Roy Furr – Writing Bullets Your Readers Can't Resist

Mikhail: Hi everyone, and welcome to Health Copywriting Profits. Today we're talking to Roy Furr. Roy was working at the customer service call center when he first discovered direct response copywriting way back in 2005. And he hasn't looked back since. Within months he was the top guy in marketing at an IT training publisher, who he helped put on the Inc. magazine list of America's fastest growing businesses. By 2010, he had fully pivoted into his own business, consulting and copywriting for direct marketing entrepreneurs, primarily in the financial and business success industries. He quickly started creating seven figure plus campaigns and breaking sales records, has made millions of dollars for his clients. And his clients list reads like a who's who of these niches. He's well-known in the industry as the copywriter for Brian Kurtz's Titans of Direct Response seminar, a once in a lifetime event, co-produced with Dan Kennedy, that featured many of the world's greatest copywriters and marketers. And since 2014 he's been publishing a daily Breakthrough Marketing Secrets newsletter, and has been training and coaching and mentoring other copywriters and marketers to their own success. So, welcome, Roy.

Roy Furr: Thank you, Mikhail. It's a pleasure to be here. I'm honored that you asked me to come on and talk about slinging bullets, writing bullets in your health...

Mikhail: Yeah. So, you know, we mentioned that Titans of Direct Response seminar that you wrote the sales letter for.

Roy Furr: Yes.

Mikhail: That's kind of how I first learned about you. And you know, that sales that you wrote, the first thing I did was buy the product. And the second thing I did was save that sales letter straight to my swipe file, because it really was one of those letters that you read and it's almost like its own education in itself with the bullets that you use there. So that's why I immediately you know, when I was putting this together, I was like, I have to have you on to do a session on bullet writing.

Roy Furr: Well, that awesome, I appreciate it. And yeah, you know, we'll get into more of my story about bullet writing. But it's a skill that I've definitely considered to be one of the most important copywriting skills since very early on, actually since I was told that. So should we dive into what I-- so I kind of cheated a little bit, right? I cheated. I told you exactly what I wanted to cover. And I sent you that list. Do you mind if I just share with readers a little bit about what they can expect over this next hour or so?

Mikhail: Yeah, sure, let's do that.

Roy Furr: Awesome. Awesome. So if you're watching, if you're listening, I would encourage you to get focused, grab a pen and paper and just take a deep breath, like breathing is so important. And focus in because you're about to get a ton of what one of my coaches calls highly condensed value. I teach highly condensed value.

So part one of what I want to cover today is the single most valuable copywriting skill. That's actually a quote from one of my mentors. Part two, we're going to talk about the rhythm of bullets. There is a rhythm to making bullets work well in copy. Part three, we're going to talk about what they actually

contain, like what ideas are contained in the bullets. Part four, we're going to talk about approaches to writing bullets. So like different ways to come at them to make your bullets feel fresh and like vibrant and dynamic. And then part five, I'm going to share a little secret of mine called the expanded bullet technique, which is critically important not just for writing bullets in copy, but where the same research can be used to go much deeper in writing other types of copy.

So, should we rewind the time machine a little bit to one of my earliest copywriting clients and talk about how I came to discover that bullet writing is really the single most valuable copywriting skill?

Mikhail: Yeah, that's today.

