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How to Write Copy That Sells with Ray Edwards

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Pat Flynn: Sometimes when you're recording a podcast episode you just know that the guest you have on, and the subject matter is one that you're going to want to give a warning to the audience to in terms of, well, you're going to want to make sure you have a pen and paper, or your notepad, or something out. 'Cause, you're going to want to take notes. This is one of those episodes. We're talking today with Ray Edwards from RayEdwards.com. A fan favorite from episode 300, where I brought a bunch of people on. People from my mastermind group, The Green Room, as it's also known. But, Ray Edwards stood out because he can help you write copy that sells.

What is copy, if you've never heard that before? That's the words you write that help people take action. This is if you're selling an idea, this is if you're selling a product, if you're selling a call to action. It doesn't really matter. This episode is going to help you. Stick around, cue the music.

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And, now your host. His family has a goal to visit every Disney park in the world, Pat Flynn.

Pat Flynn: Oh man, I'm juiced up. I hope you are excited too. If you don't know who I am, my name is Pat Flynn. I'm here to help you make more money, save more time, and help more people too. Sometimes we do that with just me talking about my experiences, and things I do to make things work online. And, other times we bring guests on the show. Like today's guest, Ray Edwards from RayEdwards.com. I've already introduced him, so let's just dive right in. Here he is, get ready.

Ray, welcome back to the Smart Passive Income Podcast. How are you doing?

Ray Edwards: Thank you. You must really like me to have me back.

Pat Flynn: And we're going to have you back again I'm sure, because your episode on copywriting back in October of 2015, which was, my

gosh, nearly three years ago. It was a crowd favorite because it gave some very specific strategies and frameworks for creating copy that converts. We're going to talk a little bit more about copy today, but I would just love to get a quick couple minutes on what's going on in your life. How are things going?

Ray Edwards: Things are going great. How else do people answer that question? Does anybody ever say, "Everything sucks right now?"

Pat Flynn: You do, you hear that and then you're like, "I'm sorry. I don't know what to say next either."

Ray Edwards: "I don't want to talk to you now."

Pat Flynn: I'm glad things are great. What's been so great about what's happening lately? What's new in Ray Edwards land?

Ray Edwards: Well, one thing is that I finally realized the power of having a team. A real team of employees. We've hired what feels like a lot of people. On one hand it feels like a lot of responsibility. I bet you feel some of this, you have team members that you think about the fact that, "Well I'm providing their income."

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Ray Edwards: I mean, they are, they're working for it. But, ultimately as the entrepreneur I think all of us think from time to time about the people who depend on us. The other side of that coin is, the enormous amount of freedom to explore new ideas, to do things that I couldn't otherwise do because my time is not occupied doing stuff I shouldn't be doing. It's not really in my zone of genius.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: I'm not saying I'm a genius, I'm saying we all have a zone of genius. It comes from the book, *The Big Leap*, by Gay Hendricks. It's just your special ability, your, "Unique ability," as Dan Sullivan would call it. I'm able to stay in that area. I'm kind of surprised and delighted

Pat, at the people who've come onboard who are first fans of the work that we're doing, and they want to be part of that. It feels like we're all part of a cause, that we're all on a mission. It feels less like I'm hiring people and they're working quote, "For me." It's more like we're on a mission together to accomplish something. That's the greatest things that's happening right now. I mean, we're making good money, good revenue. We've got some interesting clients that we're working with. That's all fun, and it's wonderful. I don't mean to downplay it. But, this feeling of being on a team is out of this world.

Pat Flynn: That's great. What is the mission that you're all kind of working toward?

Ray Edwards: To end poverty.

Pat Flynn: That's a huge mission.

Ray Edwards: I mean, I don't feel like we're going to do it by ourselves. But, I really got clear on this as I began thinking about, you mentioned the book ... I think you mentioned the book that I'm writing, or have written. It's going to be published after the first of the year. It's called, *Permission to Prosper*.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: It's about just that. It's about having permission to be prosperous, and to understand the ramifications that, that when you prosper, other people prosper. Your prosperity blesses everyone, if you think about it the right way. It doesn't mean you have to give your money away either. I mean, I know that you're a benefactor to charities, and I think that's fantastic. We should all do that as we feel moved to do it. But, I would like people to understand that just doing business with integrity is in and of itself, serving humanity and helping to end poverty. The answer to poverty I think is not more government programs, it's empowering people to create value, and receive value in exchange. Which, we often call money.

Pat Flynn: Amen to that. Now, you had mentioned an interesting word

there related to prosperity. That's permission. Why do we need permission to do this? Don't we have the ability to do it right now anyway?

Ray Edwards: Well we do, but most of us in Western society at the very least, have been trained under the "Judeo-Christian ethic," quote/unquote. And, really under the puritan ethic. That's what this country was founded on. That ethic kind of carried with it some baggage that taught us on the one hand, we should work hard, and be industrious, and be productive. But on the other hand, it also taught us that money is the root of all evil. That's not even the actual quote. The actual quote is, "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." Meaning, it's at the root of all sorts of different bad things. But, it's not the root of all evil.

