

60–Minute Client– Attracting Article Template

*Action Plan & Get it
Done Guide*

Step 1: Choose Your Topic

**** Get it Done Step #1: Set your timer for 10 minutes. ****

Get it Done Step #2: Review the 29 tips for choosing your topic:

1) Keep a list of FAQ and review them periodically.

ie. "How important is it to brush after each meal?"

"How do I set up my LLC in the state of Georgia?"

2) Survey prospects - by mass email, social media, one to one. Sample survey questions:

1. Do you currently have a form(s) of passive income to help bring money in while you grow your business (such as an ebook, membership site, etc.)?
2. Do you currently have a free giveaway to entice prospective customers to join your newsletter list for future follow up?
3. Are you currently using article marketing/bloggin/email marketing/social media to connect with prospective clients?
4. What are you doing now to market your business?
5. What do you struggle with when it comes to marketing your business?
6. Which topics would you most like to learn about? - give 5-10 options, ask them to choose top 3

3) Look at hot topics people are already discussing - social networking, online forums.

If not member of online networking forums, find some where your peeps hang out. If you target work-at-home moms, for example, you might do a Google search for "work-at-home mom forums". Or if your specialty is in internet marketing, you might search for "internet marketing" forums, because people who are there want to learn more about that topic.

4) Think about what clients need to know/work on before working with you.

For instance, if I were running a free webinar about the "5 Steps to Writing a Compelling Home Page" I might think about what readers need to do first BEFORE they even sit down to write their home page. Such as, deciding on the goal of the page. If I chose that, I might write an article like "The #1 Way to Skyrocket Your Home Page Conversions" and I'd talk about how having a specific goal for your home page is the first key to increasing conversions. But of course, just having a goal isn't the whole picture. It's an important first step, but from there they need to know how to communicate to website

visitors the action they want them to take, in a compelling way. So I might wrap up the article by inviting them to my free webinar that goes into how to do that.

5) Make a list of problems you solve & write about them - ie. chiropractor: migraines, back pain, etc.

6) Make a list of goals you help people reach - ie. earn \$3,000/month, work 20 hours per month, get kids to bed on time, etc.

7) Think back on your own journey & write down steps you took, challenges you encountered, ideas you had, etc.

8) Use a tool such as keywordspy.com to ID common keywords people are searching for in your area of expertise.

9) Keep an eye on what industry experts are talking about.

10) Expand on previous topics - wrote "Top 5 Ways to Lose 5 Pounds this Month" article, dive deeper into each of the 5 methods. If one is to cut dessert from diet, maybe write a post about healthy dessert alternatives people can eat instead: "How to satisfy your sweet tooth without sabotaging your diet."

11) Review testimonials from happy clients.

12) Think backwards, starting with the action you want readers to take after reading your article. There are 13 possible calls-to-action that I put together, which are also the 13 ways to convert passive newsletter readers into active participants and paying clients (begin on page 3 of your action plan).

- Post a comment on your blog (to encourage interaction and build relationships)
- Take a quiz of some sort (people love to learn about themselves)
- Schedule a no-cost consultation for coaching services
- Request a quote on web design/writing/VA services (VA - Unload Your Plate session, maybe talk in detail about ONE task you can help them unload, and then invite them to a phone call with you to discover other areas where they can save time/money.)
- Join an upcoming webinar (also in exchange for their name & email address)
- Call your office to speak with a representative

- Request information from an automated phone line
- Fax an enrollment form to you
- Redeem a coupon/gift certificate
- Visit your store/office for a specific reason (pick up a free gift, etc.)
- Order your e-book or other product(s)
- Purchase a services package
- Enroll in a group training/coaching program

13) Ask yourself if there's a topic in your industry in which your opinion differs from the norm. Such as, if you're a marketing coach and while most other marketing coaches are all over using Facebook for business, you happen to believe that Facebook is BAD for business. Write an article explaining why, or maybe giving alternate solutions.

