

## **I Did Not Die Today - An Introduction to Chaotic Ad Writing**

I am, for the moment, alive and well as an ad writer. But I feel I'm being stalked by iPods, cell phones, instant messaging, and increasingly fragmented media choices. And they're all gunning for my life.

Over-communication rides rampant across the mindscape of America, putting greater-than-ever pressure on ad writers to create ads that produce results.

Today I will teach you how to write such ads.

The opening line is the key to impact. So open big. I'm not talking about hype; "Save up to 75 percent off this week only at blah, blah blah." I'm talking about a statement that is fundamentally more interesting than what had previously occupied your customer's mind.

Wasn't your attention piqued by the opening line, "I Did Not Die Today?" Magnetism is why I chose it. Frankly, I had no idea how I was going to bridge from that opening line into the subject matter at hand. *But it can always be done.*

Be bold and have confidence; a bridge can be built from *any* concept to *any other* concept.

Here's a glimpse of an advanced technique I call Chaotic Ad Writing:

- 1. Don't consider your subject matter** before deciding how to introduce it.
- 2. Never open with "ad-speak."** especially one of those insultingly obvious questions directed at the customer, such as, "Are you interested in saving money?" These questions are so overused they've deteriorated into horrible clichés. Provocative rhetorical questions are okay however, such as "Whatever happened to Gerald Ford?"
- 3. Think of a magnetic opening statement** from way beyond the fence in left field; something certain to captivate.
- 4. Figure out how to bridge** from that opener into your subject matter.
- 5. The opening line will surprise Broca's Area** of the brain and gain you entrance to the central executive of working memory, conscious awareness, focused attention. The central executive will then decide whether the thought has relevance to the listener. This is what your bridge must supply.

**6. Write a bridge that justifies** your magnetic opening line. If you fall short here, your opener will be perceived as hype. Game over.

**7. Insert your subject matter into the seam** created by your opening line and bridge.

**8. Close by looping back** to your opening line.

It's really not that hard.

Hey, that's another good opener: "It's really not that hard." You could easily bridge from that opening line into a powerful ad for any product or service.

Here are some other openers for you to try:

"I've heard your heart stops when you sneeze."

"I like the TV commercials with the Keebler elves."

"Plutonium is the rarest of all substances."

Here's what I've done so far:

**1. I opened** with *"I Did Not Die Today,"* having absolutely no idea how I would bridge from that line into the subject matter of this memo.

**2. I created a bridge** to justify my opening line: *"I am, for the moment, alive and well as an ad writer. But I feel I'm being stalked by iPods, cell phones, instant messaging and increasingly fragmented media choices. And they're all gunning for my life."*

**3. I gave you details** to satisfy the central executive's demand for relevance: *"Over-communication rides rampant across the mindscape of America, putting greater-than-ever pressure on ad writers to create ads that produce results for the customer. Today I will teach you how to write such ads."*

**4. I inserted my subject matter into the seam** created by my opening line and bridge; I gave you a new writing technique.

**5. Now it's time to close** by looping back to the opening line. Let's see if I can do it:

The times are changing, and so must ad writers if we will live to see another day. Will you change with the times? Or will you continue to wear the blindfold of yesterday's ad-writing style and walk voluntarily before the firing squad?

Roy H. Williams