

Selling DisruptionTM Show

With Mark S. A. Smith

*How to Sell Way More
with Your Written Words*

David Garfinkel

Mark: David Garfinkel I met for the very first time over 20 years ago. It was in the early 90's when I bumped into him when his, at that time, housemate invited me to come by and said, "You've got to meet this guy." David, after a conversation, said, "Will you mentor me?," and I said, "No, but we can have a co-mentorship." He said, "What is that?" I said, "You share your brain, I share my brain, we make money together," and he agreed, and here we are. I tell you, David has taught me how to sell with the spoken word. He is the very best copywriter guru on the planet and I know because I saw him go from the, "I'm going to be the best," to he is the best. I'm absolutely honored to have my old dear friend David Garfinkel on the Selling Disruption Show. Welcome David.

David: Thanks Mark, it's great to be here.

Mark: That it is.

David: Yeah.

Mark: Thank you. You are the master of making people have a conversation in their head through the written word where they read your copy, and there's actually a conversation going on inside of their head to help accelerate them from don't know you, to want to do business with you. That my friends is extremely disruptive. How did you start that? How did you get into that business?

David: I got into copywriting because, frankly, honestly, out of desperation. Everything else I was doing wasn't working. I had some products, I came from a journalism background, I couldn't sell very well as a journalist. I do PR or whatever, I had minimal sales skills. When I learned about copywriting, my hair got on fire, I was very excited about it.

Worked at it, it wasn't easy. In fact it was very frustrating. I was pretty unhappy with the education, the mentoring, the training that was available, but I didn't care. I just worked through it, worked around it, figured out my own stuff and got good at it, then got really good at it.

Mark: Well that's what disruptors do. They don't worry about the how, they just set the destination and the how shows up and you did that.

David: True.

Mark: Along the way, you've done a lot of innovation in the world of copywriting. In fact, you are now a copywriting mentor to some of the very best copywriters on the planet.

David: Yeah, it's true.

Mark: What have you done to disrupt the world of copywriting so much?

David: I'm sort of in two markets and they're overlapping like a Venn diagram. They're not exactly the same but there are a lot of similarities. One is the copywriting coaching market where I coach people one on one. The other is the copywriting education market where I teach through seminars, through webinars, through my products, through my books and home study courses, things like that. As far as coaching, I didn't exactly disrupt that market, I pretty much created it. I created it in 1999 because there weren't any copywriting coaches at that time, today there is a lot of them.

At that time, there were copywriters for sure like Gary Halbert and others, Joe Sugarman who would have people come to their house and sort of either teach them, or Gary would make them an apprentice, but that was different. That wasn't a structured ongoing thing that you could do in your own home or over a period of time on the phone.

Mark: Right, and it was extremely expensive.

David: Extremely expensive, yeah. With Gary it took a toll too. We don't want to go there right now. I want to talk about copywriting for a second, because I know a lot of your listeners are C-level executives. Generally speaking, in many parts of the business world, copywriting is not seen as a C-level skill. First of all people don't even know what it is, they might think it's a Circle "C" that you take to the patent and trademark office. Really, they think that. Copywriting which you so beautifully put, is selling with the written word, is not seen as an executive skill, yet selling is premiere, second, third most important executive skill.

Mark: That's right.

David: Copywriting, let's just say it again so people can understand what we're talking about. The copywriting that, in my world, is nothing more, nothing less than making a successful sales presentation with the written word.

Mark: Right.

David: The written word. Most executives write, so I say it would do them well. If you write someone an email, it doesn't have to be a hardcore sales letter with a "Click here", if you can persuade someone to take an action, if you can persuade a team to work together, if you can persuade that number two guy or gal who's just not doing quite what you want them to do, to start doing quite what you want them to do, that can be copywriting too believe it or not.

Mark: No, absolutely true.

David: It's all part of the same skillset, now-

Mark: It's persuasion with a written word.

David: It is. That's exactly what it is, persuasion with a written word. That's the copywriting coaching market I created, such as it is today. As far as the copywriting education market, that was there before I came around, and I disrupted that market in 2004 by developing and marketing copywriting templates which put somewhat of a system and structure to writing of persuasive copy.

Mark: As a matter of fact, I have been through one of your classes that templated my copywriting, for the good people tell me that I'm a great copywriter, and it's not something that I focus on David, but your templates have allowed me to very quickly create copy that connects with people. Thank you for that.

