

MortonGregory's Five-Step Creative Process

1. Don't start writing before you're ready. Identify your target audience as precisely as possible. Who is the INDIVIDUAL to whom you're writing? Make him/her real in your own mind. Understand the product. Talk to the editor/product manager about it; as the product 'parent' they should know it better than anyone. Explore the connections between the target and your product; you need to understand that relationship as fully as you can. Then try writing out lists of features and perhaps some headlines and subheads.
2. Get the first draft out on paper as quickly as possible. Don't think too much about it, just write it. The important thing is to get it finished - not get it 100% right first time. Call it your 'shitty first draft', if it helps. Every good writer will tell you that there's only one known cure for Writer's Block. Writing. Just face down your anxieties and commit your first draft to paper. You'll probably be surprised, in two days time, how much better it is than you thought at the time of writing.
3. Allow yourself enough time to be able to put your first draft on one side for a couple of days to 'percolate' (Like good coffee!). Enough time even to make further amendments then put your draft on one side again, or pass it to others for input.
4. After 24-36 hours, read your copy out aloud to yourself and/or someone else. Your letter is your silent salesman, so make sure it reads conversationally, is sufficiently direct and personal, has the right amount of rhythm, etc.
5. Always solicit 3rd party opinion on your copy. First DM colleagues, then the editorial people. (Deepens your relationship with the Editorial Dept; and you should get some sound feedback on your grasp of the issues.) You might even want to ask your partner to read it. If they get the drift, you're on your way!

NB: If you find yourself stuck for words because you can't think of enough features, or you can't identify the benefits, you may have a poor product - but it's more likely you've spent too little time on #1!

MortonGregory specialises in the following three aspects of sales & marketing: direct response copywriting, direct marketing and subscriptions marketing. They can be reached by email at chris@mortongregory.com, by phone on +44 (0)20 7976 285 497 or via fax on +44 (0)20 8348 8821