almost everyone who writes battles from the moment they hit the keyboard.

You must change your thinking from being a “Writer” – i.e., the

person who owns the writing of sales copy...

To someone in charge of managing its production, according to a definite timetable and to specific requirements. Thus, you shouldn't think of yourself as the writer...

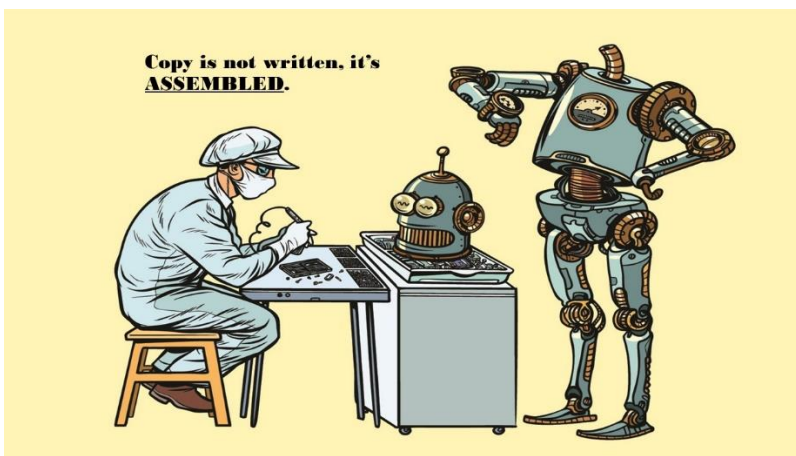


Instead, you should think of yourself as a **Project Manager** in charge of sales copy.

Oh, yeah, I get it. You're still typing. You're still writing. You're still cranking out prose.

But as a project manager, you have adjusted your thinking as you move forward in the process of writing copy, because projects have several specific components that you must manage in order to achieve success.

Wrap your head around this redefinition of your role. It's critical to any copywriting projects you take on moving forward.



As Gene Schwartz once said, "*Copy is not written, it's assembled.*"

It's critical you understand that fact.

When I'm cranking out a sales letter, it's almost never done in one fell swoop. Instead I'll come up with the outline first and then I start plugging in parts and pieces to create the initial draft.

Typically I'll focus first on the pre-head, headline, and subhead – because more often than not that lays out the big idea that holds the entire letter together.

Then I move on to the opening as that's a way to reinforce the big idea and to get the reader rolling in the direction I want.

And then I go off in different directions looking to fill in the blanks of the outline with pieces gathered from hither and yon.

Sometimes I'll take parts from a list of objections. Sometimes I'll toss in pieces from the offer I've nailed down. And sometimes I'll dive right into bullet points to highlight features and benefits.

Finally, I might toss in some testimonials, pricing, a guarantee, and so on.

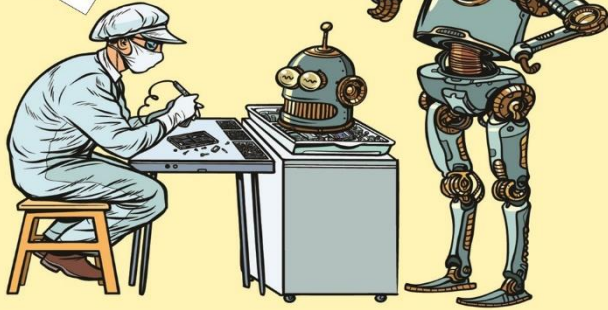
The key point being I don't necessarily do this in any pre-determined sequence. I work on the piece how I want, bit by bit, and then assemble it into a draft.

When you assemble copy in this way, it frees you from the pressure of constantly moving from start to finish in one continuous flowing effort. You can start, stop, change directions, drop new stuff, whatever.

It really makes writing less stressful and more fun. That internal editor, that "wise guy" I talked about earlier is shut up because you're NOT writing, you're assembling.

So think of your next writing project as an assembly line, where each piece gets bolted on bit by bit.

Your role as someone who assembles copy and CAMPAIGNS is now more important than EVER!



And assuming the role as someone who assembles copy as key pieces in a funnel and an over-arching campaign is now more important than ever.

Today, with the proliferation of AI tools to generate content and copy, your role has expanded beyond generating copy to managing its production.