David: You're welcome. You know I was talking to one of the best copywriters I know. He's one of these underground people you never heard of and I'm not sure he would want to be quoted by name, but he said, you are a good writer Mark, but you're also a terrific salesman and sales trainer, and he said, "The key to copywriting, mostly, is sales ability. The writing comes second." I was talking to a client who runs a nine figure business based entirely on copy and he said, "It's selling, the writing can be taught." We're not talking about Ernest Hemingway in terms of someone being able to do it. Now, you're obviously a very good writer, what I'm saying is you can be an average writer if you're a good salesperson, you can learn to apply that to copywriting.

Mark: That's great. Share with us a couple of your copywriting strategies that we can convert that sales power to disrupt sales with a written word.

David: The first one goes closely to what you were talking about a few minutes ago. That is to enter the conversation already going on in the prospect's mind. That was a concept originally developed by somebody else, but what I have done is, again, broken it down into systems and steps. The truth is always simple, getting there is never simple. This is pretty simple, you know, if you're going to write, whether it's an email, whether it's a Facebook ad, whether it's a Webinar script, even the actual bullet points on your-

Mark: Well sure, even the voicemail script, or an email, any kind of communication that doesn't have a conversation going on is essentially copywriting.

David: Right, well there's not two live people. What you need to do is imagine one person, maybe a person you know who represents your whole market. Some people like to use the word avatar. I don't like that word because it has another meaning and another context. Your target customer, think of a real person you know, imagine you're just sitting down with them at a Starbucks. If you don't like Starbucks, at a Pete's Coffee, or a Blue Bottle, Denny's, or the Four Seasons, whatever you prefer, and you're just talking to them. What would you say to them? For everyone listening to this, I'm sure your listeners, every one of you has a lot of sales experience. You know what they're going to say back to you, you know what the objection is, you know what the question is.

Mark: That's right.

David: You do both sides of the conversation, making it seem like it's one side of the conversation. If I was talking to your best subscriber and they were interested in getting copywriting coaching, I'd say, "So copywriting coaching will make you much more powerful with everything you write." What are they going to say to me? Probably they would say, "Oh yeah, really," meaning, "Why should I believe you?", or, "How would you do that?", which is more of a, you know make this a little more solid, that's a pretty blue sky kind of promise. I would answer those questions. I would say, "Now you're probably wondering how in the world can I say that to you?", instead of having them across the table in real life and say, "How in the world can you say that to me David?"

See, you take on their side of the conversation and work it into what you're writing and people go, "Yeah, that is what I want. How the hell can he say that," or, "Have you ever worked with anyone like me before?" "Well as a matter of fact, I've worked with CEO's, I've worked with solo operators," so, from having done live conversations and presentations, I know this, but so do you. Not just you Mark, but you're the listener. Everyone really knows what this is, it's just most people never stop to think about it unless they have to write sales scripts for themselves or their sales force.

Mark: Even then, one of the best ways to write a sales script is just record a conversation that you have, then take one that worked.

David: That is another technique, again, from my field, not necessarily mine, but my girlfriend Deb yesterday was telling me that she was having a conversation with a guy who was blocked on Chapter 7 of a product that people had already paid for. He's having to worry about some customers getting a little hot under the collar. She said, "Just get on the phone with somebody, have them ask you some questions, record it, then transcribe it," and it worked, and he said, "Oh, you saved my life. I owe you one, and she said, "Well yeah, I think I can figure out what you can do for me." I'm telling you people start to hang around you, they get better than you, but that's what it is. Being a coach you happily let that happen.

Mark: Right, what do you do to disrupt your competition these days? Let me set this up just a little bit before you give that answer.

David: Sure.

Mark: You have been highly resistant to social media. We used to call you the guru who's not on social media and-

David: I actually made it part of my positioning. I said that I was a social media denier. I didn't believe that it existed. I said, "If it gives you comfort to believe that it exists, I'm not going to fight you on it, but I don't believe it exists," but I changed my ways.

Mark: I love it, and you did, you changed your mind. Recently within just a few months ago, you've showed up on social media and you've have an avalanche of followers. The number of people that have connected with you online is stunning. You probably have the most rapid growing profile of anybody that I know.

David: Wow, thank you.

Mark: The stuff that you're posting David, it always blows my mind, always.

David: Thank you.

Mark: What have you done in that environment, where most people are using social media to connect and you said, "I don't need this," now you're adopting and using it. What are you doing to disrupt your competition?

David: It's the same thing I do with my coaching, it's the same thing I do with my product creation and my teaching. There are three strategies I have. The first one is I outwork my competition.

Mark: Ah, excellent.

