

The Fine Art of Self-Promotion

From Copywriting Basics to
Natural Persuasive Writing

Alice Seba.com 

Understand The Basics to Hone Your Persuasion Skills in All Your Communication

In order to be able to master the Art of Persuasion, there are some basics you need to understand. There are lots of books on copywriting, but I think you'll find that this free PDF I'm sharing with you covers everything you need to know to get started.

Because even if you aren't actively selling a product, if you want to be a go to resource, have people listen to you or succeed just about anywhere...you need persuasion on your side.

The PDF is divided into two parts...

- **Copywriting Basics and Terminology** – The basics of everything that will help you use more persuasive language and learn how to create promotional materials for your business.
- **Being Persuasive and the Art of Conversational Selling** – This shows how you to apply the copywriting basics to EVERYTHING you do...everywhere you communicate with your audience, even when you aren't selling them a product.

And remember, we're going to dive much deeper into all of this as I create my in-depth Fine Art of Persuasion Course...and write a book on the same topic. You can have access to everything, plus have a behind the scenes look on everything in the creation process.

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Just do it now because we're getting started quickly and I can only accept a limited number of participants.

Can't wait to go on this journey with you!

To always living your best life,



Alice Seba
CEO on Her Own Terms

Now let's get started....

Copywriting Basics and Terminology

Why Copywriting Is Important

Simply put, copywriting is the writing you use in your written promotional materials. This can include your advertising, video scripts, website, brochure, catalogs, business cards, sales letters and more. For the purposes of our course, we focus on online copywriting.

Copywriting is what you use to get your customers and potential customers to take a particular action.

For example:

- Call you for more information
- Place an order
- Sign up for your mailing list
- Get them to refer a friend to your business

While sometimes we think this should happen naturally when someone visits our site and they are interested, copywriting is a conscious effort to get the results you want. The good news is, the more you practice, the more natural copywriting becomes.

Consider this:

When someone visits your website, **you aren't there** to answer their questions or to convince them how great your product is. Your words need to do that for you. In other words, you need effective copywriting. This lesson is going to show you how to do that.

Terminology & Practical Applications

There is plenty of terminology when it comes to copywriting. We aren't going to cover them all, but the ones that are key to your being able to sell online. It's important to understand the meaning of the terminology, so that you know the things you should

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focus on in your own copywriting. But this lesson will go deeper than just providing definitions. We'll show you examples and even give you suggestions on applying everything to your own business.

Target Market

Your target market is the group of people you're selling your product to. You have to be **very specific** when you define your target market, in order to make sure your copywriting is most effective. You can't just say "women, moms or pet owners" because that is still vague.

What women?

Which moms?

Which pet owners?

When defining your target market, there are many things to consider. There's a small list below, but it only touches the surface. For each target market, there are so many different factors that can make up your specific target market:

- Age
- Income
- Interests
- If it's a man or a woman, marital status may come into play
- If it's apparent, you might want to have an idea about the age of the children; if they work outside the home, etc.
- If it's a pet owner, what kind of pet they have, what breed, etc.
- Wants, wishes and desires *
- Values & beliefs *
- Problems she needs solved *

These last three are particularly important because this is what **really motivates people to spend their money and buy products. Yes, they buy to satisfy their immediate needs, but desire is what drives people to spend their money readily.*

The following are important human motivators that have been identified by psychologists. They will help you in understanding what motivates your readers to take action:

- Fear
- Exclusivity
- Guilt
- Greed
- Need for approval
- Convenience

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- Pleasure

Some people might see it as unethical to play too hard on the emotions of their potential customer, but you can use this information to really understand what motivates your target market. When you understand someone, you can sell them the ***right*** product. You will understand their point-of-view, the problems they have and how much like they'd like a solution...and by understanding your audience, you'll know what the right solution is.

The Problem with Being Too Vague:

I've seen a lot of business owners who try the vague "be everything to everyone approach" and it's really tough to make that work as a small business owner. These business owners may sell candles online or cosmetics or a similar product and the business owner will say their target market is simply women.

The problem is, if you sell those things, not all women are your target as I've already said.

Let me explain further...

There are plenty of women who don't care much about candles and they're content buying the typical drugstore cosmetics or no cosmetics at all. Those women are not your target market.

Even a woman, who thinks candles are lovely and wears a little makeup now and then, but doesn't readily spend her money on those items, is not your target market. You need to understand the woman who really wants to buy your product and that she'll buy it **over and over again**.

That is your ideal customer.

Imagine Your Ideal Customer:

What are her wants and desires?

What problems does she need solved?

What are her beliefs?

If you don't already know that, try surveying the customers that you already have. Ask them a few questions about themselves, why they bought the product, what they like about it and what they don't like. In return, offer them a coupon or a free gift or something, just to get that feedback. This information will be very valuable to you.

Think about your product:

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What is the single most important reason your target audience would want to buy it? You need to be able to empathize with your target market, identify their problems and show how your product solves that problem. If you think too generally about your target market, the passion is lost in your copy and it's tough to get anyone excited about anything.

For example, if you sell acne medication and you simply talk about the embarrassment of acne, you might get some sales. But if you know that your target market for a specific ad campaign is teenagers, talking about being teased at school, worrying that they won't find a date and having a case study of a teenager who overcame that – your copywriting will be much more powerful.

You will sell more to a highly-targeted group of people than trying a lukewarm approach with the public in general. Leave general marketing to Amazon.com, Wal-Mart and other huge companies.

Exercise:

Start writing a list of all the characteristics of your typical customer. Use information gathered from customer surveys, as mentioned earlier in this section, and write at least 15-20 specific characteristics. This list will help you as you make your way through this lesson.

USP

USP stands for **Unique Selling Position** and this is what sets you apart from your competition. Put another way, a USP is some unique thing you offer that your competition is not offering. Here are just a few examples of a USP. Your USP will likely be very different:

- Are you the only company that offers an unlimited time money back guarantee?
- Do you cater to vegetarians when nobody else in your industry does?
- Do you know the secret to a perfectly baked soufflé; what do you do that's different?
- Do you look for hard-to-find items for your clients in 24 hours or less?
- Do you offer holistic options where no one else does?