So having a Project Manager mindset is crucial to your success.



Project Mgmt = Deliverables

- Break every marketing and copywriting project into the specific deliverables your client wants and needs.
- Remember: Funnels / Campaigns NOT one-offs
- Fill EVERY Hole in the Funnel

And what is project management? Project management is based on a couple of things.

First – it's based on DELIVERABLES.

So you want to break every marketing and sales letter writing project into specific deliverables that your client wants and needs, because what you're producing again, are elements of a funnel elements of a campaign.

It's all to be taken in a larger context.

Understand you're producing different specific pieces, each designed to fill every potential hole in the funnel.

To a project managers, these are all merely deliverables, part of the bigger picture.



Second, as a Project Manager, you'll want to think in terms of TASKS.

Even something simple, like writing a letter, involves both tasks and subtasks.

You need to research the audience. That's a task. You need to nail down the offer and the call to action. That's a task. You need to gather social proof. That's a task. You need to create headlines. That's a task. Creating the first draft. Getting feedback. Getting a second draft. These are all specific tasks that you want to be able to identify, list, and complete in a certain period of time.

To figure out how long a full project will take, you want to get really good at subdividing a project and estimating how long each task will take. Add up the time to complete all these tasks and you now know how long that project will take.

But make sure to toss in the slop factor. We used to do this at Microsoft and it's basically a 10 percent overage.

Why – because things happen. You will get bad answers. Technology will break down. People won't get back to you. Stuff happens.

So after adding up all the tasks and subtasks, make sure to add an additional 10 percent slop factor to the overall project timeline.



Your writing time must be managed.

There is an old truism in business that work expands to fill the time available. And this absolutely applies to writing sales copy.

The more time you give it, the more time it will take.



You must therefore ALWAYS have a specific deadline for everything you write.

Make sure you don't start writing without a clear goal in mind for when you want to have that piece of copy done, that piece of writing done.

When you give yourself a fuzzy deadline, say four or so hours to write one page of copy, then by gum it'll take you four or so hours to write that page.

On the other hand, if you set your alarm and give yourself 10 minutes to write that page, I'll bet you'll crank out that page.

Now, I don't have a fancy scientific reason for this. My best guess is that we're just prone to lose focus, which makes it a whole lot harder to buckle down and stay productive.



So you must, when writing copy, set yourself a “*it must be done by X*” kind of deadline. This will drive your writing forward.



Project management, again, requires deadlines.

Use your calendar to block out and set deadlines throughout your day. Block out the amount of time you intend to spend on each project. It's best if you can define both the amount of time you intend to spend and the exact output you intend to wind up with.

“I'll finish the bullets for the landing page by 11AM.”

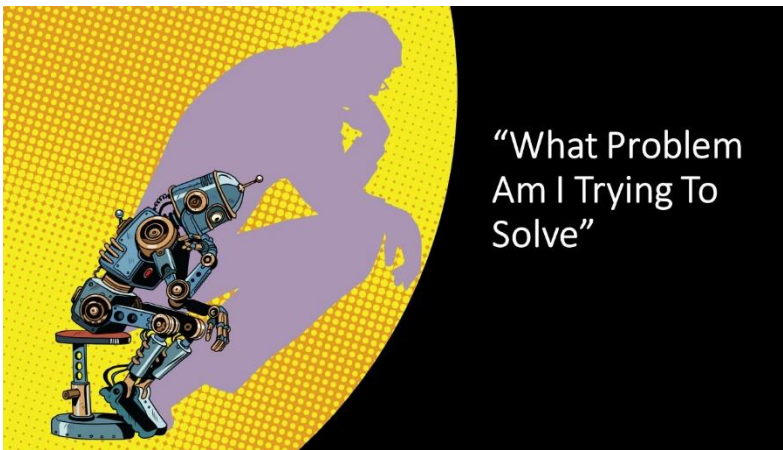
You can just block out generic “writing” time, but to manage your time in the most effective way, you want to include both the time to spend and the output you want to produce.

This may be a new concept to you and a pushback you may have, and I've used it myself initially when attempting something like this, is “but I don't know how long it will take me to produce 10 pages!”

Trust me, the more you do this, the more dedicated you are to the process, the better you will get at understanding your optimal level of productivity.