14) Read industry publications. Keeping your finger on the pulse of industry news can give you great ideas for your own articles. Note that I'm not in any way encouraging plagiarizing articles but rather using them as a source of ideas for your own original articles, maybe on the same topic. :) (And if you're thinking that the info in those publications is old news, think again. Chances are high that your audience, while obviously interested in your topic of expertise, is not spending nearly as much time as you, the expert, are. Much like how your doctor/attorney/accountant knows all the latest and greatest in their fields, while you can't even begin to keep up with it all.)

15) Review other media sources. Even watching the local news, while seemingly unrelated to your area of expertise, might cause inspiration to strike. Like when you, the nutritionist, see a story about the rising cost of food and get an idea to write an article about how to make healthy food choices on a budget.

16) Keep an eye on other industry experts' articles. If you're not already subscribed to the blogs/e-zines of well-known experts in your industry, get on their notification lists pronto. And then watch what they're talking about, for a few reasons. Number 1: you can get a sense of hot topics that you can cover in your newsletter and number 2: you can write an opinion piece covering a different angle, or maybe expanding on the expert's article, and include a link back to the original article to not only provide extra resources to readers but to potentially get on the radar of the expert in question.

17) Check out topics being covered at industry conferences. Again, this will help you pick your finger on the pulse of hot topics, as the industry conferences have already done the work to find out what's in-demand these days.

18) Think about your hobbies, and whether there's anything you can glean from the things you do for fun. For example, I was playing Guitar Hero (a video game where you have to follow along with the screen to play popular songs, in case you're not familiar :) a while back and realized that when I tried too hard, I missed more notes than when I just relaxed. I also realized that it's often the same in business. That the harder you try to attract clients, the more likely it is that they'll stay away. I wrote an article titled "What Guitar Hero Taught Me About Getting Clients" and received lots of great feedback and back-and-forth conversation with my community. What more can you ask for? :)

19) Host an interview with a prominent leader in your industry. If you just can't think up any ideas or are new in business, turn to someone who DOES have plenty of ideas to share. And if you're thinking that you could never get a well-known person to do an interview with you, you might be surprised at how willing folks are, especially if you have any sort of following in your newsletter. And the bottom line is this: even if they're too busy, the worst they can do is say no. So it doesn't hurt to ask!

20) Update an old article. If something has changed since you wrote a particular article, such as new research or just a change of opinion, consider writing an amended article, "2.0 style," to discuss what's new and improved on that topic.

21) Get the wheels turning by writing something else. If you're just absolutely stumped on what to write, stop thinking about your ezine and write something complete unrelated. A review of a book you just read. A letter to your sister. A rant on a topic that's in the news right now (which royally pisses you off but has nothing to do with your business). An entry in your personal blog or journal. You'd be surprised how the simple act of writing can get you in the right state of mind for writing your ezine.

22) Be transparent. Did you make a mistake that others could learn from? Especially if you found a helpful solution or way to avoid that mistake, feel free to share it with others. They'll appreciate your transparency (we're all human, after all) and will actually see you as MORE of an expert from having learned from your own mistakes.

23) Consider a recurring feature in your ezine. For example, I considered incorporating a "Word of the Day Wednesday" feature into my blog a while back to offer up persuasive words and how to use them.

24) Get out of the house/office. Sometimes the simple act of changing your point of view, even by simply going to your backyard or the local coffee shop, can be enough to get you out of your writing slump.

25) Take a walk. Often, when my daughter was a baby, I would strap her into her stroller and take brisk walks around the neighborhood when I was facing the dreaded writer's block. The fresh air and pumping blood was often just the trick I needed to spark a rush of fresh ideas.

26) Relax. Doing things you find relaxing, such as taking a bath, getting a massage, listening to music, etc., tends to encourage creativity. So give yourself permission to take it easy and you might be surprised at what pops up!

27) Walk away. From the article, I mean. Sometimes the pressure of trying to come up with the perfect topic is enough to keep the creative muse at bay. Alternatively, if you find yourself coming up empty, take a step away from the article and do something else. Anything else. Clean your office. Watch a movie. Work with a client. And let your subconscious brain continue plugging away at potential topics. You might find that the perfect topic pops into your head when you least expect it.