USP is a concept that is often difficult for people because every business is different. You need to really sit down, brainstorm and figure out your USP because if you don't, it's hard to stand out from the crowd and compete in your market.

Warning: A lot of home businesses make the **mistake** of making their low price as the USP. The problem is trying to sell for the lowest price is not often a profitable business model, especially for small home businesses like you. If you're not buying and selling in huge volumes, it's just not worth it. Let's leave this kind of marketing to large companies like Wal-Mart or Amazon. They can afford it.

Some of the best customers you can ever have, don't worry about price. The easiest to deal with customers are the ones who are more concerned about quality, exceptional service or that just buy because they plain old trust you and feel you understand them. They don't worry so much about spending money, look for all kinds of faults and readily ask for refunds when they have regrets. As a home business owner with a smaller budget, you don't need to deal with bargain hunters.

Here is one of the most important questions you'll ask yourself when formulating your USP:

"Why would my customer buy my product instead of a competitor's?"

Think of what information or education you can provide to people who use your products. Go the extra mile where other big companies may not. Find something different than competing on price because trying to offer the lowest price will likely put you out of business. You want to price your products to receive a decent profit. That way, you'll need fewer sales to make just as much or more money.

Exercise:

Make a list of 5-10 competitors and identify their USP. See how you compare to these companies and their USP.

For example, if one company's USP is that they have the fastest delivery rates, are you able to compete with that? If another company offers the longest hours of service, are you able to compete with that?

You also have to ask yourself if you should even bother trying to outperform your competitor in a certain area. You may want to instead focus on creating your own USP that effectively helps you ELIMINATE your competition, instead of increasing it. Find a way that you stand out and customers will have only one choice – to come to you.

Features

You probably already have some idea what this word means. It basically describes what your product looks like, how it functions, etc. It is the basic information about your product. Although features may be important to your potential customers, it's the benefits that will make them want to buy your product.

Examples of Features:

- 4" x 7"
- Red
- Foldable
- 3-Day Supply
- Includes a video, audio recording and ebook

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Exercise:

Write down all the features of your product. Include every single detail from color to size to function. You can't write too much for this exercise so write it ALL down.

Benefits

Benefits are the advantages your customer receives from using your product's features. As mentioned in the definition of features, in most cases, benefits will sell your products better than a feature does. Although successful copy combines both, often the best performing copy for most products focuses on the benefits.

An example: You sell a ballpoint pen.

The features are black ink, a felt tip, and it comes with a lid.

The benefits are that it reduces hand cramping and eliminates smudges.

Notice how when we talked about the features of the pen, it sounds like any other pen, but when we talk about benefits, it make the pen sound more interesting. Those are benefits and they help sell your product. People have a problem and they want to solve it by buying your product. Show them the benefits of your product.

What If Your Customers Care About Features?

Sometimes, you might sell a product where customers heavily compare features. One example of this might be a web host for businesses. Businesses who need web host want to know the rates, the speed, etc. Internet service is a good example of a very feature competitive and focused business. You can still set yourself apart by illustrating some of the benefits of their service.

If you have a great record of up-time, tell your potential customers about it and that they don't have to worry about losing sales when their sites are down as frequently as with other service-providers.

In this example, the feature is the up-time, but the benefit is keeping sales and that helps your potential customers visualize why they might use your service.

Someone may think up-time is just a number web hosts throw out there, but when they think, "Oh yeah, if it's not up, I'm going to lose a sale," that's when it reaches your target market. That's the kind of thing you want to talk to them about.

Exercise:

Take that list of features you just created in the previous definition and then list a benefit for each feature. This list will not only help you understand your product's benefit, but

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once you've done this exercise, you will have a large portion of the copy for your product done. You can put that information in bullet point format onto your web page or brochure.

And speaking of "bullets"...

Bullets

Bullets are one of the greatest things you'll come to love about copywriting. They are relatively **easy to write** and they can also sell your product exceptionally well.

Bullets can be about the benefits of your products or the features and bullets will often will include both.

Bullet points are an easy way to deliver a lot of information about your product, efficiently and effectively to your prospect. If you formatted all this information into paragraph format, they might not read it as readily.

Bullet points can also **"tease"** your readers into having more interest for your product. This is particularly effective when you're selling an informational product, course or book. A good bullet point teases about what's included and gets them excited to buy, but doesn't give away the actual information you're selling. You don't want to give your product away for free, of course!

For example:

Bad bullet point

- Passionately kiss your husband each morning and he's sure to stay faithful.

Good bullet point:

- Do this one thing each morning and your husband's eyes will never stray to another woman.

The first bullet point gives away what's in your information product. The other one tells the BENEFIT of what's included (the faithful husband), but doesn't tell you how to do it. That is a teaser that creates more interest in your product.

Exercise:

If you haven't already, take your list of features & benefits, and put them into curiosity producing bullet points.

Headlines

Your headline belongs at the top of your sales letter, web page, ad or any copy you are creating. It is the first thing on your page, but I wanted to discuss features and benefits first, so you can produce a benefit-laden headline.

Capitalize all the words in your headline and make it nice and big and bold to ensure it gets attention. Now those are the visual aspects of your headline. Let's talk about what to put in it...

All good copy has an attention-getting headline. People are busy and you only have a limited amount of time to grab their attention. They won't read the small print on your page if you don't get their attention. A clear, benefit-oriented headline can help you do this.

A headline that simply says "We Sell X Widgets" doesn't say enough to get a reader to keep reading. Many people probably sell X Widgets. Why should they learn more about yours?

If you are having trouble figuring out headlines to use, here are a few headline starters. These are very common ones that are proven to work and you can try them out for your copy or do something completely different. These are just a way to start getting your mind going:

- **"Who Else Wants to ____ "**

This is an easy way to start; relate to your audience.