Roy Furr: Awesome. Awesome. So this was actually my second freelance client, I had written a sales letter for a guy named David Bullock, who taught a marketing testing method based on the Taguchi algorithm for designing experiments. And it was really cool and interesting. And David happened to be a teacher for Ken McCarthy who was one of the titans at Titans of Direct Response, and who at the time was teaching the System Seminar, which for a very long time was the biggest online direct response seminar in the world. And most people today, like if you hear about traffic and conversion in response to what works in internet marketing, those people actually learned from Ken McCarthy or learned from one of Ken's students. And when Ken saw my letter for David's program, he immediately said, "Hey, David, who is this," and he came and hired me to write some bullets actually. And it was very transformational in my copywriting life because Ken is a very generous person. He will not take less than your best but he is also incredibly generous. And he asked me for one thing-- like this changed the trajectory of my copywriting life-- Ken asked me, "Have you ever heard of--" Well, first he asked, "Who are your copywriting heroes?" And at the time, like, I was reading, Clayton Makepeace's Total Package; I was reading Gary Halbert's letters; I was reading like all these top copywriters, right. And he said, "But have you ever heard of Gary Bencivenga?" And I said, no. And actually, Ken had just recorded the first ever interview about copywriting with Gary Bencivenga on Gary's approach to writing copy and Gary was widely considered the best copywriter on the planet until he retired. And Ken actually sent me a copy of that, which was awesome.

And Ken told me when-- he told me when I was writing copy, he said, "This really like-- the reason I'm asking you to write bullets is because I've seen that you can write bullets. And I believe that bullets are the single most valuable copywriting skill." And Ken came up in classic the direct mail world and then bringing direct mail online. And one of his big clients was Boardroom Inc., which became Bottom Line. And they were at their peak. I think the biggest publisher of health information on the planet, if not one of a couple, and certainly one of the biggest clients of all the best copywriters. And most of their direct mail was based on bullets or as they called them fascinations. And that term actually came from another one of the greatest copywriters, you've probably never heard of, unless you're a serious student of direct response. And that's Mel Martin.

Now, Mel Martin, Marty Edelston, the founder of Boardroom, actually he got in kind of a bidding war with Rodale, which was another giant help publisher for Mel Martin. And basically Marty Edelston was willing to be more generous and meet more of Mel Martin's terms. And Mel Martin signed a confidentiality agreement that he couldn't tell anybody that he was a copywriter for Boardroom and he just sat there and cranked out copy. And some examples of some really great bullets from Mel Martin or

what he called fascinations were what never to eat on an airplane, which when put on the outside of an envelope was a three-year completely unbeatable control.

And Mikhail, can I ask you? Can ask you? What do you think you should never eat on an airplane? This is kind of valid question.

Mikhail: I don't know, chicken.

Roy Furr: So this is a great example of turning just mundane advice into a powerful, powerful bullet. Never eat food on an airplane, because it actually, like, with the pressure changes if it is causing any gas in your stomach as digestion is going on, it's like 10 times as uncomfortable as if you're just, you know, at ground level. And so what never to eat on an airplane is food. Like just don't eat. And it was just-- like, that was an example of how he turned just, you know, uninspiring information into bullet magic or fascination, magic, fascinating, right.

Another of his very famous bullets is "Bills It's Okay to Pay Late." And that was actually a-- it was a report or a book on accounts payable, like the most boring business subject. It was a business book on accounts payable, but the headline for it, which was a bullet was "Bills It's Okay to Pay Late."

And actually if you study some of Mel Martin's classic Boardroom promotions, like he would-- it was just a wall of bullets. It was a wall of bullets. So that was-- like he would write an eight-page sales letter and probably 80 to 90% of the copy was just bullets. And that is how Boardroom really operated for a very long time. Like they were very successful sending out these bullet packages.

Now, I am going to talk in a minute about how 2020 has kind of become a year. Like, in 2020 where we are now, it's the year where bullets don't get a lot of love as the single most valuable copywriting skill. But before we get there, I do want to say that this is a great, like, writer downer here, there are four C's behind a good bullet. And just using Mel Martin's example of, like, what never to eat on an airplane, a good bullet is, first C, clear. A good bullet is clear. Like there's absolute clarity about the relevance of that bullet. Number two, it is concise, it's going to be tight, like it's not going to use a lot of extra language. It's compelling. Like it pulls you in, there's some way where it ties into your natural desires, your natural wants that just pulls you in, like, "Oh, I'm interested." And it's curiosity-provoking. A good bullet-- typically we'll talk about exceptions here a little bit later, but a good bullet almost never gives away all the information. A good bullet almost always, like, sets the hook of curiosity without telling you what it is. So it is very boring for me to say don't eat food on an airplane. Right? Very boring. That's a terrible bullet because there's no curiosity in that. But what never to eat on an airplane has just this unquenchable thirst of curiosity to it. And if you can do that with your bullets, people are going to be pulled in.