28) Keep a notebook handy for ideas. Piggybacking on the last point, you want to have a notebook nearby for anytime you might get a great article idea. I've kept small, playing card-shaped notebooks in my purse or on my nightstand before, but I've also used something as simple as the notes app on my smartphone. Find something that works for you, but try to keep all your notes in one place. That way when your ezine is due, you can pull an idea from the stash and get to work!

29) Review a book. Preferably in your topic of expertise, or something related to what you do. Meaning: don't review a book on puppies if you're a parenting coach. :) Adding book reviews can be a great way to not only keep your ezine full of helpful info but, if you become an affiliate of Amazon or another bookseller, a great way to earn commissions on your recommendations. It's a win for everyone! :)

Get it Done Step #3: Make your decision.

Which topic will you choose for this article?

****Get it Done Step #4: Set your timer for 5 more minutes.****

Get it Done Step #5: Choose the format your article will use.

There are 13 popular article formats to choose from, and you can stick with a few of your favorites or mix them up to keep your content fresh. Here are the 13 formats:

- 1) How to (ie. "How to Stop Your Dog from Jumping on Guests")
- 2) List article (ie. "Top 5 Ways..." "3 Steps to...")
- 3) Interview (with a client, an expert, etc.): Q & A; very useful for those pressed on time. You write the questions then send them off to be answered.
- 4) Profile (overview of one topic, such as my "Anatomy of a Sales Page"), broken into "chunks" - ie. who, what, where, when, where, why, and how - WHAT it is, When it began/was discovered, Why it's important, How to get rid of it - A few tips)
- 5) Exposé - to shock or surprise readers (ie. 5 Things Your Dentist isn't Telling You About Cavity Treatments, 5 Success Secrets Most Marketing "Gurus" Won't Tell You, 3 Sneaky Marketing Tactics Most Big-Name Marketers Use to Trick Folks into Investing Big Sums of Money)
- 6) Human Interest - a.k.a. "story" articles, tells how a person overcame a challenge or reached a hard goal
- 7) Opinion - what you think about a hot topic in today's world, ie. a parenting coach - "How Celebrities' Crazy Baby Names Can Destroy Their Children's Young Self-Esteem"
- 8) Inspirational - how to feel good, why their work/life is important "13 Tips to Improve Your Confidence so You Can Close More Sales" or "7 Reasons Why Your Work as a Life Coach Can Save Lives"
- 9) Historical - "How Folks Started a Business Before the Internet" or "How Sales Legend Zig Ziglar got his start"
- 10) Collection - gather tips from different sources on one topic, include quotes, stats, research studies, etc. "What 5 Millionaire Business Coaches Say You Should Do BEFORE Starting Your Business"
- 11) "The Best of" a.k.a. Review article - your personal experiences with a product of interest with readers

- 12) "News" - reporting what's going on in your industry that readers may not be aware of
- 13) Humor - tells a funny story, relays a joke, etc.

Get it Done Step #6: Make your decision.

Which format will you choose for this article?

Step 2: Move Them into Action

Get it Done Step 1: Review the 13 possible calls to action.

One of the key steps in getting blog readers to take a specific action is to *ask* them.

Invite them to join your mailing list or buy a related product.

You don't have to push or coerce; just extend the invitation and let them decide if it's right for them. If not, no harm, no foul. Before we dive into writing your article, you need to know what action you will ask them to take. That way, you can use the body of the article to lead them naturally to that step.