An example: "Who Else Wants to Save Up to 50% on Their Phone Bill? Try Our Rates Calculator to Find the Best Deals on Long Distance. "

- **"How ____ Made me ____ and It Can Help You Too"**

An example: "How X-Brand Weight-Loss Shake Made Me Lose 37 Pounds in 7 Weeks"

- **"Are You ____?"**

An example: "Are You Tired of Unsightly Bags under Your Eyes? Apply Just a Dab of X Cream Once a Day for 6 Days and Watch the Puffiness Disappear."

- **"The Secrets to ____"**

Everybody loves secrets...tell them about yours.

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An example: “The Secrets to Rekindling the Romance with Your Husband”

- “Give Me ____ and I’ll ____”

An example: “Give Me 15 Days and I’ll Turn Your Ever-Reluctant Child into an Avid Reader”.

Tell them what they have to put in to it and what benefit they will get out of it.

More Tips for Creating Great Headlines: Another great way to find good headlines is simply looking at websites, brochures, magazines and other sales copy and see what grabs your attention. You can use some of those ideas in your own headlines.

Be Specific: In one of the headlines, we talked about losing 37 pounds in 7 weeks. The headline mentioned a certain product; the subject lost a certain amount of weight in a certain amount of time. Being specific is very important in headlines and copy, in general, because that’s what really grabs attention. It also makes the results more tangible. Your reader can visualize it.

Being vague and saying things like “reduce eye puffiness” may grab some attention but telling them how easy it is; “a dab of cream once a day for 6 days”... that’s something people will say hey, I could do that. When you don’t give them that extra information right away; they may not keep reading.

Exercise:

Visit a few websites or read ads in a newspaper or magazine. See what grabs your attention. Can you incorporate those ideas into your headline?

Subheadlines / Subheads

Subheadlines are additional headlines in your sales copy. Usually, subheadlines won’t be as large or long as other headlines in your copy, but they’ll be bold each word will be capitalized to get attention.

Subheadlines help break up your copy to make it easier to read. It also helps get the attention of people who are skimming, rather than reading your sales copy. Use subheadlines to draw attention to important sections of your copy every couple of paragraphs. Be specific in your sub-headlines and use benefits too.

Example: If you have written promotional copy for your free weekly email newsletter, you’ll want subheadlines to draw in the eyes to important parts of the copy.

When you are about to include some bullet points about what’s included in your newsletter, you might have a subheadline that reads:

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Here's What's Included in Your Free Subscription to XXXXX

Then, just before you introduce your subscription form, you can have a subheadline that says:

Claim Your Free Subscription by Completing the Simple Form Below

Those are simply examples and copy that is more than a couple of paragraphs can be broken up in that manner.

Exercise:

Go back and see where you can insert subheadlines into your copy. Visually, you'll see how it draws your eyes in, will help skimmers find the information they are looking for and how it makes instructions clearer for your readers.

Power Words & Phrases

Power words are emotionally-charged language that is used to influence your reader. People react and buy with emotion, and these are words that help elicit emotion. They are often action words and create a mental picture for your reader.

The swipe file we gave includes a HUGE list of power words and phrases, but here are a few power words to get you started:

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- • Amazing
- • Discovery
- Free
- Health
- Love

- • Money
- Proven
- Results
- Secret

Power words and phrases are used everywhere in your copy. Make it a habit to use more powerful words in all your writing.

Exercise:

With the swipe file in hand, see how you can edit some existing content or copy to include more power words and phrases.

Transitions

A common weakness to compelling writing is the absence of transitions. Transitions are what connect one paragraph or section of your copy to the next. Here are some transitions to connect the ideas between your paragraphs:

- And best of all...
- And most importantly...
- But before you decide...
- But if you're still not sure...
- But that's not all...
- Get started right now with...

And again, the swipe file with includes plenty more phrases you can use.

Exercise:

Go through some copy or even an article or blog post and add transitions. See how much compelling the writing can be when each section drives the reader to the next section.

Guarantee

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A guarantee can be a very key component to your copy's success. A guarantee moves the burden of risk from the buyer to the seller. For example, they get their money back if they aren't completely satisfied.

Templates and Tools Provided for Info Product Mastery Students Only

A few key components to your guarantee:

- **The nature of your guarantee:** Will they get their money back or double their money back, for example?
- **The condition of your guarantee:** Do they get their money back if they simply aren't satisfied for any reason? Or do they have to use the product as advertised and find out it didn't work for them? You might use the latter if you offering a double your money back guarantee since there should be some requirement for a customer to get extra money back.
- **The timeline:** You might have a guarantee that says they have 30 days to review the product and decide. Check with your merchant provider for the maximum time allowed for a guarantee as some have limits, but generally speaking the longer it is, the more risk is removed and less likely a customer will ask for a refund after such a long period of time.

If you're offering a double your money back guarantee, you might also require your customer to use the product for a minimum amount of time, giving time for them to produce results.

Exercise:

Craft a guarantee for your product. Here's an example you can build from:

Join XXXX today and take up to 30 days to evaluate and put XXXX to work. If you're not able to XXXX, just tell us and we'll give you your money back. No questions asked.

Consider it your 30-day trial to discover XXXX. It's that simple.

Give your readers the confidence to buy your product and remove the risk for them to do so.

Offer

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An offer is simply what you are selling/giving to your readers.

Example: You are selling a customized embroidered baby blanket. If your customer pays you \$35, they will get a 3' x 3' blanket in the color of their choice, design of their choice and embroidered message up to 25 letters. Additional designs have an extra charge.

You might write something like this:

With each beautifully handcrafted 3' x 3' embroidered blanket you can:

- ***Choose from over XX colors and pick from any of our XX designs. You're sure to find something perfect for that special little boy or girl.***
- ***Add a special message for that little one. Your order includes up to 25 letters. Got a longer message? No worries, you can add that to your order.***

The offer is related to your call-to-action, which we'll talk about next, but they're not exactly the same thing. Your offer is what you will give in return for money or whatever you're asking for. The call-to-action is the specific instruction you give for your potential customer to accept your offer.

Exercise:

Take some time to write out all the details of your own offer. Get specific like I mentioned in the example above.