We have these conflicting inner beliefs that rich people don't get to heaven, and rich people only get rich by taking advantage of the poor, and the one percent, because they took stuff away from the 99%. None of those things are true. But, if you're an entrepreneur think about how difficult it is for you to have those conflicting beliefs. It's like you're driving with one foot on the gas, and one foot on the brakes, and that is not good for the car.

Pat Flynn: No. That's a great analogy. I cannot wait to bring you back on the show to talk about that book. We're going to help you put it out there, because it's very important. You and I, as many people know, are in a mastermind group. Speaking of, I remember the last time you were on the show. Well actually, it wasn't episode 182, it was episode 300 when The Green Room was here on the show.

Ray Edwards: Yes.

Pat Flynn: You were just in a brief moment in that. We talked a little bit about your coffee shop, and some of the other things you were up to. That's why it feels like it wasn't that long ago, because it actually wasn't that long ago.

Ray Edwards: That's correct.

Pat Flynn:

But, you are the featured guest here today. I cannot wait to talk to you more in the future about that book, and help you push it out there. But, for today let's talk about sales copy again. Specifically, copy for sales pages, and kind of what happens when a person lands on that page. We talked, again, a little bit about this in the previous conversation we had in episode 182, talking about your PASTOR model. I think, actually let's start with that. Your framework, just a quick overview of that.

That's actually been really helpful for me in the past couple years because, I finally now have my own products to sell. But, the interesting thing I've learned after now having my own products, and understanding the PASTOR model, and what kind of goes in the selling process. I've taken some of what I've learned about selling my own products, back into the affiliate marketing world, and selling other people's products. From understanding more about the problems that people are having, which is where the P comes from. And the A, which is my favorite, which is to Amplify that problem. Like, what happens if you don't take care of this right now? I used that now in affiliate marketing, it's so powerful.

Can we do a quick overview of the PASTOR model, that acronym? Then we'll kind of dive a little bit deeper into sales page specifically, everything from how long does it need to be, and all those technical things. Versus, how do we best get people to click on that buy button. We'll start with the PASTOR model.

Ray Edwards:

Okay, so PASTOR is an acronym. It's P-A-S-T-O-R. I chose the word purposely. Not to make you feel like you need to be a preacher, but the original connotation of the word was to shepherd. The shepherd's job is to care for the flock, and protect them, and feed them, and make sure they're safe from predators. My feeling is, I wanted to set the stage for us feeling that way about our customers. That, we are shepherding them to a good decision that's in their best interest. Not, that we're trying to twist their arm, or manipulate them, or mind voodoo them into buying something they don't need.

With that heart space that we're coming from, then we go through

the letters of the word PASTOR for our framework for copy. It starts with the Person, the Problem, and the Pain. The person obviously is all about knowing your customer really well inside out. That takes work, it takes actually getting to know them. People ask me, “Well how do I get to know my customer?” Well, how do you get to know anybody? You spend time with them, you talk to them, you listen to them more important. Then the problem that you’re helping solve. You need to understand the nature of that, and it needs to be the problem as they perceive it, and the pain as they perceive it.

One of the examples I like to give is, if you’re selling a weight loss solution, you may think the problem is they’re overweight, so they’re unhealthy, and they’re at risk for cardiovascular disease, and diabetes, and a host of other problems. But, that’s not what they’re feeling. What they’re feeling is, they are unhappy with the way they look. They look in the mirror, they think to themselves, “I’m fat. I look disgusting. I don’t want to go out in public. I don’t want to date. I don’t want to go to the swimming pool. I don’t want to take off my shirt. I really feel bad about the way I look. I’m ashamed.” That’s at the core of what they’re feeling.

So, understanding the pain as they’re experiencing it is something people miss a lot.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: Then Amplifying that pain, as you just mentioned. Amplifying the consequences of not solving the problem. What’s going to happen if you don’t take care of this? Well, let me tell you. This is what the future is going to look like. I’ve seen it a thousand times. You’ve seen it yourself. Ask yourself, “Isn’t this true? This is what’s going to happen.” You walk them through that. When you can get them to the place where they really see their future, having not solved the problem, most people are ready to buy at that point. We continue on and tell them the story of how we arrived at the solution. Often, there’s a story of struggle, and finding the solution, then systemizing the knowledge. I mean, your story, your journey is a classic example that you had a problem. You were out of work, you looked for a

solution, you decided to create this passive income model of doing business, you created these niche sites. You solved that problem, and you've created systems that other people could follow. That's the classic storyline. It's really the heroes journey.

All stories are the heroes journey. Then, T is for Testimony and Transformation. These are people talking about how they've used your product, how they've used your affiliate training, or whatever you happen to be offering. Or, how they've used the affiliate products that you talked them into buying, and how they've benefited from it. They're giving their testimonial saying, "That was a great idea. I mean, Pat recommending to me to get BlueHost as my hosting company, has been the best decision I've ever made. I had problems, BlueHost came in and helped me." Those are testimonials.

Then, there's the Offer, which is people think it's about, "Well, this is the thing you get. It's a box of stuff, it costs \$100." That's not the offer. That's a description of the cost of the offer. The offer is really about the transformation. Like, the peace of mind you're going to get from having a good solid hosting company. Or, the peace of mind you're going to get from having passive income rolling in, and you don't have to worry about starting the money at zero every month. You've got income starting before the month even begins that you can count on.