Now another reason to get good at bullet writing and why it's considered the most valuable copywriting skill is because good bullet writing is good headline writing. So if you can write something that is clear, concise, compelling, and curiosity provoking, you've written a great headline, right? And often times with those Boardroom packages, because they were writing so many bullets Now, again, we'll talk about how that's not necessarily how most copywriters approach copy today online. But because they were writing so many bullets, what they would do is, is they would just write, write, write, write and when

they found the one, like the one where it was like, "Oh, that's the one that everybody wants to know the answer to," they would just stick that at the top. And that was their headline. And so your best bullets can become your headline.

And the other thing, like the other relevance here is if you've studied all the classic headline templates, like, you know, who else wants and how to and three secrets to and what your blank doesn't want you to know, and you know, there's a thousand headline templates out there. You can actually use those not just to inspire headline writing, but you can inspire your bullet writing with those as well. And so, you know, if you're studying headlines, you're also studying how to write great bullets.

Now, before we dive into like more of the "how to" of this, I again want to address that, like, what do we do in 2020. Now, Mikhail, do you have any like-- have I missed anything up until this point?

Mikhail: No, I think that's good. It's really interesting that "what never to eat on an airplane" headline that you kind of used, I think that's probably one of the most famous headlines that, you know, once you start looking into copywriting, you come across that headline. It's really interesting that he used that because I've never known what the answer to that question was.

Roy Furr: Yeah, it's the most boring answer in the world, but that's what a great bullet is going to do. Right?

Mikhail: Yeah, yeah. So I think we're good.

Roy Furr: Okay, excellent. So I do want to talk about like, here we are in 2020 and especially like when it comes to compliance, and when it comes to what's really working out there at least online and in VSLs. A VSL is not very good if it's just somebody like saying bullet, bullet, bullet, bullet, bullet, like it's just not compelling, right. And so 2020 is definitely the year where I've heard the most noise in the copywriting world, not noise, like noise versus signal, this is signal-- the most signal in the copywriting world of copywriters saying story leads, story leads, story leads, story leads, you have to be able to write a great story if you are a copywriter. And you know, frankly, I've been making that same transition for years going back-- I forget exactly how many years now, but I taught a story selling masterclass. It's just all about how to use stories to sell.

And yes, stories for leads at this point, especially online, tend to work better, especially in VSLs tend to work better. But you still use bullet writing in describing the offer and writing supporting copy in your order forms, and you can use them in emails. And it's still a skill that if you can write something that, going back to the four C's is clear concise, compelling, and curiosity provoking. Whether that's headlines, subheads, bullets, or just individual lines in your body copy where you're like telling what you're going to share in a few minutes within this VSL, you are writing compelling copy, right? So this skill, don't just think "Oh, like, you know, Boardroom mastered the fascinations or bullets in the 1990s in direct mail, and they're no longer relevant because here I am running Facebook ads." Think, "How can I understand and integrate the principles and strategies of effective bullet writing into my copywriting such that even if I'm writing a sales letter that has zero bullets in it at all, I'm still using the power, the power of Boardroom level fascinations in my copy."

And so like, okay, it's 2020, story leads are all the rage and it's no longer the world where Eugene Schwartz described where great copywriting-- he said-- he taught that great copywriting is like an action movie, you imagine this action movie. You know, there's like a 60 second story setup where you're just kind of thrown into the middle of the action and you like start to figure out kind of what's going on. And then there's a hail of bullets and explosions. And then there's a little bit more story. And there's a bunch more bullets and a little story and a lot more bullets and you just keep going on repeat until he gets to the point where you make the offer, you close and you're done, right. And that was the 80%, 90% bullets sales letters. We're not there anymore. But we are still at a place we're writing bullets and that skill, that fundamental skill of like, type, clear, concise, compelling, curiosity provoking copy is just as relevant as ever.