David: I work harder than any other coach in direct marketing. A lot of that is preparation. A lot of that is showing up and being present, not phoning it in, pardon the pun, because a lot of my work I do on the phone. Actually being very present and listening for voice tonalities, listening for contradictions, which is not to bust somebody like Gibbs in the interrogation room in NCIS, but to realize a person is doing that for a reason. There's some conflict going on in their mind. I've taken the techniques that people use in business coaching, executive coaching and other forms of coaching, and I work that very hard. I don't let them see me sweat, but I'm working very hard. Sometimes after the curtain closes, after the sessions over, I'm exhausted.

The second thing I do, is I out-innovate them. The copywriting templates was an innovation, now there are lots of copywriting templates. I came out with the first one in 2004, but I'll innovate on the spot. I keep all my client stuff confidential, so I'm going to be a little vague here. I will develop a completely new system to solve one client's problem if I need to. I did that on Tuesday. This client had a problem I had never seen before. Once we had it laid out and I tried a conventional solution, it didn't work. I created a new solution and that's working. I don't rest of my laurels, I'm proud of what I've done. If I've done something in the past and it works, I'll do it again, but I'm always willing to innovate.

Mark: Disruption is a continuously moving target, it never stops.

David: It is.

Mark: Your disruption becomes the new norm.

David: That's right, especially if you're taking a leadership position. My leadership is not like the kind of leadership a typical C-level executive has. I don't have teams of people working for me. I'm more like a thought leader or technique leader. I'll create a new norm in my particular field. There's another thing I've done to disrupt ahead of my competition. That is, I've developed post-graduate coaching skills. They literally are

post-graduate. I was in a year-long PhD level executive coaching program and I got a certificate in evidence based coaching from Fielding Graduate University.

This doesn't have a whole lot to do with copywriting, but it has everything to do with how you talk to another person and listen. The energy, the mood, the tone and the feeling of safety in a conversation when you're dealing with some fairly delicate stuff, and I don't care how tough some person is, everyone has an unconscious mind, which is a little less tough than their callus exterior. It's just human nature. Whether the person is, quote on quote, sensitive or not, when you're talking about making changes, or having new insights, sometimes that's a little bit of an uncomfortable experience. That's the very nature of it. I have to help people become comfortable being consistently uncomfortable to grow.

Mark: Well said.

David: Thank you, thank you. Some of my competitors have really great technical skills, but honestly, pretty painful in their personal skills. I've learned how to help people get great growth without all the slash and burn. People know that, they've told me that, they said, "You know I worked with so and so, the guy has great insights, but I felt terrible afterwards," I said, "Well, you don't have to. It's your choice, you can if you want if you think that's what makes it good, but you don't have to."

Mark: That's brilliant, absolutely brilliant. One of the things that I do David, for every show, is generate a show based on the conversation. There's three of them already.

David: Oh wow, okay.

Mark: This is definitely a truth filled show.

David: Awesome.

Mark: What advice do you offer an executive who is facing strong competition and needs to disrupt their market using the copywriting skills, techniques and tactics that you have?

David: The answer to that is everything from very simple and straightforward to complex and articulated. For right now, let me give you a simple thing, which has worked with, last time I checked, a 66 billion dollar company pretty well. I've helped a lot of people do this. You don't have to do the complicated thing, in fact, simpler is usually better. There's three steps.

Mark: Okay, three steps.

David: Step number one is find out, and not in focus groups, not in surveys, not in Ask campaigns, but in conversations like you and me are having right now. Find out in relaxed one on one conversations with prospects and customers, one at a time, the answer to this questions. You might have to ask it a few times before the dam breaks. You want the dam to break, you want some emotion in your answer. Here's the

questions. What is it that companies in our industries do that really pisses you off? Then shut up and listen and record responses word for word and take notes.

Mark: I love it.

David: Okay, you're going to have a list. You look for the common elements until you find one or more common answer. Find the common answer that you can do the opposite of that people will appreciate. Let me give you an example. About 12 years ago I was in a seminar and there were fairly high income people in the seminar and I said, "How many of you have luxury cars?" Hands went up. I said, "How many of you have annual service contracts where you have to pay several thousands of dollars a year just to keep up the factory warranty?" A lot of the hands went up and it was almost like a dark cloud went over the room.

At the time I didn't, although now I do, at the time I didn't, I said, "I'm not a BMW salesman, I'm not making a pitch, but did you know that BMW takes care of all of your maintenance except for windshield wipers and tires for the first four years?", then they really got mad, because they didn't have that.

Mark: You'd think they could spring for the windshield wipers.