Then the R is they're Requesting your response. That's the buy button. It's asking people to buy saying, "This is what you do now to get the thing I just told you about." That's PASTOR.

Pat Flynn:

I love that. I wasn't sure if there was an S at the end for the longest time, until I picked up your book again, Copy That Sells. Which, is also a great book. We'll have all these resources in the resource section obviously, in the show notes. But I thought maybe there was an S in there for something like Scarcity. I'd love for you to talk about this a little bit before we get into more of the weeds of the sales page. The purpose of it, I had a lot of sort of demons in my head related to injecting scarcity into offers, especially with

something like a digital product. Which, “Well yeah, you say there’s only 100 spots.” But, for real, it’s like a digital product. You can sell as many as you want.

Ray Edwards: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: I was like, that kind of thinking, especially for my audience here listening. A lot of them have online courses, eBooks. Scarcity isn’t something that comes easy unless you literally say, “I’m just, I don’t have enough of them to give away.” Which, is not really possible for digital products. Is scarcity important? If so, how do we inject it into this whole process?

Ray Edwards: Well, I think urgency is important. That may or may not involve scarcity.

Pat Flynn: Ah, okay. I like that.

Ray Edwards: How do we make it urgent? Well, if it’s a digital product it makes no sense to say, “We only have 100 of these, so you better buy now.” Everybody knows that’s bologna. Even if everybody didn’t know it, you would know it, and that would be enough to stop you. But, what can be true is, you may have limited enrollment windows. If you’re doing a live sort of, semi live coaching program where you have prerecorded trainings, and then each week you do coaching calls where you’re live interacting with people. You can legitimately say, if this is how you do it. “For 10 weeks we’re going to have these coaching calls that go along with the program. So, we open it up like a university college course, and we close registration before class begins so we can concentrate on the students that we have just brought into the program.”

That introduces urgency. Like, “I have to enroll by Friday or they’re going to close the doors. I won’t be able to enroll again for a year, or six months,” or whatever the time period is.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: That's not false scarcity, which I hate false scarcity. I really think people should understand that most people are not going to fall for that anymore. It's just a, just don't do it. There's one form of urgency and scarcity that people don't talk about enough. I think that's the underlining and illustrating the cost of not buying what you're offering. That may sound like amplifying the problem, but there's an element of urgency in that every day you wait, is a day you live without the solution. If your solution helps business owners make extra revenue for their business for instance, and you can get them to figure out what that number is. I may say, "Well gosh Pat, if I used your method to run my online store, I'd probably make an extra \$10,000 a month that I'm not making right now."

Well, it's easy for you to then say, "So, multiply that \$10,000 times 12. That gives you \$120,000. That's what it's costing you to not solve this problem with this solution that I have. The question isn't really whether you want to buy this. The question is, how many years do you want to keep paying \$120,000 for having this problem?" That introduces urgency because every day I delay is money lost.

Pat Flynn: Wow. I like that a lot. Thank you Ray. What about cost or price fluctuation urgency? "Price will go up soon." Or, "This coupon is only available for this amount of time." I kind of hover back and forth between, "Yeah, you know. Increasing and decreasing the price is a great strategy in some cases." Other times I'm like, "No, I don't want to train my audience that discounts are normal. I don't want to be a JC Penney." How do you balance that?

Ray Edwards: Yeah. I think a lot of it depends on how you feel about it personally.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: But, I do some of that. We don't do discounts, but we do the price is increasing at a certain date. But, there's one thing I always do. I feel like that's usually so arbitrary. That, my response as a consumer is, "Why? Why is it Friday at midnight that it changes?" I just tell them the truth. I say, "Look, you may be asking yourself, 'why Friday at midnight? That seems arbitrary.' Well, it is. Except, my job is to

motivate you to do what's in your best interest. I believe getting this product is in your best interest. I know if I put a deadline on it, you'll take it more seriously. That's why we've engineered it so that the price goes up at midnight on Friday. I'm trying to motivate you to make a decision."

Nobody feels icky about that, because you've been totally above board with why you're doing this.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. I mean you're literally telling them the strategy.

Ray Edwards: Yeah, yeah.

Pat Flynn: So, PASTORU. You've included Urgency there. Not quite as nice as PASTORS. But, I'll take it. I like urgency versus scarcity. I think that's a good overview. Now, does that give us the framework for a sales page? Do we literally go three P's, A-S-T-O-R, and perhaps U kind of is involved in there somewhere as well? Or, is a sales page specifically the page on a website that sells our product. Is that structured differently than this?

Ray Edwards: I start with the framework, the PASTOR framework.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: I mean, I literally open a document and type the words, P-A-S-T-O-R down the side of the document, and start building my paragraphs. To me it's the overarching framework of any persuasive message. And, there are other elements that are not mentioned in the PASTOR framework that needed to be included. Like, authority, or credibility pieces. But, you could say that falls under testimonial, so it's a kind of proof.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: There are bullet points. We don't talk about bullet points in the PASTOR framework. But, bullet points are very important. What's interesting to me is, I, in my course. I have a, I think its' 15 elements

of a winning sales letter. It's also in my book. If you don't want to get my course, you can get my book for like seven bucks on Amazon.