With that in mind, here are 13 ways to turn blog readers into leads and clients:

- Post a comment on your blog (to encourage interaction and build relationships)
 - Share your article/video/content (to help you spread the word)
 - Take a quiz of some sort, in exchange for joining your mailing list (people love to learn about themselves)
 - Schedule a no-cost consultation for coaching services
 - Request a quote on web design/writing/VA services (VA - Unload Your Plate session, maybe talk in detail about ONE task you can help them unload, and then invite them to a phone call with you to discover other areas where they can save time/money.)
 - Download a free report on a related topic
 - View a video that dives deeper into that topic

- Read other posts that relate to this topic (to keep them on your blog longer and increase engagement)
- Join an upcoming webinar (also in exchange for their name & email address)
- Redeem a coupon/gift certificate for a related product/service
- Order your e-book or other product(s)
- Purchase a services package
- Enroll in a group training/coaching program

Get it Done Step 2: Get specific.

Of course, you want your article and call-to-action to make sense; you wouldn't write an article on potty training and then promote a book on solving behavior issues in children, because the two aren't related enough. Sure, some kids with behavior issues also need help with potty training, but they're not related enough to make that leap. Choose a specific call-to-action that goes hand-in-hand with your article and you'll skyrocket your responses.

Get it Done Step 3: Make a decision.

Which will you choose for this article?

Step 3: Outline Your Content

Now that you know the topic you'll choose and the goal of your article, it's time to put together a working outline to ease your writing process. What you want to focus on here is the main body of the article, or the actual content you'll be providing. Typically, you want to share no more than 3-5 ideas or main points, and this exercise is meant to gather those ideas.

Get it Done Step #1: Set your timer for 10 minutes.

Get it Done Step #2: Do a "brain dump."

Next up, you want to think about everything that you want readers to walk away knowing. What do they need to know to accomplish the goal you set out as your topic?

For example, if you have a list article, such as "5 Ways to Lose 5 Pounds this Month," you would jot down the 5 things you want to cover. If you're writing a how-to piece, write down the steps you want to take readers through. Basically, get all of your thoughts on the topic at hand down on paper, so that you can filter through them and come up with a cohesive plan for your article. One that can keep any potential ramblings at bay and keep your article flowing smoothly.

Here are some examples of what you'll do in this step, based on the article format you chose in step 2:

- 1) How to: Write down the steps you want to walk readers through
- 2) List article: Write down the points you plan to cover
- 3) Interview (with a client, an expert, etc.): Write the questions to be answered
- 4) Profile: Briefly answer the questions of "who, what, where, when, where, why, and how"
- 5) Exposé: Write down the steps/components you plan to reveal
- 6) Human Interest: Jot down the challenge the person faced and the steps they took to get past it
- 7) Opinion: Write down the main points you want to cover
- 8) Inspirational: Write down the main points you want to cover
- 9) Historical: Jot down any notes you have, research you've conducted, etc.
- 10) Collection - gather tips from different sources on one topic, include quotes, stats, research studies, etc. "What 5 Millionaire Business Coaches Say You Should Do BEFORE Starting Your Business"
- 11) "The Best of" a.k.a. Review article - your personal experiences with a product of interest with readers
- 12) "News" - reporting what's going on in your industry that readers may not be aware of
- 13) Humor - tells a funny story, relays a joke, etc.

Jot down any ideas or main points you want to share here:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Get it Done Step 3: Organize Your Outline

Once you have all of your thoughts down, it's time to clean house. Organize your ideas into related subsections and toss any ideas that seem like they don't fit anywhere. (Note: ideally, you'll have 3-5 sections, but some articles may have more and some less. Try to stick to 3-5 as a general rule, though.)

Subsection #1: _____

Main points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Subsection #2: _____

Main points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Subsection #3: _____

Main points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Subsection #4: _____

Main points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Subsection #5: _____

Main points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Nice going; you now have a working outline that should make writing your content a breeze!

Step 4: Write Your Article

First, before you sit down to write your article, check out the 3 “tricks” below to help you **drastically shortcut the writing process** so you can finish each article in record time.