David: Well you don't understand the German mentality well enough Mark. No, windshield wipers not included. Here's the thing that became the new norm, you'll find a lot of the companies have that now, but BMW really took off. It was interesting because there are so many other, if you're a car guy, which I'm really not, but I researched this a little, there are a lot of other advantages that BMW could use in their advertising, but they just used that one. I think they went from being a premiere luxury brand to a high-end consumer brand over the course of the last 10 years. I think that had something, or a lot to do with it.

Mark: No doubt about it, so in the world of selling disruption, crossing that barrier is part of the disruption in the marketplace. It's crossing from a luxury brand to a consumer brand is disruptive. Crossing the threshold creates disruption.

David: That's interesting, yeah, of course. It makes perfect sense.

Mark: That's what we attempt to do and that's what I do with my clients, is help them figure out how to cross those thresholds. It's by doing step one of what you just said. Now, I want to point out one thing that I think is really critical. You can't do this with Ask campaigns, you can't do this with the focus groups, in fact, I hate focus groups, I think they mislead companies.

David: That's good.

Mark: The reason why is because people don't know what they don't know. The only way we can detect that is in person by looking at those fine changes and asking questions that followup when we identify that they're missing a piece of information.

David: Yeah.

Mark: It's going to that next level. As you pointed out, that's what makes the dam break, where they go, "Oh, you know I've never put that into words before," but that's the deep root cause that creates the disruption, so conversations have to do it. I love it. Thank you very much for pointing that out, so what's step two?

David: Well, step one is have the conversation. Step two is analyze the responses and look for themes that are repeated frequently. The complaint that comes up most often, there's probably more than one. Step three is choose one that you can do the opposite of and bang the drum loudly, blow the trumpet loud so that it will strike people. Yeah, I'm really tired of paying for that auto maintenance. Yeah, I'd love it if I just drive the car in, they give me a loaner, no charge, nevermind that my monthly on the car or lease payment is twice what I was paying for the Prius, or whatever, but I'm going to forget that in the moment. In other words, build your wedge, not the entire marketing platform, but the point of first contact with your customers on how you do the complaint. You become the good guy in a market of bad guys all of a sudden. They want to do business with the good guy.

Mark: The way that I frame that my friend is with the words desirable difference.

David: Oh, that's nice. I like that.

Mark: That's what we look for. I don't care about being different. What I care about is being desirably different. You've identified the way to create desirable differences, I love it. Now you've put together a special gift for our listener.

David: I did.

Mark: It's a template. It's one of your magical David Garfinkel, how to kick ass with your copy and disrupt your market templates, thank you my friend, tell us about it.

David: You're welcome. What I noticed was the thing people were most interested in with me was having me look at their copy, whether it's a Facebook ad, or whether it's a long webpage ad, or whether it's a magazine ad, a newspaper ad, or a script and critique it for them. That is my most popular service, but the reality is, not everyone can do that, for any number of reasons. I thought, "Well, it's not going to disrupt my market if I share my process, because I can reach far more people that way, and sooner or later some of them will want to do business with me and that's fine.

Mark: Here's the real secret, is your disrupting your competitors because you're essentially giving them this one sheet of paper with diagnostic questions for copy, that they charge money to do, you bastard, thank you very much. If people need to take things to the next level, David Garfinkel is the guy I said go talk to. He's worth every thousand dollar bill that you pay him, because he will make you millions.

David: Thank you Mark. I didn't look at it that way, but you're looking at things through the lens of disruption and you're absolutely right. I'm loving talking to you today. Light bulbs are going off in my mind too.

Mark: I think my friend that's the co-mentorship aspect of our relationship.

David: It's how things work when we talk to each other. I live just North of silicon valley, disruption is such a big word, but first of all, I don't think most people have any idea what it means, even to themselves. Secondly, there are a lot of companies who are disruptive, but they couldn't define it, but you've really nailed it down, that's valuable and worthwhile.

Mark: Let's talk about your template for a moment.

David: It starts at the beginning and it ends at the end. You'd be surprised how many people don't do that.

Mark: I know many people who do that, they don't finish what they start. By the way friends, you can download this from the show page, the form that David is going through right now, the template that David is going through right now.

David: You can have the best copy, the best pitch, the best offer, the best deal in the world, but if you can't get someone's attention, your prospect's attention in the first place and keep it, it's all for not. That's the first question. How well does your copy grab? I call it the grabbability. The grabbability of your copy, how well does it grab your readers or viewers attention from the start and hold on tight until the close. This is something you can test. You know, you're in a customer's office and say, "Hey, can you take a look at this." If they start reading it, they sort of sink in, they start breathing a little slower, their head starts nodding, they start getting angry, they start getting interested, you see their shoulders shake a little bit, you know that you got them. If they tell you that the punctuation is excellent and the spelling is superb, you probably got a little work to do.