I've seen a lot of changes in this area right now, Pat. I used to tell people, "Long copy always wins." In fact, I think I've told you that.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: It doesn't always win anymore. It often wins. It's often what's required. But, today's audiences are more sophisticated than ever before, and it's more important than ever before that we learn to speak to them in their language. I think your audience for instance, has a much different lingo and vibe than some other online business expert's audiences might have. Your approach might not work so well with them. But, for your audience, if you tried to do the things that they do, these other people who sell how to be in business online stuff, it would fall flat.

The sensitivity to how to deliver the sales page message is very important. That often means, like I think you have a certain style on your website. It is, I would describe it as hip, cool, lots of white space, punchy, to the point, direct without being harsh. So, your sales pages need to be the same way, and they are from what I've seen. They're very much that way. They include all the pieces of the PASTOR framework, and they include all the components. There's two things happening here. There's the overarching framework of the copy, PASTOR. Then there's the components of how you construct the whole thing.

That gets into headlines, and sub headlines, and bullet points, and call out boxes, and some of that is more design.

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Ray Edwards: But, it's part of the overall thing that happens to people when they come to make the sales decision.

Pat Flynn: When it comes to the headline, which is I would assume the first

thing people see and read when they're on a page. This is at the top, the bold words. What are some of the biggest mistakes that we're all making that we should avoid? In other words, what should we be doing with the headline? There's so many ... When you've got the framework but then you've got to start actually putting pen to paper, or start typing. I mean, sometimes that headline is just, that's what stops people.

Ray Edwards: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: That, like, the typical advice would be, "Okay, worry about the headline later. Get all the other things filled out." I mean, it just often stops people in their tracks. What could we do to approach the headline in a more fascinating, and more interesting way that we could actually get it done without stopping?

Ray Edwards: I often give the advice that you should write the headline last, after you write a whole bunch of bullet points. But, I usually also tell the whole story. The whole story is, the best headlines I've written are ones where I wrote the headline before I wrote anything else. It usually comes out of, I'm doing research, I'm reading other people's copy about similar products, I'm reading my own copy that I've written so far about my product, I'm reading about my market. I'm looking at books that relate to the subject matter. And, when you throw all of that thought, those ideas into your subconscious, it begins to mix those things up. I think there comes a convergence point where you start having some original ideas.

For a recent workshop we did, I asked myself, "What is the truest thing about my business right now that people are fascinated with, that they'd like to learn in a workshop?" The truest thing is, how did you get to a million dollars in revenue as a writer, and you're not a best seller? You're not Stephen King, or something like that. As I was thinking about this, I was journaling about it one day and I wrote down, "Courage." I realized, "Well it takes courage to get there because there's all kinds of psychological baggage." I don't need to unpack all that for you right now. But, that was the overwhelming feeling I had. My headline for that copy was, "Do You

Have the Courage to Become a Million Dollar Writer?”

That resonated with me, and so I sat down and banged out the rest of that copy in an afternoon. It's been some of the most successful copy I've written. We've sold that workshop out twice now, at \$10,000 a ticket. 12 attendees at each event, and it sells out fast. It's not available now, so I'm not trying to pitch that. But, I'm trying to say, the inspiration factor when you get a headline that makes your bell ring you think, "That's it." My encouragement to you is run with that, and pour out your copy while you're in that state. 'Cause when you're in that excited state, and that seems like a brilliant idea to you, that has a half life. It only lasts so long.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: If you wait, it'll go away. Your brain will start killing the idea.

Pat Flynn: Your headline there was a question. Is a question a great way to ...

Ray Edwards: It's a terrible idea. I tell people not to do that. Because, it's like when they train you to be an attorney, they teach you, "Don't ever ask a question in court that you're not certain you know what the answer's going to be. And for heavens sakes, never ask a yes or no question." Well, my question violates both those things. So, what do you do with that?

Writing copy is part science, and a large part art. I used to hesitate to say that, because it makes it sound elitist. But it's not, I think everybody has the creative side within them. But, one thing that ... The biggest distinction I made in the last year is that 80% of the sales copy process is about connection. Emotional connection with your audience, 80%. I'd say 15% is about facts and information. And, so that leaves by my math, five percent. I'd say three percent of that is the offer, and two percent is whatever urgency you have about the offer.

If you look at that scale, I mean 80% connection. That's knowing your market, knowing their needs, knowing their pain, knowing

their desires, what keeps them awake at night, knowing how to talk about it, being able to describe it better than they can describe it themselves. When you can do that, as Jay Abraham said, “They feel like you already have the answer.” You must, you know the problem so well.

Pat Flynn: Those who are struggling with how to connect emotionally with their customers, or their prospects. If you were working with somebody, let’s say somebody hires you, Ray, for copywriting. What are some questions that you might ask them to help them tell that story?

Ray Edwards: Well, if I was working with somebody who was having trouble connecting emotionally with their customers, I would sit down in their office and I would say, “Okay. Do you have some phone numbers of some customers? Let’s call them.” I would want to talk to the customers, and record those conversations. And, try to get customers who are happy, and also customers who are not happy with what they’ve bought from you in the past, or with their status as it relates to the problem that they experienced, which caused them to buy it to begin with. And, let them do most of the talking.