1) Work in chunks. Looking at writing your article as a single project can seem overwhelming, since in reality there are a lot of little pieces to put together, and it can be unclear where to even *start* with such a project. You may have noticed that this article blueprint is broken into clear steps, and that is to help avoid this overwhelm. When you can say to yourself, "In the next ten minutes, I'm going to choose a topic for my article," followed by, "In the next 5 minutes, I'm going to choose a format for my article," it feels much less overwhelming than, "I have to write my article!" Even if you sit down and blast through the different steps back to back, the point is that you can work on one segment at a time and then piece them together when you're done. Or, if you'd prefer, you can work on one segment at a time, take a break, and then come back to the next segment. Choose whatever method works best for you - just be sure to have a clear writing schedule and deadline in place so you don't "forget" to come back to your article!

2) Work backwards. Although it seems like the title would be the first place to start with your article, since it's the first thing people see, I typically don't start with the title. Sometimes I'll mock a "working title" as more of a placeholder than anything, and then come back and really tackle the final title once I've organized my thoughts out and can pull out the "hook" that will grab readers' attention. Likewise, I typically know what my conclusion and call-to-action will be before writing the introduction, because what I want people to DO shapes the content I'm sharing.

3) Get all your thoughts out on paper, without stopping to edit. It's natural for us to edit ourselves as we type, but you have to try and resist this idea! No matter if your thoughts come out in a jumble; you'll fix them later. The important thing is to allow yourself to do an unfettered "brain dump" to get those nuggets of gold outside of your head and into your article. Then you can go back and make it look pretty. :) If you find yourself stopping to edit your work, or if it feels like you're going off on another direction that isn't relevant to your current line of thinking, open a new document, take out a fresh sheet of paper, or even just scroll down to another page in your current document and get your thoughts out. Those "tangents" could be other articles, just waiting to be written! Don't erase what you've already written until you've completed the writing process and make it to the editing stage.

Get it Done Step #1: Set your timer for 25 minutes.**Get it Done Step #2: Write your introduction.**

Now it's time to expand your outline into a full-length article. Ready? Here we go! :)

If you'd like, you can follow my do-it-yourself article template below to shortcut your path. First up, you'll write your introduction statement(s).

Your introduction typically consists of a paragraph or two (or sometimes even just a sentence!) explaining the main topic of your article in a way that will grab the reader's attention and convince them to read more. You don't have to get bland here, either – even in non-fiction articles, you can unleash your creativity. For example: “The time was 5:00 p.m., and Karen was dreading yet another frustrating drive home through rush-hour traffic. If only she knew the secrets of building a profitable home-based business that I'm going to share with you today...”

Feel free to take some inspiration here from your favorite works of fiction. Notice how they begin each book and each chapter within the same book. Ernest Hemingway is a master at drawing people in from the very start, so consider taking a cue from some of his stories. Here are a few examples to get the wheels turning:

"It was now lunch time and they were all sitting under the double green fly of the dining tent pretending that nothing had happened." (From *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*) See how he doesn't waste time with the back story but rather leaves you wanting to read more to find out exactly what happened? This simple sentence alludes to something embarrassing or scandalous and leaves readers (or at least, left me :)) wondering what that something was.

"The strange thing was, he said, how they screamed every night at midnight." (From *On the Quai at Smyrna*) Say what? Now I've got to know what has them screaming at midnight...

Well done, Ernest.

A great way to use your introduction is to address the challenge you're solving and what NOT solving that challenge is doing to your readers.

Example #1: Here's an example from an article of mine called, *Is Your Web Copy in the "Danger Zone"?*:

"Sure, it sounds exciting: *The Danger Zone*.

But when it comes to your web copy, danger is the last thing you want. In fact, your web copy has a specific job to do: entice readers to stay on the page and, ultimately, take some form of action. *What* you want them to do may vary from page to page, but the point is that each page on your website should be strategically written to lead readers naturally to the relief they seek."

Example #2: Here's another example from an article titled, *3 Ways to Brainstorm Irresistible Offers for Your Business*:

"Creating irresistible offers is *the key* to taking clients from 'No thanks, I'll pass' to 'YES! I want that!'"

As you can see, your introduction can stay short and sweet and still get the point across.

Write your introduction here:

Get it Done Step #3: Fill in the main points.

