

Executives Have Feelings, Too

Copywriting for Training Decision Makers Doesn't Have to Be So Highfalutin

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Have you ever noticed the way marketers distinguish business people from consumers? From the differences in the copy, you'd think the two audiences were entirely separate life forms.

Marketing copy aimed at senior training leaders tends to be dry, with a focus on bottom line benefits and zero entertainment value. Meanwhile, writing targeted at consumers tends to be fun, zany, and emotionally charged.

Why the difference? The premise is that CLOs, Training VPs, and other high-level types don't consume things or...have emotions. As unfeeling drones built without pathways to their hearts, they *never* make decisions based on emotion. Every choice is rational and based on efficiency and productivity.

Come on. Isn't *every* decision in life an emotional one?

Last I checked, senior training executives were making the same emotionally motivated decisions as the rest of us. They put considerable effort into choosing between milk chocolate chip cookies with macadamia nuts and dark chocolate chip cookies with almonds. They save money for their kids' educations and read self-improvement books.

Besides, C-level folks are driven by the emotional stimulant of the masses: the prospect of losing, saving, or making money. You see, they might have nicer offices than you and I, but they're wired like everyone else.

So when you're selling to upper management, make sure your copy taps into the same emotions that drive them as consumers. How do you do that while retaining a professional tone? Hint: emotion *does not* come from adding exclamation marks to the end of sentences.

Begin by distinguishing yourself. Obvious, yes, but how often do you see training vendors develop sites and copy that are exactly the same as everyone else in the training industry? You've seen it: the clichés, the photos of smiling, well-dressed executives in meetings. Isn't the goal to *stand out* from the competition?

Maybe you're not measurably different from your competitor. Okay. Still, you can look deeper to find something, like your working philosophy or environmental policy or the fascinating story of how you developed an incredible e-learning course. These things get attention - and attention is the first step in getting a response.

Don't try to impress your audience with jargon and tired training-specific clichés. They've heard it all before. Take a more unconventional route and you'll get noticed. Don't be afraid of a metaphor

or analogy. Not only do they help people relate, but their use indicates how you think and work. Senior leaders like to work with original thinkers. And let your personality come through. They also prefer to hire people they like.

I'm not suggesting a Saturday morning cartoon theme for your brochure. A "professional" tone is critical for showing that you're serious, that you understand their problem and are capable of solving it. Point is, you can't sacrifice the edge and attitude that creates emotional connections.

In short, create a unique brand voice. Something honest. Something human. You know, something those CLOs can relate to.

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