A better way to do this is to throw some kind of open house, and just have people listening carefully for phrases that come out of the lips of your customers, and paying attention. There’s nothing that will connect you to customers like being with them in person.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: No survey, no demographic data, no psychographic data. None of that will work as well as being with them in person. The next piece of advice I would give to that person is, if you feel like you know quite a bit about your customer, I would encourage you to do something called the, “Instant empathy exercise.” That doesn’t sound like hype at all, does it?

Sit down, close your eyes. Imagine yourself living through the customers day. Your perfect customer. If you have an ideal perfect

customer, or avatar as some people call it. Imagine you're them, and you wake up in the morning. I mean, go into this in vivid detail. Imagine what kind of smells you smell, what kinds of sounds you hear, who's in the bed with you. Is the dog in the bed, is the dog on the floor, do you have a dog, do you hate dogs? Is the bedroom messy or neat? Is it beautiful or shabby? What's the first thing you do when you get up? Well, after you do that. Then do you brush your teeth? What do you have for breakfast? What kind of card do you get in? Is the house noisy when you leave? Is it chaotic, is it peaceful and tranquil? What route do you take to work? Do you hate your boss when you get there? Are you the boss when you get there? Do you still hate the boss when you get there?

Go, and try to come up with every smell, sight, sound, sensation, emotion. Just, build this huge imaginary day all the way until they get home and go to bed. If you've done the exercise, and you've done it well. You've done it with your eyes closed, you've imagined it vividly, you've gone overboard, you've exaggerated. Maybe it's silly in places sometimes, and you open your eyes and you immediately start writing your copy.

I don't know why this works, but it's like you became a tuning fork that's tuned to your customer. Things will come out of you, I don't mean to sound too spooky. But, things will come out of you that you didn't know you had inside of you. Those are the things that'll connect with your customer like nothing else. They'll have the reaction, "It's like he's been reading my mind." Or, "That's exactly how I feel, but nobody's been able to put it into words before." That's what doing that exercise will do for you.

Pat Flynn: The instant empathy exercise. I like that.

Ray Edwards: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: That'll be a fun challenge for all of us to do.

Ray Edwards: I need to give credit where credit is due. I got that technique from Brian Keith Voiles, who is one of the best copywriters I've ever

known. He partnered with an investing firm to write all their copy, and he stopped being a copywriter, and he lives in a mansion in Salt Lake City or something like that now.

Pat Flynn: Hmm, I see.

Ray Edwards: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: Well thank you for that, thank you Brian. To continue this, I'd love to talk about ... First of all, I do want to get into at some point in the conversation, but perhaps before we finish up. For those who are interested in hiring a copywriter, how might we find one that makes sense for the kind of page that we're trying to build? I'm at a point now where I could probably hire out some copywriting for the work that we do. There's a lot of options, there's a lot of people. How do we know who's best? We'll get into that in just a moment.

But, let's continue on down the sales page. We got the headline, and a lot of the other components. From there, how do we start our paragraph writing? Where do we go from there? Do we go from there to the problem? I know some pages I go to, and then they start telling their story, but the story doesn't happen till later. It's just again, one of those things that you could start anywhere. But, what does Ray Edwards recommend?

Ray Edwards: Well, I recommend you start as always, with the customer, and with their problem that they're experiencing right now. One of the techniques that I love to use is something that Gary Halbert, I think pioneered as far as I know. The late, great copywriter Gary Halbert. I call it the, "If, then, lead." It starts like this. "If you have been struggling to lose weight. If you have tried every pill, potion, and lotion, and exercise machine on the market. If you are tired of yo-yo diets, and gaining all the weight back. If you're tired of feeling ashamed, if you're tired of trying one supposed miracle answer after another and you wish somebody would just tell you how to get healthy and thin. Then, this page is for you. Here's the story." So it's, "If, then, this is for you, here's the story."

Pat Flynn: I like that. You basically just cover all of the points that you've heard in your research at that point, right?

Ray Edwards: Yes.

Pat Flynn: That's very powerful. Because, then you're just regurgitating what you know they're going through. When they assume that you know what's going on, they know that you likely have a potential solution, right?

Ray Edwards: Exactly. With the more detail you can subscribe their problem, and the more accurately, and the more of their language you can use, the more affinity and belief they have in your solution. I have, in our course, maybe this will help. I kind of have a structure that I walk people through called, "The 12 steps on the path to purchase." It's the buyers journey. It's really based on the heroes journey, Joseph Campbell's work, "The heroes of 1,000 faces."

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: Most of us have heard that ad nauseum. But, I have mapped it over the sales letter. It starts with the first step is the ordinary world, that's what we were just talking about, the problem. Your buyer lives in an ordinary world, and within that world something is not perfect. There's a problem. That's why they were looking for your page, and they found it. Then the second step is to paint the dream situation of paradise. You describe to them what life would look like if they could solve this problem. "If you could just solve your weight problem, you would not be ashamed to take off your shirt at the swimming pool. If you could solve your income problem, you wouldn't be so frightened when you go to a restaurant that your card's going to be declined, 'cause you don't have enough money in your account to pay for it."