Remember those main points you crafted in step 3? Now it's time to expand on those thoughts to create valuable content for your readers. In the example below, you'll see my one-statement main points listed out, followed by a detailed explanation. In your case, the main point would be what you crafted in step 3, and now you'll write the explanation. The great part about using this "main points" method of article writing is that it naturally divides the article into easy-to-read sections, complete with bolded subheadings that break up the text and are easier on the eyes than one loooong line of content.

Example: (from my *Are These 3 Hidden Dangers Lurking Within Your Web Copy?* article)

Main Point #1: Your Web Copy isn't Stopping Readers Dead in Their Tracks

First and foremost, before you can hope to move readers into action, you've gotta get them to stop and pay attention. Because if they don't even bother to read those words you spent all that time and energy, sweating over your keyboard, to write, then your website has no chance of drawing them in and getting them excited to work with you. The very first thing readers should see, when they land on your home page, is an attention-grabbing headline that stops them in their tracks so that they feel compelled to drop everything and read the rest of your copy.

Main Point #2: Your Web Copy is Talking AT Them, Not TO Them

Another common challenge many business owners face is that they write their web copy from their OWN perspective – it IS human nature, after all. ☺ But it causes a disconnect when your customers come to your website with THEIR own perspective – and the two often don't match up. So while you might be talking about transforming their lives, all they're thinking about is how much they hate their job or how miserable they are in their marriage. And while YOU know that a life transformation is just what they need to get back on track to happy, they may not make that connection. It's the job of your web copy to help them understand how what you do will impact their life.

Main Point #3: You're Talking to *Everyone*

Another challenge I see on many business websites is a general *vagueness*. There's all this talk about “relieving stress” and “changing your life”, improving health...the list could go on and on. It's all very general. And when you're talking to everyone, you're talking to no one. Case in point: “stress relief” for executive-level professionals looks very different from stress relief for stay-at-home moms of young children. And when you know *who* you're talking to, you can hone in on the motivations that will cause them to call you for a consultation, join your newsletter list, or buy your products and services.

Expand on your main points here:

Main point #1: _____

Main point #1 explanation/expansion: _____

Main point #2: _____

Main point #2 explanation/expansion: _____

Main point #3: _____

Main point #3 explanation/expansion: _____

Main point #4: _____

Main point #4 explanation/expansion: _____

Main point #5: _____

Main point #5 explanation/expansion: _____

Get it Done Step #4: Write your conclusion.

The good news is that you're almost done! Woo-hoo! :) Now that you have most of your client-attracting ezine article written, it's time to wrap up your article with a nice bow - and send those who are interested into the next step of working with you.

In the last paragraph, briefly restate the main points from your article and give readers a specific action to take. It may look something like this:

“To recap, if you want to build a profitable business from home, you’ll need to choose the right business model, decide what to sell, and set up your home office. Get started today by creating a timeframe for completing each step, and then click here to post your timeframe on my blog to not only declare your commitment for all to see but also get community support in reaching your goals!”

(On a side note, if you use the call-to-action of encouraging comments on your blog, make sure that you keep an eye on comments coming in so you can reply to each poster with encouragement and support. That will go a long way toward building a community of active participants in your business!)

Write your conclusion here:

Step 5: Make Your Article Irresistible

Last but not least, we're going to use copywriting techniques to make your article even more irresistible.

Get it Done Step 1: Write a Great Title

A strong title can do wonders to encourage your newsletter subscribers to open your articles, which, of course, is the first step in using your ezine to establish your expertise, build trust, and attract clients. Here's how to get it done:

Set your timer for 10 minutes.

Great Title Option 1: Focus on the transformation.

What is the end result potential clients can expect after opening and reading your article? Will they walk away with 5 ideas to create a stronger plot for their novel? Will they be able to identify their dream job? Jot down your ideas here:

Great Title Option 2: Get specific.

Laser in your topic to make sure it's as specific as possible. (Ie. 5 Website Mistakes that Cost Most Businesses \$1000s in Lost Profits Each Year, 7 Ways to Lose 5 Pounds Next Week) Cut the vague and give your title some teeth! Brainstorm your thoughts and write the winners here:

Review popular title formulas.