Call-to-Action

Your call-to-action is what you ask your reader to do once they read your promotional copy. It can be something as simple as calling you for more information, signing up for your mailing list or buying your product. If you don't tell people what to do, they are less likely to do it. Even if your copy implies they should buy your product, if you don't ask for the sale, you won't make it as often.

Every piece of sales copy should have a call-to-action; whether it's a page on your website, your business card or other piece of copywriting.

Examples: Here are some examples of the types of calls-to-action you can make.

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- Click a link to place an order
- Click a link to check out an affiliate offer
- Call a 1-800 number to place an order
- Call a number to hear a recorded message
- Fill in a form to subscribe to a newsletter or get a free gift
- Fill in a form to enter a sweepstakes

The swipe file includes plenty of wording you can borrow to create your calls-to-action.

Exercise:

Take a look at every page of promotional material you've written. Ensure it has a call-toaction. If it doesn't, fix it. Don't assume your reader will know what to do.

Closing

Tidy up your conversations with your readers and have a closing. After you've made your call to action...give them another reason to take action.

- "It doesn't matter if it's the middle of the night on a Sunday..."
- "It's in your hands..."
- "It will be the best \$XX you ever spent." (use this if the price is one of the attractive things about your product. This doesn't necessarily mean a cheap price, but one with incredible value.)

Exercise:

Check your copy. Do you end it abruptly after your call-to-action? If so, add a closing paragraph using one of the phrases above or in the swipe file.

Postscript / PS

Studies have shown that on a sales letter, people read the headline, they read the first paragraph and then they zip down to the bottom of the page, generally looking for the price or summary of the offer.

This is where they run into your P.S.

Your P.S. will reiterate the benefits and it will have a call to action. If the headline and the P.S. do their job, your prospect will now go back and skim your sales letter for relevant information.

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Because people readily read the P.S., it is your last opportunity to make an impression on your prospect and close the sale. P.S. is appropriate for sales pages, free offer pages, emails and any pages where you sign your name. Some even sign and add P.S. to their blog posts and articles.

Some possible P.S. starters:

- “Don’t forget...”
- “Don’t need the whole system, but are interested in ____?” (Make a downsell offer)
- “Every day that goes by...”

Exercise:

Add a P.S. to some copy and test out the results. The swipe file includes additional P.S. starters that you can use.

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

When we sell online, we aren’t always there to help overcome our potential customer’s objections. However, that doesn’t mean you can’t help them with answers to many of their possible questions.

When your product is new, you can guess at common questions people will have about your product, your order process, your guarantee, etc. and put together a FAQ for your website. As you drive more traffic and sell more of your product, you can add to your FAQ so that you can retain more of the customers that would have otherwise just clicked away.

For example:

- Is there a money-back guarantee?
- What is your return policy?
- How much is shipping etc.

The swipe file includes some other possibilities, but a FAQ will usually be quite unique to its product.

Exercise:

Put together a FAQ for your product and add it to your sales page or website.

Honing Your Copywriting Craft

Now that we've got terminology out of the way, let's talk about how you can improve your copywriting to make compelling offers to your website visitors.

Speak to Your Audience

Since the sales copy you write is to promote your own products, it's easy to make the mistake of talking about yourself in your copy too much. The problem is, your potential customer doesn't really care about you. They care about themselves, they want solutions to their problems and they want to know what you can do for them.

You need to focus on your customer first.

A lot of sales copy is too focused on the business who is doing the selling:

"We sell xx..."

"We're great at xx..."

"We believe in customer satisfaction..."

It's simple enough to change wording around to focus more on "you" and how you can help your potential customer. Turn it around and write things like this instead:

"Are you looking for..."

"If you need reliable..."

"Your satisfaction is guaranteed..."

Exercise:

Go through your copy and change many of the "wes" to "yous" and rewrite your copy based on the change in focus. When you're done, you'll see how much more of a connection you can make with your reader.

In most cases you'll be saying essentially the same thing (ex. Saying, "We believe in customer satisfaction" is pretty much the same as, "Your satisfaction is guaranteed"), but the focus is on your potential customer.

Avoid Excessive Adjectives

Can you see what's wrong with the following copywriting example?:

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"The biggest and best e-book that will make you the happiest person on your block."

Here's the problem: Outside of the fact that it's pretty over-the-top with its claims, that sentence above is pretty meaningless.

Nobody really cares if an ebook is the biggest and this sentence really doesn't say anything about why it's the best.

Also, the word happiest is kind of meaningless. We all want to be happy, but if we are unhappy right now we have specific problems we need to have solved. Telling someone they're going to be happy doesn't answer much for them. They want to know HOW you're going to make them happy and how you'll make their specific problems go away.

The real problem with the sentence above is that it's filled with adjectives that don't give specifics. Adjectives describe nouns and they don't provide readers with good information. Make sure you answer these questions in your copy:

- How are you the best?
- What makes you great?
- How do you care for your customer?

That's what people want to know. If you use too many adjectives, it ends up sounding like too much hype and the meaningfulness is lost.

That doesn't mean you can't use adjectives in your copy. Of course, you're still going to use them, but your copy should be able to stand on its own without all the extra words.

Exercise:

If you want to see if your copy can stand up on its own, pick a couple paragraphs from your website or your entire page and remove all the adjectives. Does it still sound compelling? Is it selling your product? It doesn't mean you have to remove all the adjectives, but it is a good test of the effectiveness of your copy on its own.

Above-the-Fold

Above-the-fold refers to the space that can be immediately seen, without scrolling in a web browser. Knowing the above-the-fold space can be tricky given that people access the Internet in a wide variety of ways from small mobile screens, a laptop or a giant desktop monitor. But generally speaking, you want to ensure you're grabbing the attention of your reader near the top of the page.

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Tips for Your Above-the-Fold Space:

- Avoid large page headers or logos. They detract from your sales message.
- The same goes for your navigation. Don't create distraction above-the-fold.
- Include a compelling headline and attention-getting starting copy.
- The introduction of images may also draw the eye in.

Exercise:

Check your copy and review the above the fold space. Does it grab attention? Is it compelling? Have you removed the distractions?