And so, then step three is the guide appears. That is us. We're the guide. Nancy Duarte, and Don Miller are two great thinkers in this field who both, they use the same analogy. They say that, "If you're looking at the Star Wars movies, you're not Luke Skywalker. You're

Yoda.” Which, most people don’t think of as the role they’d like to be in, but that’s the role we play. Then, you get into telling your story. We’re a good third of the way through the copy now, before you start telling your story of how you found the solution. Whether, you found it yourself, or you found it through an affiliate product, or whatever the method is, the mechanism that you found that solves the problem.

And, you go into ideally, you’re able to tell a story that includes what we call in the world of fiction writing, “Try, fail cycles.” Because, nobody’s impressed by Superman. He’s invulnerable, he can fly, bullets bounce off of him. Of course he’s going to win, big deal. That’s why he had to have kryptonite, ‘cause he had to have a weakness. He had to try things and fail, and it had to look like he might ultimately fail.

But then, we want victory. I mean, we definitely want somebody who solved the problem. Nobody wants a fitness trainer who’s 60 pounds overweight. Ultimately, your struggle has led to a place of victory, you describe that. Then you give the transformational vision, that’s step six. I actually have a chart that shows all this. I’d be happy to share it with you if you’d like.

Pat Flynn: That would be great. We’ll post it in the show notes.

Ray Edwards: And so, the transformational vision is letting them see what the solution looks like. This is the magic of the P90X commercials, because they spend 70 to 80% of their time showing the transformation that people undergo, and they show different people, different body types, so what we’re all looking for is somebody who looks like us.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: Somebody who looks like me now, and this is what he looks like 90 days later. That’s what I want. That’s the transformational vision. Then the offer is step seven. This is the components of the sales letter stacked up in order. This is where you describe the

components of this stuff that you're giving them. Yes, the units in this course, the modules in the course, the worksheets. But, you're describing it in terms of what transformation each one of those things will bring you. Then step eight is proof, where you offer testimonials, and third party endorsements, and proof that your stuff works.

Then there's something we haven't talked about at all, which is value justification, step nine. This is where you prove that your solution is worth more than you're asking for it. My rule of thumb is, I like to find a way credibly, without being overly salesy, is showing how your solution is five to 10 times more valuable than the investment it takes to get it. It's not too tough to do, because the element you have is once they buy it, they have it, and they have time to realize, to reap the return.

Then, step 10 is risk reversal. This is the guarantee. This is, "I'm taking the risk, you're not." Especially with digital products is I like to tell people ... I'm a big proponent of speaking the obvious truth that nobody wants to talk about.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: I will say to people, "Well you buy my digital course, you could rip me off. You could download all the stuff, and then ask for a refund. Some people do. That's okay, because most people are honest, most people won't do that. And, I believe we give enough value that you won't even be tempted to do that, so I'm not really worried about it. I'm not going to let a few bad apples spoil the whole bunch." Well, that makes a lot of sense to people 'cause they realize it's true. Then, step 11 is, offering tipping point bonuses. This is a gift you give to incentivize the purchase now. I think people over bonus. I really strongly recommend you don't offer 12 different bonuses. Maybe one, no more than three. But, they need to compliment and enhance the value. And ideally, this is the perfect bonus. The perfect bonus is one that people say, "I would pay that whole price just to get that thing."

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: That's how you know you've got a great bonus. If you were doing a course on social media marketing, and you had the world's coolest social media marketing publishing calendar in the form of a spreadsheet, and people looked at that and they were just salivating to get their hands on that. You said, "We'll give you this as a bonus if you buy the course." You'd sell a lot of courses just to get that spreadsheet in the hands of buyers, 'cause they want it that bad.

Then step 12 is the invitation to buy, where you just ask them to buy. Those are the building blocks that the PASTOR framework lies underneath it.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: But, those are the building blocks, the way you stack them up on the page to get people from, "I got a problem" to "I found the solution. I'm going to give you my money, and I know you're going to help me."

Pat Flynn: Wow. Thank you, and we'll definitely have a link to the resource that you just mentioned that highlights all those things. A couple of questions, number one on price justification where you're trying to show that what you are selling is worth five to 10 times more than the price you're asking for. How might you do that? Would it be juxtaposition versus other products that exist in the market? Or, other ways that people can get that same information that's a lot more expensive? Or, the outcome-

Ray Edwards: Yes. It's all those things. It's juxtaposition, it's comparing it to other solutions, it's showing them ... One common and powerful way to do this is to say, "Look, you could learn all this on your own. You could Google it all, and figure it all out like I did. But, it took me 10 years, and I spent \$300,000. I'm just saving you all that time and money. So, why not benefit from my experience instead of trying to go out and have your own?" Then if you've got some unique tool that

really multiplies the effectiveness of your message, or what you're teaching, or the software that you're selling, or whatever the case may be.

Pat Flynn: ... Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: It's really helpful if you have something unique that makes it slightly different from any other product of its kind.

Pat Flynn: Some sort of unique selling proposition in the product itself you're saying?