Mark: If they become an English teacher, you're screwed.

David: Right. If they go into their whole intellectual, critical observer mode, then you haven't grabbed them very well.

Mark: I love it, excellent, next.

David: Next is claims. In a good ad, you need to have the balls to make claims, to say we can do this, or we can do this better, we can do this cheaper, we can do this faster, or we're the only one who can do this, or you'll like the way we do this better than someone else because, those are claims. Bold companies do that, timid companies, their salesmen have skinny kids, you know. You need to have claims that are strong. They also need to be unique and believable. This sounds like a joke, but it's not there. There are probably 2000 accounting firms in America who all have the same claim, quality and service.

Mark: Right, there are probably two million companies that use those two same claims. That's the cost of admission to the market.

David: Right, but it's not unique. Just saying that word doesn't make it particularly believable. A lot of people take their whole advertising, and I have to blame the advertising agencies, and other people who are doing a disservice, but by encouraging them to do this, they sort of use this wishing well approach, where they say, "Well, I'm going to say something and people are going to believe it because I want them to, because I said it." Life doesn't work that way, but I call it wishing well because it's like throwing money in a wishing well and hoping that your dreams come true. It works very well in movies, in real life not so much.

Mark: Yeah, it works really well for the people who have the wishing well.

David: There you go, yeah, it's like the riddle, how do you make money in Las Vegas right? Own a casino.

Mark: Yes, there's only one way.

David: Yeah.

Mark: I love it. I want to go back to the point of quality and service. Quality and service as a naked word mean nothing. Quality requires a modifier, service requires a modifier.

David: Absolutely.

Mark: Whether it's excellent service, excellent quality, or top quality, or it's ranked quality, so using quality and service as a differentiator doesn't create a desirable outcome. Those are not desirable differentiators. You need to be unique and believable, good stuff.

David: It needs to be believable, but it is up to you, not up to the customer, up to you the marketer, you the company to deliver the belief, to bring it home, to create the conviction in your customer. That's step three on the list, which is proof of claims. How convincing is your proof? There are a lot of different ways to proof things. People don't usually realize all of them. Testimonials certainly work well, analogies work well. Sometimes talking about the construction, I'll give you an example, I love coffee and I have a coffee maker called an I-Coffee, it's not made by Apple, but it might as well of been. It has some very neat, elegant sleep technology. I looked at the press release for the company when they made it, and they said they went through over 1200 prototypes before they finally came up with the one that delivered the coffee just the way they wanted it to.

Mark: They're the Thomas Edison of coffee makers.

David: They're about 8800 trials to go, but same idea.

Mark: I love it, yeah. What we're referring to is Edison's quote of the, try 10,000 ways to make a light bulb and he says, "I just know 10,000 ways that don't work."

David: It's true, but you see, that's proof. Most people wouldn't think of that. The principle there is not how many prototypes you did, but how much work and effort you put into making your product as good as it can be, or better than the competition. There are lots of different ways of proof. That's a very convincing kind of proof. A testimonial that says this coffee maker makes great coffee, Jane. Not as convincing perhaps, maybe convincing to women names Jane, but that's about it.

Mark: Even then, they know Jane doesn't good taste in coffee.

David: That's right, she would already have one of these then.

Mark: I love it, what's next on your list?

David: Testimonials which is of course, a specific form of proof. I have a question about that, and the question is, how well can your target market relate to the people giving testimonials?

Mark: Boy that's a big shift happening right now. In the past we used to use celebrity endorsements, but we know the Kardashians don't drive Buick's.

David: We know that, we do. Also, if you look at, if you've been watching any of the football games this time of year, there are a lot of Chevy commercials where they bring in, I don't know if they're actors, focus groups or whatever, those look just like the people who drive the Chevy's. They say things just like those people would say and they move and they talk. That's a perfect, positive example. This is a subjective thing, again, you can find this out by showing it to your customers and having them read those testimonials. What do you think about this? Does it seem like something you would say, or do you believe someone would say this? You know our product, you've done business with us, but yeah, testimonials need to be relatable, they need to sound real.

Mark: Great, what's next?

David: The big one.

Mark: The big one, yep.

David: Objections. Every sale has them. Every sale has them, and often when you're the marketer, when you're the inventor, when you're the owner of the company, when you're the chief executive officer, you're so in love with your product, you may be living in a little bit of a bubble. You may think that it is statistically, humanly, logically, scientifically impossible that anyone could have any objections, but back here in the real world, if someone is seriously interested they will have objections. If they have no objections they're just fluffing you.