Copy Should Be Scannable

People often scan sales pages rather than reading them word for word – this is particularly true online where reading large pages of copy make the eyeballs dry out.

This means it's really important to make your copy scannable. You can do this with:

- Bullets
- Numbered lists
- Small paragraphs
- Short sentences
- Simple words
- Formatting with bold lettering and italics sparingly, for emphasis
- Limit distracting navigation.
- Keep your page header or logo simple and short and don't let it distract from your copy.

Just be careful to make everything subtle and truly scannable. Too much color or font change can make your page a disaster instead of easier to read. When you're done your copy, always take a step back and look at from a scanner's perspective and see if it draws your eye in at key areas.

Exercise:

Check your copy for scannability. Use bulleted lists, numbered lists, simple sentences, formatting and limit distracting navigation.

Copy Should Be Specific

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Regardless of what you're writing about - your promise, your proof, your supporting statements - the more specific the information the better.

Use:

- Numbers
- Statistics
- Facts
- Features and their concrete benefits

If you can be more specific or give back up proof for something, ALWAYS do it.

Exercise:

Add numbers, statistics, facts and more benefits, where appropriate, to your copy. See how this concrete detail creates more credibility and interest in your offer.

Sense of Urgency

Even though people may be excited about your product after reading about it, they may just decide they'll buy later. Problem is, most times when they decide to buy later; they never get around to it. They'll forget where your website is or forget about you completely.

To prevent this, you need to create a sense of urgency. In other words, make them feel like they need to buy now. Here are some ways you can make them feel like buying now:

- Offer a time-limited discount
- Limit the distribution of your product, where it makes sense
- Offer them extra bonuses or goodies with your product, but only for a limited time or the first XX sales.
- Show them how serious their particular problem is and why they should find a solution now

Whatever you can do to make them purchase now, the more likely you'll make the sale.

Exercise:

Go through your promotional material and make sure you've added a sense of urgency to everything. Whether it's to encourage them to find a solution to their problem now or to offer a time-limited discount, you can always add a little sense of urgency.

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Editing Your Copy

Once you've written your sales copy, it's time to lay it to rest for a bit. If you keep staring at it, nothing is going to jump out at you. Take a break and come back later or the next day.

Edit to make sure:

- Each claim is supported and is specific.
- Each sentence makes sense and that thoughts are completed.
- You have a transition between ideas.
- You are credible. Add facts & statistics; use your company name, address, phone, etc.
- Benefits are included for all your features.
- The prospect is the focus of the copy.
- First letter of each word in your headlines and subheadines are capitalized.
- The page is easy to read – scannable.
- Content is conversational.
- Use action-oriented words, eliminate jargon, excessive punctuation and meaningless adjectives.
- Your call-to-action is clear.
- You have a PS, if appropriate, and that it highlights the benefits of buying.
- Your offer is compelling.
- Words are spelled correctly. Pay particular attention to “It’s” and “Its” and “You’re” and “Your.” These are common misspellings.
- Don’t worry about the length of your copy. It can be as long as it needs to be to give your prospects all the details they need to make a decision. Just make sure it is concise and each word and phrase serves a purpose.

Exercise:

Edit your copy, using the above checklist. Can you see how you're copy has become more compelling and easy-to-read?

What to Do Next:

Now that you've got a good overview of copywriting basics and terminology, it's time to move onto the Art of Persuasion and Conversational Selling where you'll be able to use these concepts in any type of content you create.

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Being Persuasive and the Art of Conversational Selling

In the last lesson, we talked about copywriting basics and the terminology you need to know to create compelling copy...whether you're writing a video script or a written sales page, the concepts are the same.

But there is some nuance needed when it comes to informational content. We're talking your how-to and other informative videos, your blog posts, reports and other pieces of content where you're really trying to build a relationship...but be persuasive as well.

While you can certainly take hard-hitting copywriting concepts and apply them directly to your content marketing, the result may have you looking more like a used car salesman than a valuable information provider. That's why this lesson is very important. You will learn how to be persuasive and remain conversational, even while you're selling.

Key Points to Keep in Mind

- **Content is meant to pre-sell, not necessarily sell.** A sales page is designed to convert a prospect into a customer. Content like a YouTube video or a social media post may do the same thing, but generally, content is meant to warm the prospect up so they will be more receptive to the sales pitch. You still use persuasive language, but you can provide more information and be more objective than a sales piece might be.
- **Publish content with purpose.** Without purpose, there are no results. Whether your purpose is to get people to sign up for your mailing list, register free software, buy a product or even just warm them up to the idea of buying a product...think about the purpose of each piece you publish.
- **Be passionate about your topic.** Not all topics are naturally exciting, but show some interest in what you have to say. Your enthusiasm will be contagious to your readers.
- **Have an opinion about your topic.** Generic content often produces generic results. When you are certain about your stance on a subject, the more convincing you will be. Don't worry if people don't agree with you; your target audience will appreciate your opinions, particularly if they're backed by strong arguments and supporting evidence.
- **Shape your content around your products.** If you're a writer at heart, this might make you cringe a little, but if you believe in your products...the fit comes naturally. Choose topics that lend themselves to the promotion of your products. Make your angle or opinion on those topics complement your products as well.

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- **Speak directly to your audience.** Even though blogs and other content can be personal and are based on your own experience, always relate to your audience. Choose “you” more than “I” or “we”. Ask your readers questions and instead of saying things like, “I hate it when,” say, “Don’t you hate it when?” Where possible, always turn things around toward your reader.
- **Be objective when it comes to recommending products.** Even if you highly recommend a product, you can still remain objective and offer tremendous value to your readers.

Highlight the type of person a product is suitable for...and who it is not suitable for. After all, not all products are right for everyone. Skin creams are suitable for different skin types. Some info products are often better suited to beginners than they are to intermediate users. Give this information to your readers. They will appreciate your honesty and will more likely take action on your offers when a product is right for them.

Not all products are perfect either. If there are some features missing, don’t be afraid to mention that or things you think would make the product better. Educate your reader and make sure they are informed about their purchases.

