How To Use The "Problem" To Get Attention (Without Being Negative)

Three Month Vacation Podcast

Sean:

Have you ever been in the situation where you've been in the shower, it's nice warm water, and then suddenly it's freezing cold? That's because someone else turned on a tap somewhere else in the same apartment. No? That hasn't happened to you?

How about a computer? Have you had a computer that went vroom, vroom, 1vroom, ready to start and it started to go slow and slow and then boom? These are problems and problems get attention. The problem is that we don't make use of the problems when we're getting our message across and we certainly don't use it the way it should be.

How should the problem be used and why not use the solution instead? That's today's episode on attention getting. On the last episode of attention getting, we talked about how you can use the two concepts of novelty and consequences, but here's another way, using the problem.

What are we going to cover today? You like the three things, don't you? We'll cover three things, then we'll do the one thing that you can do and then we'll wrap up. Just in case you haven't heard Episode No. 24, well, listen to it again. I had to do it twice. The first time I did it, I was half asleep and then I had to re-edit the whole thing all over again because the first one really put me asleep. Imagine that? The irony. It was about attention getting and the voice was so slow.

If you got that episode or you thought this is really slow, well, there's a new episode. Delete the old one, download the new one again and you'll find that it's much better, much better music, much better tone, and yes, I'm awake in that one. That was Episode No. 24 on how to get attention through novelty and consequences, use the problem.

We're going to cover three things in this episode. The first thing is why solutions are less effective than problems, and second is why problems get your attention. The third is the mistake that most of us make with implementing the problem.

Let's start with the first one which is why solutions don't work as well as problems. To understand solutions, you have to understand your day-to-day life and your day-to-day life is simply a whole bunch of solutions. When you sit on the chair, that's a solution. When you switch on your computer and it works perfectly, that's a solution. When you get in you car and you turn on the ignition, that is a solution.

What is the problem? The problem is the opposite of the solution. Let's take those instances and you know where I'm going with this. You sit on the chair, it breaks. You turn on the car ignition, it won't start. That's where your brain gets activated.

You don't think of your chair, you don't think of your car, you don't think of all the things that work. That's because the brain is focused on the problem. It's not focused on the solution. When we get into marketing and when we get onto our website and we get into networking and we get into our presentations, what we tend to do is we start to lead with the solution and that's a problem.

The reason why we put our audiences to put is because we're leading with the solution. When someone asks us what we do, what we so is we immediately talk about our solution and you notice that immediately those people start to fall asleep. They are very polite.

Let's say you're at a networking meeting, so let's say you're a software developer and let's say you make time-tracking software. Someone asks you what do you do? Well, you spit out your solution. You say we make time-tracking software and this helps you keep track of your time when you're working. That's your solution.

Notice how your brain doesn't get very activated by something like that. Now the reason why we do is because we've been taught to talk about our benefits. We've been taught to bring out the solution but the brain kind of goes to sleep every time someone brings out a solution. When you turn that into a problem, that's when your brain gets activated.

Now, to be very fair, there is nothing wrong with solutions. Problems increase the heart rate, solutions decrease the heart rate. The question is now that we know that solutions aren't as effective as problems, how do we go about creating the problem?

That takes us to the second part of today which is creating the problem because we don't really want to be negative, do we? Here we are in the second part which is how to bring out the problem. Now the biggest objection is what we have to deal with at this point in time and that is we do not want to be negative. We do not want to highlight a problem, and yet to get the customer's attention when we are writing that email, we have to bring up the problem. When we are on the sales pitch, we have to bring up the problem.

What is this problem? How do we get to this problem without being negative? Let's take the example of that time-tracking app that we talked about earlier. Let's say you're still a software developer and you have the solution for a time-tracking app. As we go through the internet and look at different time-tracking apps, we find that the solution pops up everywhere.

One will say log, learn, optimize your life, every second counts. That's a headline, by the way. The second one says the ultimate timer, it's insanely simple, it's built for speed and ease of use. The third one is find your ideal work/life balance, and it goes on to talk about understanding your daily habit so you can focus and be more productive. The fourth one is a time-tracker that makes it easy to record your work hours and to calculate your income, and to build a customer if you're self-employed.