Mark: It's so true. I want to frame up this concept of objections for just a moment David.

David: Sure.

Mark: The reason why is because an objection is something that we say that people object to, then the written word, we are going to create objections just by the fact we can't test ahead of time what they're going to find objectionable, as we can in a conversation. In conversation we can use the objection bypass technology that you and I developed over a decade ago to do that, when we don't have that chance to test ahead of time what they find objectionable, we're going to have the potential of raising objections. Keep in mind, until a salesperson speaks there are no objections, there are only concerns. In the written word we have to treat them as objections because we are making claims in the written copy. Handling objections fits the selling disruption model because of this framework. Please continue on with that concept.

David: One of the things that is hard for marketers, inventors, leaders to accept initially is the better the job you do with your value proposition, with the promise that you're making, the more objections you're going to raise.

Mark: That is good! That's a disruptive statement my friend, that's really good. The better job you do with you promise, the more objections you're going to raise.

David: The reason is because people have been disappointed before, and they're protecting themselves emotionally from another disappoint, like, "Oh yeah, they told me that this was going to keep us up 24/7 even when all the generators went down, and we lost five hours of this, and we had a couple of these things blow up." Someone says absolutely, you know, no shutdowns no breakages, all of their emotional guards are going to go up in the form of objections, "Well are you sure? No one's able to do that, that's never happened, the technology for that doesn't exist." They'll be thinking all of these things in their mind.

What you have to do in a non-combative, non-intrusive, non-conflicting way, acknowledge, "Some of our customers thought the technology wasn't there, but that's because they didn't know about x,y,z. X,y,z has a synergy that nobody else in our industry has put together." You need to bring these things up in a way that it's okay for you to doubt what I'm saying, because other people have to. They were almost as smart as you are, maybe just as smart, yet they had some very reasonable well-founded doubts and here's what they found out. Part of it's a little bit of the feel, felt, found kind of thing.

Mark: Sure.

David: Part of it's simply, logically explaining why what seems to be impossible is not, it's actually possible.

Mark: Yeah, the twist that I've used up, the feel, felt, found is at first I thought I discovered, now I realize.

David: I like that better for a number of reasons including the fact that the last two words and hypnotic trance words.

Mark: We're starting to reveal some of our insider secrets on how we make stuff work.

David: Yes, well we draw from every field we can.

Mark: Indeed, every field.

David: Yes. You basically deal with it in a way that is as unobtrusive, is effective and as ethical as possible.

Mark: I love it, so good. I don't know if you know this, but we have a double length podcast going on. This is such extraordinary information and truth bombs, I doubt that we've lost our listener, it's so good.

David: Well the smart ones have stayed with us. If you stayed with us, congratulations, you're one of the smart ones.

Mark: Indeed, indeed. What's the next step in the copy review?

David: The next step is what I call the flow factor. There are books about mindset and athletic peak performance that talk about flow state. I can never say the guys name that starts with a C-

Mark: And it goes on for like 17 syllables, yeah.

David: Yeah, but this is a slightly different kind of flow than that. We're not talking about bringing someone into a low alpha, high delta brain frequency. I'm not talking about that, what I'm talking about is do the words flow? Does the story flow? Are there no jagged edges, or abrupt jumps or leaps. In other words, here are four questions that need to get yes answers, or need to get positive answers to. How well do you develop and refresh curiosity.

Mark: Interesting, ooh, very interesting.

David: You want to keep people curious and sometimes you can do that by leaving an open loop. By asking a question and not answering it right away. How effective are your subheads? If you have long copy and you break it up with little bold face subheads to keep the reader engaged. How smooth are your transitions, then you move from one topic to another, you do it in an artful and graceful way. How well do you keep building anticipation right up to the close? You don't want to give up your whole story from the start, you want to give away enough so they want to keep reading.

Mark: Yeah.

David: You want to keep them hoping, praying, wondering and reading heavily that they're going to get the answer, the solution, the possibility that they're looking for when you finally make your offer and ask them to place their order.

Mark: Yeah, the metaphor I use is keep your candy in your pocket.

David: Hey, that's good. Yeah, so they want to know what's in there. Yep, that's good.

Mark: That's really good, the flow factor. David, that idea is absolutely brilliant. How often do you refresh curiosity? I guarantee you, 80% of sales presentations have never thought of that one concept. They just keep barging forward. No wonder people are talked out of a sale.