- **A call-to-action is a must:** If you want your readers to do something, don’t skirt around the issue. You don’t have to put giant “BUY NOW” links or shove anything down your readers’ throats, but you do need to tell them what you want or they’ll simply do nothing. If you think they should sign up for your newsletter, tell them to do it and give them a good reason why. If you think they should buy a certain product or get more information about it, again, tell them to do it and back it up with a good reason why.
- **Be an example and a role model.** If you talk the talk, you’ve got to walk the walk. The more you show yourself doing what you say and reporting your results, the more likely your audience is to take action on the advice you give them. As a content provider, people connect to you...give them that inside look that will inspire them into action.
- **Don’t wear yourself out at the keyboard.** A lot of content publishers fall into the trap of thinking they have to keep publishing, publishing and then more publishing. They worry when they don’t post something on a particular day and volume is their strategy. I’m sure you’ll agree - it can be a very tiring grind.

The great thing is, if you follow the advice in this lesson, the need to write day in and day out disappears. If you’ve been cranking out content because volume seems to bring results – give yourself a break. Taking the time to create a few **persuasive and informative** masterpieces will go much further than a ton of blog posts you wrote just because you felt you had to.

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Copywriting Terms Become Content Marketing Terms

In the last lesson, we talked about copywriting terminology as it applies to sales copy specifically. Because we're talking content here, we may need a slightly different approach. With that in mind, let's go over some of the terminology and ideas presented in that lesson, and see how they very much apply to content.

Target Market – Still Crucial

Everything that you learned about target market in the last lesson is crucial for you to be able to create persuasive content. You ***have to*** know your audience, inside and out. You have to know their hopes, fears, problems and dreams. And while it may take a while before you have a complete and deep and meaningful understanding, it's something you should work toward...every...single...day.

We've given some tips on getting to know your target market in a few lessons now, but let's go over a few ways you can deepen your understanding:

- Ask questions of your readers and customers – find out what they think on certain subjects.
- Find out what questions they need answered. Ask them regularly and create a question submission form.
- Pay attention to comments they leave on your blog and forum.
- Pay attention to comments they leave on other blogs and forums.
- Follow their conversations on sites like Twitter and Facebook.
- You can use tools like <http://quantcast.com> to learn more about the buying habits of your audience.
- Track your links to see what your readers click and buy.

There are many places to observe behavior and learn about your audience. Make sure you take full advantage of that.

You need to know who you're writing for if you expect to reach them not only with the information they need, but the product solutions they're craving.

USP...Becomes Your UCP

In the last lesson, we talked about your USP, which stands for Unique Selling Position. In that exercise we asked you to focus on your product/business as a whole to find out what sets you apart from the competition.

This week, let's look at what makes your CONTENT different. In other words, we want you to figure out what your UCP...or your Unique Content Position...is.

Simply put, your UCP is what sets you apart from other content providers reaching similar markets. Here are a few brief examples of UCPs.

- A light-hearted coffee break for moms (Ex. <http://www.goodbirthcontrol.com>)
- Tax tips especially for online business owners (Ex. <http://www.onlinebiztaxtips.com>)
- A hip approach to green living (Ex. <http://crunchydomesticgoddess.com>)
- A tech blog geared toward non-tech-savvy Internet marketers (Ex. <http://techbasedmarketing.com>)

Really take a look at what unique thing you bring to the table that others don't AND your audience is really drawn to? If you don't think you're there yet...think about what you CAN do to achieve those results.

Headlines

Headlines for content do differ somewhat from sales copy headlines, but if you write good copy headlines, you'll likely write superb content headlines.

For your content, headlines are crucial for a number of reasons:

- It's the **first thing** your visitors see when they come to your page and it's how they decide if your content is worth reading.
- It's what your subscriber sees when they **scan the headlines of their RSS reader**. If you don't stand out, your competitors will get read while your blog post stays lonely.
- For email, as they **glance over subject lines**, it's how your subscribers decide whether or not your email is worth opening.

We have an **ENTIRE** lesson on headlines coming up next week and we'll give you plenty of templates and ideas, but for now, let's keep the following in mind:

- **Like with copy, capitalize all the words in your headline and make it nice and big and bold to ensure it gets attention.** There may be exceptions...particularly when it comes to email subject lines and we'll get more into that next week.
- **Format your headlines so they looked balanced on the page.** Many times, we'll write a blog post that is a little longer than one line and a little bit of the headline trails to the next line. It looks unbalanced and it's hard to read. It's better to edit the headline so it is more balanced on each line.

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- **Fill your RSS reader with a ton of blogs – just for research.** No, I'm not suggesting you read a ton of blogs, but I definitely suggest you should subscribe to plenty of blogs simple for research. Choose some targeting your market, but choose plenty outside of your market too. Look at which get your attention and analyze why.
- **Add your own blog to your RSS reader and subscribe to your mailing lists.** See what others see. Amongst all the noise of an RSS reader and a full inbox, do your headlines stack up?
- **Review your headline before you publish.** If you write your headline first, always review it before you publish. It's amazing how content can end up very different than what we thought it was going to be...so make sure you do that review.
- **Can't come up with a headline to start with?** No problem...write your headline last. Sometimes we need to fully complete and digest our content before the headline comes apparent.
- **Offer a benefit.** One strategy for headlines is to keep your target reader in mind and promise them a benefit in your headline. For example: "*The Secret to Perfectly Creased Pants*" or "*What I Discovered about Finally Losing the Baby Weight*"
- **Pique your reader's curiosity.** When you're lost amongst a ton of other headlines, sometimes getting people curious about the unknown can be very effective. For example, "*The Thing I Promised Never to Speak about Again*" or "*Why This is a Really Bad Idea*".

Developing great headlines takes practice and testing. Start by using these tips and you'll be on your way. Now let's go through an example.

Develop a Positive Money Mindset

How you think about money is the single most important factor that determines whether you are wealthy or not. So, if you want more money in your life it is essential that you develop a positive money mindset.

