

Writing Effective E-Mail Ads

By Joe Vitale

1. Know what's in it for your reader.

Get out of your ego and into your reader's ego. Complete this sentence: "Get my book so that you can...(fill in the blank)." Your book (or whatever you are selling) is the feature. What people get as a result of having your book is the benefit. Focus on benefits. Always! Without this, your letter will bomb.

2. Write a headline that telegraphs the key benefit to your reader.

ALWAYS use a headline. There is only ONE exception to this rule. When you personalize your letter, the "Dear (whoever)" opening becomes your headline. There are few headlines more powerful than the reader's own name. The headline is THE most important part of your letter! Spend nearly all of your time on it.

3. Be brief.

Say what you have to say in terms of the reader's self interest and shut up. This does NOT necessarily mean a short letter. If you are trying to make a sale, and the reader has never heard of you or your item for sale, you may have to write four or more pages to get your message across. If all you want is a return call, a one-page letter may do. Don't be afraid of length. People will read any length of copy AS LONG AS IT'S INTERESTING!

4. Always use a PS.

Always. Why do copywriters who charge upwards to \$15,000 to write a sales letter and have weeks to draft it always use a PS? They are always read. Always.

5. Look good.

Visual attractiveness accounts for 70% of your letter's impact. Use short sentences, short paragraphs, bulleted points, indented paragraphs, subheads, etc. Some people will just skim your letter, so engaging subheads and bulleted points help reach them instantly.

6. Outline first.

Use a planning tool to help you think through your message. Or talk to a friend. Or to a tape recorder. Or to yourself. This also helps you get comfortable with speaking your letter rather than writing it.

7. Write first, edit last.

Turn your inner editor off. You can rewrite later. For now, write spontaneously and quickly to get your ideas on paper.

8. Ask for something.

Why are you writing? You want a call. Or an order. Something. Say so!

9. Get a reader.

Find one person to read your letter OUT LOUD in front of you. If he (or she) has trouble reading your letter, if he wrinkles his brow or stops to reread a sentence, rewrite those places. Don't skip this step! It's the secret of many professional writers.

10. Rewrite your letter again.

Is it the best you can do? Be honest! If not, throw it away and call the person instead. Or hire a copywriter to write it for you. Why waste your time or your reader's with something that doesn't communicate in a persuasive and interesting way? (I rewrote this letter 24 times!)

Well, there you have it. Of course, there are more rules, laws, ideas and suggestions for writing letters that get results. You should always guarantee whatever you are selling, for example, and always offer proof for all of your claims. But the above will get you rolling.

Sincerely,

Joe Vitale

P.S. ALWAYS identify yourself. People look here to see whom the letter is from.

P.P.S. Notice that you read both these postscripts?