Are you still awake? You shouldn't be because all of these solutions have put you to sleep but then let's go to letsfreckle.com. That's L-E-T-S-F-R-E-C-K-L-E-dot-com. Immediately your brain is locked in because the headline there is my team has gone through four time-tracking apps in the last 2 1/2 years. What is so precise about that headline? It's precise because it's not something that was invented by someone sitting at their computer.

You can be the best copywriter in the world but when a client speaks, they have a totally different voice and this one shows the pain of the team going through time-tracking apps and getting frustrated with it. This is some kind of manager and that is what makes it so powerful, that emotion-built voice of the problem they've been having with time-tracking apps.

We looked at both the problem and the solution. We've seen that the solution is very important because it reduces your heart rate and the problem increases the heart rate. The issue here is that your problem cannot be manufactured at your desk. It needs to come from a customer. It needs to come from a real customer. They bring up an issue that you would not think of.

The best copywriters in the world, they don't sit at their desk and they write. They go out there, they meet the customers, they speak to them on the phone, they take them out to lunch, and then they get the words from the customer.

They get the problems from the customer which they then put on a webpage, which they then put on emails. That has more power than you could ever dream of just by sitting at your computer and thinking what I'm going to write today.

When you think of it, at Psychotactics, we have an article writing course and what is the problem with article writing? Usually you think, well, it has something to do with article writing. It is about the fact that you can't write quickly enough or you can't complete an article, things like that. Yet, when you go there, it talks about how to stop knocking on clients' doors and to get them to call you instead.

Now, you might have a fluke and think of that sitting at your desk but most of the time it's the reason why customers are motivated to do something and they need to tell you that. They need to bring out that pain. You need to put that pain in the headline.

Notice it's not negative, not any more negative than, say, the newscasts are telling you that there's a storm or a cyclone or a hurricane headed your way. Not any more negative than someone telling you, hey, your tires are balding and you might skid off the road.

When the problem comes from the customer themselves, you will find it is very powerful and it's not negative, and it brings out this whole emotion that you would struggle to work on if you were just sitting at your desk and trying to figure it out.

With that, we come to the end of the second part. We did the problem and the solution. We found out that the problem is more intense than the solution. We notice the dog poo, not the sidewalk. We notice the rain, not the sunshine as much. This takes us to the third part and the most important part of all, which is sticking to the problem. Just because you have a problem doesn't mean that you're going to stick to it.

What do I mean by sticking to a problem? To go back to that problem of the software developer that has the time-tracking app, well the problem was that the team has gone through four time-tracking apps in the last 2 1/2 years. Now, you want to drive home that problem.

Why has the team gone through that? What have been the frustrations of your team as they have gone through the time-tracking app? What have been the consequences? What happened? This is a story. This is an unfolding story. It's like a movie. It's like drama. It's amazing, it's got power and detail that you don't want to let go of. You don't want to jump into the solution right now. You want to drive home that problem before you get to the solution.

The second thing is you definitely don't want to go into another problem. You want to stick to the problem. You want to drive home the problem. You want to drive home the consequences. Once you're done, then and only then do you move to the second problem, or if you like, to the solution.

What I tend to do is I have a problem in the headline and a very brief solution because you want to increase the heart rate and decrease the heart rate. From that point on, you just stick to that problem. For instance, when you looked at the article writing course, it was how to stop knocking on clients' doors and get them to call you instead.

Now, that was the problem. There's a bit of a solution there. It is learn why articles do a far superior job of attracting clients you want and how the right articles make you the expert in your field. Now that's a very brief solution there and now we stick to the original problem, which is how to stop knocking on clients' doors.

Knocking on clients' doors can be the hardest way to get business, yet we do it all the time. In order to get the clients' attention, we send out sales letters, we make presentations, we do everything we can to get clients. The more we try to sell, the higher the clients' hackles go up. The more we try to convince, persuade, the more the client wants to say no or avoid you.

That's just the first paragraph. Then it goes on to why clients put off the purchase. The first reason why they put off the purchase, the second reason why they put off the purchase, and only then do you get to presenting the article writing course.