However, many of us are taught to think negatively about money. We're told things like "money is the root of all evil," and "money doesn't grow on trees." No wonder we have such a difficult time thinking positively about money! You may have even been taught that rich people are greedy and as a result are subconsciously avoiding wealth and missing out on the great opportunities having money can provide.

The above headline isn't bad and includes some important power words. There is even a benefit for the reader, as long as the reader is aware they want to have a positive money mindset. In this case, the headline could be better by finding the "benefit of the benefit". In other words, what is the benefit of having a positive money mindset?

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We could try things like:

Attract Wealth: Develop a Positive Money Mindset

End Financial Woes: Develop a Positive Money Mindset

Discover the Power of Your Positive Money Mindset

The Amazing Benefits of a Positive Money
Mindset & How to Get Yours

The last one is a little long, so depending on the layout of the page, you may or may not be able to make it work. The first two tweaks above, stated the benefit. The second two were designed to pique curiosity. Either way, they offered something a little more than the original headline.

Subheadlines

We've talked about subheadlines...**a lot**. They make your content so much easier to read, so use them readily. They make your content easier to scan, draw the eye in at key points and make it easier for readers to refer to your content over and over again.

Use the tips in lesson 3 and 4 to use them in your content. And continuing along with our example, let's add some subheadlines. Here's an excerpt from the same article:

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As long as you hold on to negative and incorrect beliefs about money, you will never create the wealth you desire or deserve.

To change your money mindset, you must first recognize that money is not good or bad by itself. It is just a tool. In fact, money is more often used to do good than bad. Think about the wonderful charities that have been able to help people all around the world when they are given large donations of money. Appreciate all the good that money is used for. It is an important part of life and is used to make positive changes in the world. Money should be sought after, not avoided.

Recognize that money is abundant. When you were young, you may have been told by your parents that money doesn't grow on trees. If you're holding onto that belief now, your own mindset could be holding you back from attracting money. Money may not grow on trees, but there is an abundant amount of it for everyone, including you. However, if you believe that money is scarce, that belief will keep it far away from you.

Giving money away is another way you can develop a positive money mindset. Wanting to hang onto every cent you have is a sign of a stingy mindset and reinforces the idea that there is not enough of it. Giving reinforces the concept of abundance.

Finally, be happy for those who are successful and have money. We often remember being told that those who have money are greedy and are tempted to think negatively about them. In fact, the opposite is usually true. Rich people often accumulate their wealth by sharing what they have with others and believing in the idea of abundance.

Clearly, there is great information in this article, but how could we use subheadlines to make this content easier to read and take action on? How about something like this:

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4 Important Steps to Changing Your Money Mindset

Changing is easier said than done, but when you think about the following four steps, you'll see that they just make sense. The way we've been raised or even the relationship we developed with money in our adult may be creating a negative mindset. Turn it around with the following steps.

Step #1: Money is Neither Good or Bad

To change your money mindset, you must first recognize that money is not good or bad by itself. It is just a tool. In fact, money is more often used to do good than bad. Think about the wonderful charities that have been able to help people all around the world when they are given large donations of money. Appreciate all the good that money is used for. It is important part of life and is used to make positive changes in the world. Money should be sought after, not avoided.

Step #2: Money is Abundant

Recognize that money is abundant. When you were young, you may have been told by your parents that money doesn't grow on trees. If you're holding onto that belief now, your own mindset could be holding you back from attracting money. Money may not grow on trees, but there is an abundant amount of it for everyone, including you. However, if you believe that money is scarce, that belief will keep it far away from you.

Step #3: Give Money Away

Giving money away is another way you can develop a positive money mindset. Wanting to hang onto every cent you have is a sign of a stingy mindset and reinforces the idea that there is not enough of it. Giving reinforces the concept of abundance.

Step #4: Be Happy for Successful People

In the above example, a subheadline of "4 Important Steps..." is added. This quantifies the process for your reader and makes it seem more attainable. They think – "I only have to do these 4 things".

We inserted an introduction to those 4 steps as it's important to have some transition and the content should flow throughout. Subheadlines aren't an excuse for poor writing, even though they can help us along sometimes. 😊

Then a subheadline was added for each step. The addition of those headlines may pique curiosity because they likely don't jive with what the reader might initially believe. They see "Money is Abundant" and they think..."Is it really?" and may continue to read.

Of course, the hard-headed may not want to believe and won't read...but that's okay...because you want to target people who are receptive to new ideas and who are willing to follow your guidance.

Power Words & Phrases

Power words are definitely not just for copy. They give your content motion and create a vivid picture for your reader. Always use the list of power words in the swipe file we've

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provided to help you. As you get more practice, power words will come to you more naturally, but for now, keep that list handy.

Let's look at an example:

The product shows you how to grow a better rose garden.

...becomes...

The step-by-step system shows you exactly how to grow healthier, more colorful and vibrant roses.

In this example, the addition of "step-by-step" gives the reader the confidence that they will be shown exactly what they need to know. "Healthier, more colorful and vibrant roses," creates a better mental picture than "better rose garden."

It's true that the second may seem more like a sale pitch, but when you incorporate it into a well-written piece that educates the reader...it will seem natural. It is your honest recommendation.

Here's another example:

If you want more information, sign up for the mailing list for weekly tips.

...becomes...

For more easy-to-action strategies, sign up for my [insert exciting publication name]. You'll get my no-holds-barred advice, special offers and more.

The second example provides a more inviting offer and helps your reader imagine what they'll get by signing up.

Or how about transforming some simple statements like this:

It's really easy. -> It's remarkably easy.

She felt better. -> She felt instant relief.

The caterpillar changed into a butterfly. -> The caterpillar transformed into a butterfly.

Can I be honest with you? -> Can I be brutally honest?

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It's amazing what a slight edit can do to give more power to your statements.

Transitions

In order to keep people reading through your content, you have to join your ideas. Keep them interested by connecting one idea with the next. It's not necessary to have a transition between every paragraph or section, but always review your content to see where you can add it.