Review the formulas below and choose one to use as the foundation for your title.

#1 Use words with announcement quality

Finally...a quick way to blast belly fat!

Presenting a new way to sell your house in 30 days or less

At last, conquer the fear that is holding you back from landing your dream job...

#2 Begin with the word "New"

New method of managing your personal finances (instead of THEM managing YOU!)

New research reveals surprising qualities all successful people have

#3 Reveal a "human interest" angle

Famous examples:

How I improved my memory in one evening

How I became popular overnight

#4 Begin with "How to"

How to gain a steady stream of high-paying clients

How to end your money worries...for good

#5 Begin with "Why"

Why some people are more successful in business (it's not what you think...)

#6 Use a testimonial-style headline

He was going broke – until he discovered the secret to success

#7 Pull out the shock value

Have You Fallen for These 3 Sneaky Marketing Tactics Most Big-Name Marketers Use?

Is Your Doctor Prescribing One of These Potentially Harmful Medications?

#8 State a strong/bold opinion

3 Reasons Why Non-Traditional Baby Names Can Destroy Your Child's Self-Esteem

#9 Name your main points

7 Reasons Why Your Work as a Life Coach Can Save Lives

13 Tips to Improve Your Confidence so You Can Close More Sales

#10 Keep it short, sweet, and descriptive

Anatomy of an Effective Email Newsletter

Secrets of Successful Working Moms

Choose your formula:

Now, write the title of your article:

Get it Done Step 2: Use "Bucket Brigade" phrases to keep people reading.

Back in the day, a bucket brigade was a series of people who passed buckets of water down the line from the well to a fire. It was important to have a continuous line of people moving the buckets to help quickly douse the fire.

Likewise, in your marketing writing efforts a bucket brigade uses a series of words and phrases that lead people from your headline or blog post title down to your call-to-action that we talked about in the first method above.

They're simply phrases and words that **"join" together paragraphs** in your content. Your writing needs to be seamless so that your prospect never has a chance to "slip out" the sides (or stop reading and click away, in other words). They can only go one way -- forward to your offer at the end.

A good "Bucket Brigade" is a series of **miniature "cliff hangers"** that literally suck your prospects in your copy and keep them glued to the page all the way to the end. TV is a great example of using cliffhangers to keep folks engaged, both from season to season but also from commercial break to commercial break. If you notice, many shows will end a scene on a mini-cliffhanger to help ensure that you keep watching after the commercial break.

Examples of Bucket Brigade phrases include:

And here's some great news for you:

A word of caution:

As you may have noticed...

And that's not all...

And best of all...

But before I jump into the details, let me say this...

I must let you in on a secret...

Bear with me, because I'm going to show you how...

But there is just one small catch...

But more on that later...

All of the above allude to upcoming content that they won't want to miss, so it helps to keep them interested and reading.

Get it Done Step 3: Keep readers connected.

The second copywriting technique” is a concept called connectors. Connectors keep your writing flowing and writings that flow keep readers in a trance.

The problem is, our brains often work quite the opposite. When many of us write, especially if we're just getting started, our brains would normally jump from one idea to another because we have so much to say and so the writing appears chopped and broken. Nothing flows.

For example:

“Headlines are so important because they grab attention and draw readers into your website copy. To create a powerful headline, one of the most important elements you need is to arouse curiosity. Curiosity occurs when there’s a disconnect in thoughts.

The use of specifics is also another important element of a headline...”

There's a disconnect between arousing curiosity and the use of specifics, and it interrupts the flow for readers. Too many interruptions and he or she gives up for good.

Instead, you could lead into the second paragraph with something like, "Curiosity alone isn't enough to craft a compelling headline, however; the use of specific facts and information also comes into play..."

Examples:

also, again, as well as, besides, coupled with, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, similarly

Get it Done Step #4: Use Power Words to add some pizzazz to your content.

