
proached as just words on paper. It's important to ask yourself questions: "Who is my audience? What am I trying to get across?" And most important, "How can I personally relate to the message?"

All those questions for one little piece of advertising? You bet. I can assure you that the writer asked himself some of the very same questions when writing the copy.

The Moment Before

There is an acting technique called the moment before. When you get the script, read and understand it thoroughly. Then create a scenario in your mind about what was going on in the life of the person you are portraying the moment before you begin reading. Here's an example. The following is the script. The product names have been changed.

Ann: Did you know that Diet Dipsy Soda has no caffeine? None at all. But a lot of the other diet soft drinks do. Brand X has even more caffeine than Brand Y. And Diet Poopsie has caffeine. And sugar-free Dr. Hester has caffeine. But not Diet Dipsy. So go ahead. Try Diet Dipsy Soda right now. The only thing you give up is calories!

Let's break down the copy and find a moment before. Diet Dipsy Soda has no caffeine. This is big news. But what's more is the fact that many other diet drinks *have* caffeine. I bet I'm the only one who knows this. I've gotta share this with someone. It's too exciting. I'll just call my friend and tell her. "Hi, it's me. Listen, I have some news. *Did you know that Diet Dipsy Soda has no caffeine? But a lot of other. . .*"

Create a situation in your mind that genuinely motivates

you. It works, it really does. Let's try another style of copy and another moment before.

Ann: The first time you wash with Super Beauty Cleanser you'll feel a difference that will amaze you. First, feel it soften as it gently removes make-up and dry dulling skin. Then feel it rinse pure and clean without drying even delicate skin. But most amazing you'll feel smooth, newer skin that looks fresh and more youthful. Super Beauty Cleanser for a fresh new face every time.

This voice-over style is "cosmetic-ish." Words like smooth, soften, gently, pure, and clean add an intimate velvety tone to the voice. It's sometimes called romancing the words. Think sensual, low-keyed — not low energy — and soothing. A bedroom voice! Imagine floating in a mineral bath. If you've never been in one, try to conjure up what that would feel like. No doubt it would feel pretty good.

The moment before: "I know you've never used this before. Well I have and you're in for a treat. You won't believe how wonderful you're going to feel. Close your eyes and think what it feels like to brush a feather over your face. The first time you wash with Beauty Cleanser you'll feel a difference ..."

If you have difficulty relating to the subject matter, remember, your moment before does not have to relate directly to what the copy addresses. However, it should evoke the same emotions. Say perhaps, the copy is about having pimples, feeling embarrassed and uncomfortable, thinking people are staring at you because of your pimples. But, you've never had pimples. You have no idea how it feels to have them. Ask yourself: Have you ever felt embarrassed and uncomfortable about anything? Of course you have. So create the moment

before using your personal embarrassment and then read the copy about pimples. You have just brought your reality to the copy. And because the moment actually happened to you, you were able to read the pimple copy with honest emotions.

Nobody can hear what goes on in your mind. (Thank goodness!) So use whatever you need to call on in order to help you create genuine motivation. There are actors to whom all this comes naturally. Others need to define the moment. It does not matter into which category you fall. If you are true to the emotions of the copy, your delivery will have credibility.