Refer to your swipe file to incorporate transitions into your content. Here are some of those transitions to refresh your memory:

- A word of caution...
- And best of all...
- And most importantly...
- And remember...
- As you may already know...
- As you may have noticed...
- Aside from that, one thing's for sure...
- Back to what I was saying...
- Bear with me because...
- Before you forget...
- Bottom line is...
- But before you decide...
- But don't take my word for it...
- But if you're still not sure...
- But that's not all...
- Consider this...
- Could this be true?
- Fair enough?
- Follow me so far?
- For example...
- For instance...
- Get started right now with...
- Had enough...
- Here's exactly why...
- Here's the bottom line...
- Here's the next step...
- Here's what else...
- I can't stress this enough...

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It's just a simple phrase that helps connect one idea to the next. Here's one example of a transition, with the transition shown in yellow:

Have you ever been in a situation that brought on sweats, rapid heartbeat and shortness of breath? You probably weren't having a heart attack but an anxiety attack. If you suffer from anxiety disorders, learning to manage it is the first step to overcoming it.

But first, let's take a moment understand what anxiety is...

Anxiety is characterized as extreme reactions to fearful situations. When someone follows you into a dark alley, those anxious feelings of a racing heartbeat and sweaty palms gives way to heightened senses and a rush of adrenalin that can save your life. This is the fight or flight syndrome.

Of course, you aren't always going to put a transition on a line of its own as that would make your content a little hard to read if you put a single sentence transition between each paragraph. The above example might be used when you really want to draw attention to a certain section.

Here's another example with the transition highlighted in yellow.

Antioxidants are substances that fight the aging process that goes on in your body. They are not produced by the body so to get the benefit of these power-packed substances you must ingest them. A variety of foods contain antioxidants.

Let's go back to the beginning. The body continually replenishes its cells. Through a process called cellular metabolism, the body produces energy, more cells and repairs any damage. One by-product of cellular metabolism is unstable molecules called free radicals.

In the above example, the article introduces a complex concept first and then transitions to explaining it in more simple terms.

TIP: Sometimes subheadlines can work as your transition. If you're stuck with connecting one idea to the next, try a subheadline instead.

Call-to-Action

A call-to-action applies to all content. Use it to:

- Get your readers to click through to read more content.
- Sign up for a list, a teleseminar or other free offer.
- Read a review about a product.
- Buy a product.

To reiterate a key point from the last lesson:

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"If you don't tell people what to do, they are less likely to do it. Even if your copy implies they should buy your product, if you don't ask for the sale, you won't make it as often."

When it comes to calls to action in your content, they may be more subtle and less pitchy than with sales copy, but they still need to be direct.

Here's an example, that uses a subheadline to draw the reader into the closing and the call-to-action. It acknowledges the reader might need more help and tells them where to get it:

If You Struggle with Your Money Mindset, There is Help

I know change isn't easy. I see it over and over again with my clients. They want to change their attitudes toward money, but it's a process that can take time. But the good news is, the process is well worth it. To get started with your money mindset journey sign up for my **completely free, no-strings-attached**, 3-part **Mind Over Money** call series by [clicking here](#).

Whether you're just at the beginning of changing your attitude toward money or just need a little reinforcement to stay the course, [get free help right here](#).

Calls-to-action don't just belong at the end of your content. Many times you don't get the luxury of having a visitor read the whole way through your content, even though they may very much need your help. Sometimes a little side note in the above-the-fold space of your article can do the trick.

Important: If you use the following trick, make sure you have a stronger call to action at the end of the article to. Those who read all the way through or more likely to take action, but the "Side note" is just to catch those who view the above-the-fold area.

In the following example, you can see the call-to-action, right where it says "Side note:"

How you think about money is the single most important factor that determines whether you are wealthy or not. So, if you want more money in your life it is essential that you develop a positive money mindset.

However, many of us are taught to think negatively about money. We're told things like "money is the root of all evil," and "money doesn't grow on trees." No wonder we have such a difficult time thinking positively about money! You may have even been taught that rich people are greedy and as a result are subconsciously avoiding wealth and missing out on the great opportunities having money can provide.

As long as you hold on to negative and incorrect beliefs about money, you will never create the wealth you desire or deserve.

Side note: If you're serious about changing your money mindset and want help right now, [get free step-by-step help here](#).

Now let's get back to...

4 Important Steps to Changing Your Money Mindset

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The key in all calls-to-action is you have to be direct. You can just say things like:

“In my [Mind over Money](#) series we talk about...”

...and expect that everyone will jump over that. While links like this can add to your call-to-action, they do not replace your call-to-action. You always have to tell your reader what you'd like them to do.

Postscript / P.S.

A P.S. isn't necessarily just for sales copy. They can be used anywhere you sign your name on your content. You may include a signature in your blog posts and then post a P.S. offer or call-to-action. The same goes with email. A P.S. can remind your reader to take action or introduce a call-to-action in a largely informational email.

Here's an example from Lynn Terry's ClickNewz.com blog:

Refer back to the checklist on [How To Create A Podcast](#) for links and additional resources for setting up your video podcast.

Have questions – or want to share additional tips & resources for how to create a video podcast? Leave us a comment below!

Best,



p.s. Subscribe for email notification below so you don't miss a single post in this Podcasting series – which is also where I'll send you the **free report on how to create a podcast**. That report won't be available for free any other way so be sure you are subscribed now if you want to get a copy! 😊

Subscribe to ClickNewz

Name:

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It's just a parting thought with a compelling reason to sign up for her mailing list. Brilliant!

What to Do Next:

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Now that you've got all the copywriting terminology and the know-how to apply it conversationally to all your content, it's time to put things into practice. To help you, we've included a swipe file that includes fill-in-the-blanks headlines, power words, transitions, calls-to-action, closings, P.S. and FAQ ideas. Keep them handy when you're writing copy, video scripts or any content that is designed to persuade your audience.

And remember, we're going to dive much deeper into all of this as I create my in-depth Fine Art of Persuasion Course...and write a book on the same topic. You can have access to everything, plus have a behind the scenes look on everything in the creation process.

If you haven't joined me yet, the sign up buttons are on the bottom of this page ->
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Can't wait to go on this journey with you!

To always living your best life,



Alice Seba
CEO on Her Own Terms

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