I talked earlier about some of the things about a *project* that are different as opposed to *writing*. A project has specific **objectives**. And it's important when you start any sales copy project that you understand what the objectives for that project are.



It's important to ask yourself this question, and this is one of the best questions I ever got from working at Microsoft.

What problem am I trying to solve?

This is such a great question. It's critical because every sales letter, every piece of copy, whether it's a postcard, an email, a website, a webinar, what have you, every bit of copy exists to solve a specific problem.

And before you start writing, before you start planning this project, before you even kick off one word, you must define that problem.



Clearly, what is it you want this piece of copy to do?

Do you want this piece of copy to generate leads? To get people to raise their hand, to request more information, to request a call, to request a consultation, whatever? It's important to know.

Do you want them to call you or contact you?

Or is this a piece of copy to close a sale – is that something this piece of copy is going to drive home... the point that NOW is the time to pull

	<p>out the credit card, to pull out the wallet, to click the button, and close the deal?</p> <p>What do you want this piece of copy to do?</p> <p>Again, I mentioned it could be to make an appointment for a virtual meeting, a phone call, an in-person meeting, whatever. Do you want the copy to drive that call to action home?</p> <p>Do you want this piece of copy to establish your credibility? That's certainly a viable use for copy. Sometimes we just want to nurture people along and have them grow in their understanding and awareness of how excellent we are at what it is we do. Thus, establishing credibility is a viable, absolutely important job for copy to do.</p> <p>Is this piece of copy to generate interest, to build interest and something coming soon? In the Jeff Walker world, that's called sending a "shot across the bow" that more's coming along the way.</p>
 <p>Copy can be used for many purposes, but you need to nail down ONE.</p>	<p>So understand what it is you want this piece of copy to do.</p> <p>Copy can be used for all of those purposes, but you really need to nail down the one specific use you want this piece of copy to do.</p>

Then use all the time allotted to hammer out the exact prose necessary to accomplish that desired result.



Then you use all of the time allotted to generate the exact prose necessary to accomplish that desired result, to do what it is you want that copy to do.

Of Course, You'll Need Answers...



Now of course, before you can make that happen, you'll need to get answers to a number of elements and variables that will get plugged into your copy and your project along the way.

Who is the prospective customer?

What are their hopes, dreams, fears, pain?



The first is WHO is the prospective customer? Who is it that you intend to serve either with a product or a service and solve their problems?

What is their mindset about what's going on in their life?

When they lay awake at night, looking up at the ceiling in the darkness, what are their hopes, their dreams, their fears, what pain do they have right now?

You really need to understand your customer and get deep within their mind.



WHAT exactly is included in your offer? And it's important to model your offer and design your offer in a way that addresses the needs of the customer, their hopes, dreams, fears, and pain. You really need to know specifically what's in your offer that does exactly that.



You need to know what's driving urgency with this offer. You need to know what it is that impels them to pull out their wallet and buy right now - to click that button and make that decision immediately.

What is driving urgency?



You need to know all the aspects of your offer.

You need to know if you're including bonuses and you need to describe them in detail.

Is there a guarantee with your offer? Do you even provide a guarantee? Do you take away all the risk that the prospect may have in choosing to go and do business with you?

And what is your specific call to action? What exactly are you going to have them do in order to take the action you want them to take, to meet the objective you set for that sales piece? You need to have that clearly defined in managing this product and this project.



Swipe Like a
PRO

In order to get more done faster, you need to learn how to swipe like a pro.

I'm going to talk to you about that for a second.

Swipe Like a
PRO



There's an old saying from Pablo Picasso that "Good artists copy, great artists steal."

Now there's some lesser well known, similar sentiments from other noteworthy experts.

Albert Einstein said the secret to creativity is "*knowing how to hide your sources.*"

Isaac Newton is famous for saying "*If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.*"

And screenwriter, Wilson Mizner once said, "*If you steal from one author, it's plagiarism. If you steal from many, it's research.*"

Now the lesson to take from this is not that it's okay to steal, but rather it's to look for inspiration from the best that's out there.

One of the most valuable tools you can acquire as a copywriter is an extensive swipe file of proven ads and promotions. And one of the best ways to build such a file is by saving your junk mail, getting a mailing list for companies that focus on direct response, and always keeping your eyes open for ads and headlines and magazines and newspapers and even TV and radio, of course online.