Sticking with a single problem is very critical and the reason why it's critical is because the problem, which was in your headline, got the customers' attention. Now when you stick to that singular problem, it gets the customers' attention and keep that customers' attention. That's what you're really doing. You're getting their attention with the headline. You're keeping it with a couple of paragraphs. Then you're moving to a solution.

That brings us to the end of this episode but let's summarize. What are the three things we covered? We started out with the solution. We found out why the solution is very important. It's important simply because it reduces the heart rate. If you just have a problem, it just gets the heart beating so quickly that the customer's not able to focus for very long.

It does attract. The problem does attract but the solution has reason to be there and that reason is that it reduces the heart rate. The problem and the solution both co-exist. The problem comes first, then the solution.

Now, the problem is very critical and the way to get the problem is not to sit at your desk but to go out there and speak to your customers and they will come up with something which is mind-boggling, something that you would not have thought of.

The third thing that we covered was simply that you cannot just have the problem there for one second and then disappear. Most people do that. They put in the headline, they may sneak in a line or two, and then, poof, they're gone off either to the next problem or they've gone to the solution.

You want to make it linger. You want to make it stay there for awhile. People need to know that you know how they feel about this problem. When you drive home the consequences of not dealing with that problem, they can feel those consequences and so it becomes more powerful but it also becomes more natural. This is exactly how life pans out.

We look at a problem, we figure out the consequences, and then we take action. If we see a solution, there's nothing to fix so we go about our lives as it were.

What's the one thing that you can do today? Maybe you're going for a networking meeting. Maybe you have to write a sales page on your website. Maybe you just have to write an email.

The question to ask yourself is this: Do I have a prospect or a client and can I speak with them? Because when you speak with them, they will give you a list of their problems. All you have to do is make them pick which is the biggest problem. When they pick the biggest problem, ask them why it is the biggest problem, how it became the biggest problem, what did they think are the consequences of that problem.

If you just stick to those three questions, you'll get at least a couple of paragraphs if not three or four paragraphs. The best part is you don't have to do any of the writing, just a bit of polishing and you're done. You're ready to go with your problem and your solution.

To get attention, the brain requires a problem, so use a problem, get to the customer and get cracking.

If you would like to learn more about problems and solutions and consequences, then you should get yourself the Brain Audit Kit. You can get this at www.psychotactics.com/brainaudit and I would recommend that you get the Brain Audit Kit. You can get the Brain Audit at $9.99 but what you miss out is on the entire workshop experience so there is an entire workshop in the Brain Audit Kit, and it also has additional audio from all the questions that we've got over the years.

The Brain Audit by itself is a very comprehensive book but the Brain Audit Kit goes several levels deeper. It explores the mistakes that people make. It explores the trouble that they've had so your experience is richer and you don't make the same mistakes.

I'm not suggesting that you don't get the Brain Audit. The Brain Audit by itself is very powerful but if you get the Brain Audit Kit, you will find that you're able to go deeper and get greater benefits in a shorter amount of time. Not at first, you still have to go through the information but you will find that there is enormous depth that you don't want to miss out on.

The Brain Audit, as you know, was one of our first books and since then we've gone on to write many books. The book I'm writing right now is about pricing and how to increase your prices without losing customers but it covers the psychology of pricing, how to increase your prices, and then how to maintain and manage your prices. It's a very comprehensive series.

The key to actually getting this book out is what I'm going to explain in the information workshop so it's the structure. Most people think that it's the content that matters, that if you have it in your head, that's fine, but as writers, as creators, we have a big problem.

That problem is that we spin in our head. We have so much information that we don't know how to put it down on paper. We just stack it up and when you stack it up, the client gets overwhelmed. When they get overwhelmed, you know what happens. Nothing happens. They don't act on it and they don't consume your book or your product or your workshop, and then they don't come back.

The information product workshop in Maryland does just that. We spend three days and not two days or one day because we don't want to hurry through it or we want to make sure that you get it, that you actually work through it. That's on May 5, 6, and 7. You can find out more at www.psychotactics.com/dc.

Finally, if you haven't already left a review on iTunes, please do so today because it's really helpful to us. That's me, Sean D'Souza, saying get attention today and get it with the problem, and bye for now. Arrivederci.

Oh and before I go—Can I ask you a small favour?
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