Power Words are to copywriting like peanut butter is to jelly. They help invoke emotions in readers, which keeps them more engaged in the content.

I like to refer to Power Words as simply "jazzed up" versions of regular, everyday words. Instead of *hot*, think *sizzling*.

Instead of *big*, think *massive*.

Instead of *quick*, think *instant*.

Sizzling savings.

Massive return on investment.

Instant response.

Here's a quick example: Instead of saying, "In this article, we're going to talk about how to stop your dog from barking," we might insert some power words to say, "This article will reveal 5 proven ways to instantly stop your dog's incessant barking for good so you can savor refreshing silence once more."

The underlined words are power words, by the way. :) Notice how they help to paint a picture in the reader's mind of the relief they'll feel once they solve this particular challenge (by reading all the way through your article, of course).

And best of all, one or all of these techniques can be put into place immediately, on both new blog posts or to breathe new life into oldies-but-goodies.

Review your download page to find all of the Power Words and Bucket Brigade and Connector phrases.

Here's One Last Thing Before You Publish...

Before you release your article to the world, there are a few last finishing touches you'll want to do.

Get it Done Step #1: Edit your work.

Last but not least, you want to give your article a once-over to make sure that there are no glaring errors or oversights. If you can, I recommend letting your article "sit" for a period of 12-24 hours before performing this last task, so that you can come back to it with fresh eyes. From there, you can review your article for spelling, grammar, and overall flow. You'll want to make sure it's easy to read and keeps reader's interest. If you don't feel confident going this route on your own, you can send it to a mentor/copy coach for reviewing to help increase the chances that your article won't give off an unprofessional impression of you and your business.

Get it Done Step #2: Run your article through the following checklist.

For the article itself:

- 1) Are you focusing on what's important to the reader (NOT yourself)?
- 2) Have you covered all important points you wanted to make?
- 3) Does your article use laymen terms and is it easy to understand? (If you're not sure, send your article to a trusted mentor or friend for a second opinion!)
- 4) Have you communicated the challenge your readers face by NOT implementing your advice?
- 5) Is the topic of your article narrowed down to one specific challenge/solution?
- 6) Is your title the best it can be? Does it pass the "2 second glance test"? (Hand the paper to a friend/colleague and see if it grabs their interest in 2 seconds or less)
- 7) Does your article contain subheadings to keep your readers' attention and break up text?
- 8) Does your article contain no more than 3-5 main points?

- 9) Did you present readers with an irresistible call-to-action?
- 10) Is the article appealing and interesting to read (again, hand it over to a friend/colleague and carefully watch their reaction - do they seem genuinely intrigued/interested or do they skim through quickly)?
- 11) Does the article read as if you're talking to a friend - personal and conversational, or is it dry and dull, corporation-speak?
- 12) Did you choose your words carefully, using words and phrases that have the highest possible emotional impact? Are there any headings, subheadings, or paragraphs that could be stronger?
- 13) Are there any spelling errors that might cause people to mistrust your authority?
- 14) Is any part of your article written in a way that would offend or insult your readers? (Example of what NOT to say: **Would you IGNORANTLY sit on the OPERATING table to get BRAIN SURGERY from a NURSE?** - yours would never be that insulting, I know, but you might be unknowingly putting people off. Your best bet is to run it by a trusted friend/colleague or two to get their opinion before publishing.)
- 15) Did you make any factual claims and if so, can you back them up?

When it's time to publish your article:

- 16) Does your article end with a copyright notice to discourage readers from "borrowing" your work? (Example: © 2013 by Tammi Metzler)
- 17) Did you include your title in the name of your blog post, and NOT just a generic name like, "June Blog" that doesn't inspire opens?
- 18) Did you check the formatting of the article to make sure it looks okay?
- 19) Did you click any and all links in your article to make sure they're working properly? (This is especially important if you ask people to click a link in your call-to-action - you want to make sure that link is working correctly!)

Get it Done Step #3: Publish your article!

Congratulations - you've just completed your article! Keep this blueprint handy so you can pull it out each time another article is due. Way to go!