Great copy can inspire new twists and it's just there at your fingertips and all around you. All you have to do is keep your antenna up and working.

With a great swipe file, you'll never get stuck for out on opening headline or a subhead or a sentence or a bullet point. You'll have a wealth of options and examples to pick and choose from and model.

Recycle Like CRAZY!



You also want to recycle like crazy.

I used to think that every letter, every email, every promotion had to be totally written from scratch. This is just not so – one of your most valuable swipe file sources is stuff you've already written.

I'm not saying you should use word-for-word, copy that you've written on one promotion for another and never come up with any new, but you don't have to feel like every single sentence, every single paragraph, every single headline has to be 100% original.

I mean, heck, inside Magnetic Marketing, one of Dan Kennedy's most effective campaign strategies is to literally reuse the exact same letter as step two in a sequence. He just recommended slapping a second notice at the top and sending the same letter.

Again, it is a great strategy because it works and you can do the same thing with emails. Just send the same email and preface it with a note along the lines of, "I sent you an email the other day, but here it is again in case you missed it."

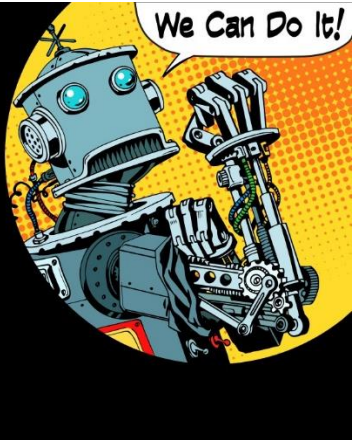
Again, this works. Don't get hung up on the idea that you're repeating



yourself and boring the prospect. There's a pretty good chance they did indeed miss that first notice. So recycling it a second time is just a smart use of your time. This principle applies to elements of letters used before, including bullet points offers testimonials and so on. You really can recycle and reuse copy to a much greater degree than you may have realized. Your goal is FAST. Get your message out, get your offers out, get noticed. It's all good.

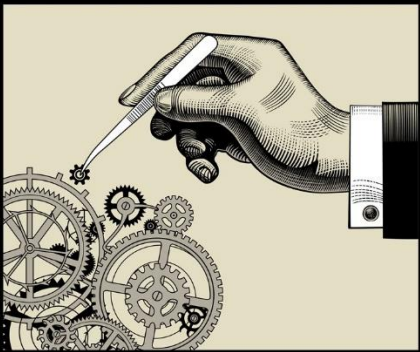
When You Think Like a Project Manager...

- Forces you to do the leg work necessary to get everything in place to get the project done as fast and efficiently as possible.
- You're focused on the project first.. THEN you attack the challenge of getting the actual words right.
- This is incredibly liberating as a writer – because you won't be starting from scratch on a blank slate... you'll have a wealth of information at your fingertips when you actually begin.



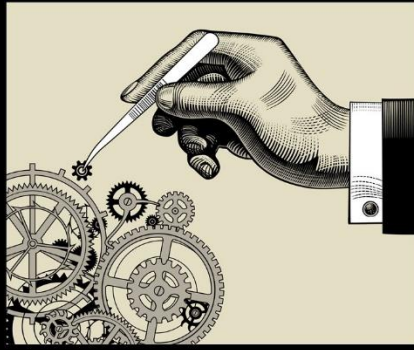
When you think like a project manager, instead of like a writer, this forces you to do the legwork necessary to get everything in place first, to get the project done as fast and efficiently as possible. You're focused on the project first, THEN you attack the challenge of getting the actual words right. This is incredibly liberating as a writer because no longer are you starting from scratch with a blank slate in front of you. Instead you have a wealth of information, resources, and tools right at your fingertips.

Changes Copywriting from an ART to PROCESS



When you actually begin by thinking of copywriting like a project manager, instead of as a writer, this changes copywriting from an art into a process.

You are Project
Managing the
creation of an asset
fully intended to
deliver specific and
measurable results.



You are project managing the creation of an asset fully intended to deliver specific and measurable results.



And that my friend is the right mindset and the right way to think about writing copy.