David: I think the problem is that sales people with all good intentions want to be entertaining, but they want to be entertaining like they see, I was going to say Jay Leno, but he's not in the air anymore, Conan O'Brien, no that's what he does on TV.

Mark: He has 50 writers writing that stuff.

David: Right, he has a different job to do. As a salesperson or, you know, as a persuader, as a negotiator, the entertainment needs to be a little more subtle. You want to have people hanging on every word because you're raising more positive questions in their mind. These are not the objections, these are, so we have five different ways that we're going to help your company improve the ROI with this product. You want them to have a checklist in their head saying, "Okay, that's one, what's the second one," and you don't reveal them all right away.

Mark: Right, exactly. How about revealing the next one.

David: Aha, okay. The next one, number seven, is consistency. Are there logical or emotional inconsistencies that need to be fixed? That's a little hard to explain but-

Mark: Actually I think it's easy to explain. You have to have somebody else read it, because sometimes we have emotional and logical consistencies that we've bought into that we don't even see anymore. Quite frankly, I use people like you who spot that stuff in an instant. Man, I send stuff and you skewer me, I know, in the most loving way, but you skewer me. It's like, "Oh, duh," right? It's just because you see it in a different way that I do. You need a separate set of critical eyes.

David: I put on my customer hat. Customers are always looking for, where's the catch? Where are they trying to get me? Where's the big lie? Sometimes there isn't a big lie, but they're going to try to make one up anyway. Often there isn't but-

Mark: I think that's really interesting. I don't want to let that one fly by, I want to nail that one down. Customers are inventing in their mind the big lie. They're looking for it and they may be inventing it. Tell me a little more about that, that's an extraordinary concept.

David: Suppose you are talking about egg crates they use in the grocery store. At one point you say, "So you can put a dozen eggs in there," and you spell dozen, and another point for whatever reason, you abbreviate it doz., and in another point, god knows why, you write dzn, well all that says is that maybe you were in a different mood about the word dozen when you wrote it each time. No, to a reader that's, "Oh, this guy doesn't even spell dozen the same way." Some people actually take moral offense at inconsistencies like that.

Mark: Yes.

David: They will start to make up stories about you that simply aren't true because they don't feel safe. They feel like you're trying to trick them by spelling dozen differently. You're not trying to trick them, you were just distracted or sloppy. That is what people do.

Mark: Wow, that is really good. They will create a falsehood in their brain to talk themselves out of doing business with you, because of those inconsistencies. That's a massive insight, wow.

David: Thank you.

Mark: All right, I'm ready for another.

David: Next one is rapport and empathy. You might say, "Well okay, as someone who's really developed my interpersonal skills, I know how to get rapport with somebody who use the same words they do, match their mirroring, talk about things you have in common," but how would you do that in a written sales presentation. The answer to that is to realize something, something that taught to me almost 20 years ago by a coach of mine, it's funny, I think you will appreciate this and I think a lot of your listeners will too, because we're persuaders, "David, what does everybody want more than anything else?" Being a persuader, I looked at the world through my persuader lens and I said, "Well, they want to be agreed with," he said, "No that's not what they want, they want to feel understood," and he was right, he was absolutely right.

You and I have talked about this a lot Mark, there are some people who only come through a feeling of satisfaction through debate. They might want to be disagreed with, so they're going to have a debate, but they do want to be understood. They want to be understood as the person who likes to be disagreed with so they can have a debate, and to the degree that you can make your prospect comfortable, and you can do that by talking in the same language, having as much as doable in the same point of view as they do, use the same tone, same reference points, talk about their concerns as though your concern too. Your concerns and their concerns get addressed. That creates a lot of rapport and empathy in the written message.

Mark: Love it, excellent.

David: The next thing I look at and everyone else should look at is stories.

Mark: Yes.

David: My god, we could spend hours on stories. The bottom line is how effective and intriguing are your stories? When you're talking about beginning, middle and end, a lot of people tell stories that never end. Some people tell stories without setting it up in the beginning. Some people don't really have a middle, they just say this happened, this happened, and there's a big gap between beginning and end. They haven't transitioned to it smoothly. Stories are not about products, numbers or elements on the periodic table, stories are about people, they're always about people. When you have an industrial or tech problem, it's about how the product affects the people, or something the people do, or something people want to together.

Mark: I think it's so critical because a lot of people make the product the hero, but the story is designed to make the customer the hero.

David: Absolutely.

Mark: That's the one that works.

David: That's the one that works. The product can be a helper, the product can be a co-star, but the most important hero in the story and the most important leading man or woman is a customer, or the customer, or someone that will stand in for the customer reading your story, in that story.

Mark: Excellent.