Ray Edwards: Yes, yes. In your case, when you teach people about affiliate marketing, the unique feature that you have that nobody else has, is Pat Flynn. I mean, how long have you been doing this?

Pat Flynn: Nearly 10 years.

Ray Edwards: How long before you sold a product about doing it?

Pat Flynn: How long have I sold a product ... Eight years.

Ray Edwards: Yeah. Unlike most people who have never done any of this stuff and they start selling stuff on how to make money on the internet. You built a business for 10 years, eight years. Then you began teaching people how you did it. That's unique. Not-

Pat Flynn: What about for people in the audience who are like, "Well, I don't have 10 years of experience but I have this product. I know it's helpful. There are other products like it in the market. I guess I must be screwed."

Ray Edwards: ... But, you're not. When I was first writing copy, and that's how I made all my money was writing copy for clients. I was really successful, and it almost killed me because I was working about 100 hours a week taking on so many clients. I raised my prices, and they just kept coming. I was paying a couple of mentors at the time to advise me, and we got on a group call one day and I told them my problem. I said, "This is killing me, I think I'm going to go get a job.

This is not fun.” They said, “Well you need to start teaching people how to do what you’re doing, instead of doing it.” My response was, “Well there’s already a dozen courses out there that teach people how to write copy.” I named them. I said, “So,” basically what you just said. “I’m screwed. Nobody wants to hear from me.”

One of my mentors, a guy named Alex Mandossian said, “Ray. Why do you think there are new diet books that come out every week? Do people not understand how to lose weight? Or, are they looking for a unique voice, a unique angle? Why do new rock bands make music every year? Isn’t there enough music in the world? Do we really need another rock album? Or, is it because people are looking for a fresh new sound?” He said, these are the magic words. He said, “Ray, there are people for whom your voice is the only voice they will ever hear about this. If you stay silent, you have robbed them.”

Pat Flynn: So powerful.

Ray Edwards: Yeah. It’s true.

Pat Flynn: It’s just tough when you’re in the weeds, and you’re working on this, and you see all these things. I mean, the initial reaction is to pull back, and to assume that you’re going to fail. That’s a whole other conversation really, to the mindset that has to be there before you even can put your sales page up, and have the confidence to sell. That’s partly why I love to promote, like what I talk about in *Will It Fly*, the validation processes and all those things to kind of get the confidence, to get the testimonials and all the things that you might need for a public facing sales page down the road, which is great.

Another question I had, and then I want to shift to when we hire a copywriter. The last question I have is, if step 12 is the offer and the request to buy essentially, the buy button on the sales page. Is that the only place the buy button should be? This is more of a technical question. I’ve seen pages where the button is after every section, all 12 of those sections. Sometimes it’s a third of the page, two thirds of the page, and then at the very bottom. Another one has one where

it's stickied the entire time you're scrolling down. Is there a best practice there, or does that not really matter if you have great copy?

Ray Edwards: Well, I think it varies from product to product, and market to market. The ultimate marketers cop out is, you should test that. But, I think in general, until you've made the case for your product and its value, I think it's too early to introduce the buy button. Now, if you've been going through an educational marketing approach, education based marketing, which is a lot of what you do. You teach a lot, so there's a lot of trust built up. So, by the time you get ready to offer a product, you unlike other people that we know and respect who are doing a great job. You have a different relationship with your audience. They're ready to buy the moment you say, "I have a product coming out."

I mean, you probably have people who have told you, "I'll just give you my credit card number. Whenever you make something, send it to me." If you're in that kind of position, I think that you can afford to put the buy button at the top of the page. But, for most people, I think the answer is wait until you've made your case. There are certain things that your reader, or your viewer needs to understand and agree with before you can lead them to the conclusion and say, "Therefore, you should buy this product." If you introduce a buy button before you've led them through that logic chain, I think that's generally a mistake.

Now, after you've done that, that could be around step seven or eight. Then I think it's fair to put the, and wise to put the button after every one of those sections.

Pat Flynn: That makes sense. It might be the testimonials that help them go over the fence, or it might be the things that are in the course itself that might do it, or it might be because it's the last button.

Ray Edwards: Yes.

Pat Flynn: Wonderful. To finish off here let's talk about, so Ray I'm looking to hire a copywriter. I'm speaking for my audience, and also myself

perhaps. But, I'm looking to hire a copywriter. What kind of person should I look for? How do I even begin to find a person who can do the copy for me when it is such a personal, one to one experience for myself to write for my audience, but now I'm hiring somebody else to do that who doesn't even know me or my brand yet. How do I even begin?

Ray Edwards: Yeah. This is a really tough question, and it's one that I used to wince every time I heard it, because I didn't have a good answer. I would tell people, and these are all true. Word of mouth, ask your friends, look to your audience, see if there's a good copywriter in your audience who already gets you, who loves your stuff.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: That's probably the best resource you have. But, that involves having enough courage to write to your audience and say, "I'm looking for a copywriter who really loves what we do. If you're that person," and you give them some instructions to follow, and you walk them through whatever your hiring process is. Hopefully you have an intentional, well thought out process that weeds out the non starter candidates. Beyond that, you need to look for someone who has worked for other people, has proven that they deliver what they promise, that they deliver it on time, that they deliver it with a certain level of quality, that they're willing to work with you after they deliver to make sure that it continues to work for you, or that if it doesn't work the first time out, they'll continue working with you until it does.