David: Thank you.

Mark: Wow, what's next.

David: Bullet points.

Mark: Bullet points. Don't we have death by bullets in many times when it comes to sales copy?

David: We do. The thing about bullet points is because Microsoft Word developed that little button at the top of the screen, people think any words that come after that constitutes a bullet point, not true. Each bullet point should be a mini sales presentation, in that it covers one, the benefit of one aspect of the product. If you have a product that walks, jumps, dives and lies down and goes to sleep, maybe a robot dog or something right, you can have a benefit for each one of those things, the walking, the diving, the jumping, the going to sleep. Each one could be a bullet point. It wouldn't be, dives like you never seen before, it could be more like your new robo-k9 companion will make swimming more enjoyable than ever before. That's more of the positive effect of what it will do.

Mark: So you're telling me that somebody using a bullet point of being in business 35 years is not a bullet point?

David: No, unless the main thing you're selling is longevity. If your customers only care about how long you've been in business, and you know that because people say, "Why did you buy it from us," because you've been in business longer than anyone else, then maybe.

Mark: Then maybe. Other than that, I don't see that as usually a point. In fact these days, the big, fast growers didn't even exist a decade ago.

David: It's true. It's very admirable to be resilient and strong enough to stay in business that long, but customers don't care.

Mark: That's right, they don't. All right, what's next David.

David: Your close, your close action. How strong and appealing is it? A lot of people sort of wimp out here. The salespeople may be very aggressive and confident when they ask for the close, but somehow they're afraid that they might be judged as being too aggressive or needy by saying, "Call us, click here, order now." No, people at that point, you need to be very directive, confident, clear, simple and unambiguous about what you want the person to do. They all have the right to say no and some of them will, but what you'd rather do is have people say, "No, absolutely not, I don't want this," because every time you have someone like that, it means that there is going to be some that will say yes, whereas if you are sort of mealy mouthed about your close and people say, "I'll think about it," that's probably all they'll do is think about it. It's much better to be a little aggressive, a little forward and a little assertive in your close.

Mark: I want to give an example of that. All of us that consume cocktails from time to time have had the experience where we have had a cocktail, we're sitting there with an empty glass debating whether we should have a refill. We are waiting for the cocktail waitress to say, "Can I bring you another?" If they don't, we don't, and if they do, we do.

David: That's true.

Mark: If you've had that experience, you know what it's like for that customer who's waiting to be asked.

David: Perfect. Perfect example, it applies. That's exactly the way it works.

Mark: Does that bring us to the close of your list?

David: It does. The close is the close.

Mark: I absolutely love it. David, what a magnificent conversation we've had my friend.

David: Thank you.

Mark: It's always a delight, I learn so much from you. I got a ton of stuff I can use immediately. You've refreshed some things that I'd forgotten about. Added a whole new arsenal to my list. I know the listeners enjoyed this too. What is the next step for you and our listeners?

David: If someone would like to work with me, they should go to my website, it's on the show page.

David: It's on the show page. It's GarfinkelCoaching.com, I do copy critiques. I do like people to fill out an application form, it doesn't long, just to give me an idea if it's something I can help them with and how I can best help them so I can prepare a little bit. They don't pay until we both agree that it would be worth their time and money to do so, and that I can help them. They should just go to my website, take a look around, go to the copy critiques page under the services, fill out the form, we'll get on the phone and hopefully I can help you make a lot more money.

Mark: David will turn your sales copy into a closing machine.

David: Yes, and for the very very rare person who would like to learn to do this themselves, you learned to do this Mark, and you were just telling me you booked in excess of \$10,000 worth of seats at one of your executive summits without talking to any of those people?

Mark: Yeah, just because of the copy that you taught me to write, it's extraordinary.

David: Yeah, so not too many people are willing to take the journey that you did and congrats to you for taking it, but if you're one of those people there's information about my copywriter training program, and my executive business owner training program on the Garfinkel Coaching site as well.

Mark: I think that's great. I do want to do one plug for your copywriting class. When I sat through the class, first of all I met some extraordinary people that have become very dear friends, because people who think like copywriters are really cool people.

David: Yeah, they are.

Mark: Second thing is, I took 76 pages of hand-written notes.

David: I remember that. I was blown away, I thought your pad was going to catch on fire. I was watching you take notes.

Mark: You see, the pad is just right over there. I keep it handy because there's so many great ideas. Thank you David! I'm honored to spend time with you again my friend. Thank you for generously sharing your insights with The Selling Disruption Show listener. Thank you.

David: Thanks for having me, appreciate it, you're welcome