You need to work with someone who does know something about you. I mean, if you have a conversation with somebody and they don't know the first thing about you, then I think that person is probably off your list in those cases.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: I say it used to make me wince because I never had a good answer, until we're just getting ready to launch an endorsed service provider

page on my website. These are copywriting apprentices that I have trained, that I have paid to write copy for me, that I've approved their copy and said to other people, "You should hire this lady." Or, "You should hire this guy, because they're good. They've worked for me." I decided to formalize that, and we started endorsing people, and we're going to be posting this page. I don't get any money for this, when you hire one of these people. I don't get a cut, I don't get a percentage. I'm just connecting people who need one another, who are in my sphere of influence. People who need copywriters, and copywriters who need work.

These people have all agreed to adhere to our code of ethics, which we post on the website. Among the things in that code of conduct are things like, "I will deliver what I promise. I'll deliver it on time. I'll deliver it to your satisfaction. I'll do the research necessary."

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: There's a whole list of conduct related rules that we all agree to and adhere to. The one part that I do play in this, is I stand behind the recommendation. If something happen and it goes awry, then I do step in and try to intervene, and make sure that everything gets made right. We are only just starting this, so frankly I don't know how that's going to work exactly. I wanted to have an answer to this question for people, so that's going to be my answer. That page should be going live by the second week in June.

Pat Flynn: Well that will be already live at the point in which this episode comes out, so that's a huge resource Ray. I didn't even know you were doing that to be honest, and that's great. I mean, it's very smart, and I think going to be very valuable. Where might we find that page?

Ray Edwards: If you go to RayEdwards.com, it'll just be in the navigation bar. It'll say, "ESP's." Because, Endorsed Service Providers, too big of a word to put in the navigation bar.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Edwards: So we're calling them ESP's.

Pat Flynn: Nice, Ray. Thank you so much for all of this. Super helpful for myself, and I know everybody else listening too. RayEdwards.com is where everybody should go right now. Check out that resource if you need some copywriters, and also obviously check out Ray's books as well. The upcoming book, name and subtitle of the book, and perhaps maybe a ... I don't know if you want to share likely when it might come out?

Ray Edwards: The name is, *Permission to Prosper*. The subtitle is, "How to serve God, love people, and become rich beyond your wildest dreams." The publication date is March of 2019.

Pat Flynn: Sweet, man. Congrats, looking forward to it. We'll definitely push it out, and help people find it when it does. But Ray, thank you so much for your time, appreciate you as always. We look forward to chatting with you next time.

Ray Edwards: Thanks Pat.

Pat Flynn: Woo, that was awesome. Wow, Ray, thank you so much for coming on and sharing all of your wisdom, as always. You can find him at RayEdwards.com, and also check out his new book coming out soon, *Permission to Prosper*. We'll have all the links that you need in the show notes for that and more. If you go to SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session327.

Now, before you go, something really important. Because, it's one thing to make sales and have customers. But, if you have anything that requires a recurring payment, a subscription model of any kind, then you're going to want to pay attention to this because what's very common is, well there's drop off. You know, there's churn, and retention. But, failed payments. I have recently experienced my own set of pains related to failed payments now that I offer monthly payment plans for my online courses. I didn't even realize how much money I was losing until I got on board with a company called AllGravy.io.

You might remember that if you remember a podcast episode I did a while back, with a man named Casey Graham who put this company together to help people recover failed payments. Now, I don't want you to be confused by the automated features that different shopping carts have in them, which basically use auto triggered emails to collect failed payments because of certain things like credit card failures and expiration dates, and things like that. That's pretty standard across the board.

But, AllGravy.io, and Casey's company. They have real life human beings that essentially become a part of your team, that reach out to people to make sure they will pay you. It's not done in a very scary, sort of collection company kind of a way. But, in a very friendly way where they get involved with your brand. This is what they've done for me. They've recovered tens of thousands of dollars for me over the past year, from failed payments that I didn't even know were happening. This service literally pays for itself, and I highly recommend you check it out.

If you go to AllGravy.io/Pat, once again this is AllGravy.io/Pat, give them a call, schedule a call, and just talk to Casey or his team, and they're going to help you out. If you have any sort of recurring, or payment plan model in your business, you gotta check them out because they will save you money. It literally pays for itself. I don't endorse companies like this all the time, but I love this company not just because of what they've done for me, but what they are doing to help others. They actually help employ stay at home moms, and other people who are looking for a side income to do this for us. Really friendly people who become a part of your brand to help serve you, and help serve your audience too so they can make sure they continually get access to whatever great products that you have. Just, it's a win all around.

Check them out, AllGravy.io/Pat. Let them know I sent you, and you heard this on this podcast episode because they're going to hook you up for sure. Check it out, AllGravy.io/Pat. Thank you once again for listening all the way through. I look forward to serving you next week. We got a lot of great content coming your way, so make sure



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you subscribe to the podcast if you haven't already. I appreciate you so much, and I'll see you in the next episode. Bye.

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