So with that said, that's our setup. And we'll dive into our next section. Mikhail, do you have any-- you know, before we dive into the specific "how to", do you have thoughts about where bullets fall? Or is your experience completely different as far as where bullets fall in terms of copywriting skill today or usage today?

Mikhail: No, I think what you're saying is true, you know, especially like you said, because the medium that the sales message is being delivered, has changed, you know, you have to change them and evolve with it. Back in the '90s when they were doing these bullet filled sales letters, they could not have imagined what the internet would have been-- what changes that would have brought, things like video, there's these interactive videos now as well, based on, you know, what you choose changes what you see and that kind of stuff. So yeah, it's still-- it's changed but bullets themselves, I mean, once you write in a headline, you're writing a bullet once you're writing. Even that skill of curiosity-driven copy, that still is at the core of what you're writing in your story. Even just, you know, just the normal body copy, you have to have those elements in it. So I think that's still the case.

Roy Furr: Absolutely. So let's have fun. Let's have fun here. Let's have fun diving into more of "how to write". Now, the one thing that I will say that I didn't include here that I still consider to be a powerful recommendation for writing bullets is all that practice that you did and actually-- just sec. I like to get this out. This is like in the bottom of a file cabinet drawer in the next to my desk here. And this is like my stack of 3x5 note cards when I was a new copywriter, and I wrote down all these headline formulas on here. So it's got like the "How to" and it's got "Begin your headline with word introducing" and "Get rid of blank", which is the problem forever, and "What never ever to--" let's see, "__20:51__ or action." So, what never ever to eat on an airplane, right?

So, like all of those things can still inform your copywriting. And while I'm not a huge fan of using swipe files, I believe-- like, my belief is that you should internalize the principles and strategies and techniques and, like, the psychology behind it, but not then proactively, like, take a swipe file and say, "Oh, I'm going to change this headline, and I'm going to change this subhead and all that," like, I don't believe in that. But the whole idea of taking that stack of headlines, and like internalizing all the language, so that I can use it naturally was really transformational. And so you can use that as a starting point. If you're going to learn nothing else from this, practice your headlines, and like study headlines like that, in order to write better bullets. But let's get more into, like how to make bullets interesting in the context of a sales letter.

So, the first thing that I want to talk about is the rhythm of bullets. Because if every bullet-- this was-- so I'm going to contrast my advice first. Mel Martin, one of the things that he would do is he would say, like, what your bank doesn't want you to know, what your insurance company doesn't want you to know. And he would have all these bullets that were the exact same structure in like a chunk. So the rhythm of each of those was exactly the same. But he did that intentionally in small places of his sale site. Most of the time, when you're writing bullets, what you want is you want to vary the rhythm, you want it to feel like poetry, you want it to like have ebb and flow, you want it to have like, some things are tight. And some things may go on a little bit more and go a little bit deeper in order to kind of pull the prospect through. And it keeps it interesting. Like if all of your bullets are the same sentence structure in the same rhythm, it's not going to be interesting.

So let's talk about the rhythm of bullets. There is the one shot bullet, like what never to eat on airplane, right? You could take that same thing and you could turn it into the next rhythm that I suggest, which is the one-two punch, which is what never to eat on an airplane and the scary reason why, or the surprising reason why. So you take like, one chunk, another chunk. Then there's jab, jab, hook, like the-- okay, boxing terms. Jab, jab, hook is just being able to, like, combine foods for weight loss-- okay, it's being able to combine like three chunks together. And the first two should be small chunks. So foods for weight loss, foods for fitness, and foods you should never eat unless you want to end up in the hospital. Like, I just made that up, right? But the whole idea is to take-- okay, if I'm promising kind of a mix of food, like what to eat, what not to eat and that's in one of the fulfillment items of my offer. That idea of here's one type of food, here's another type of food, here's another type of food and probably make the last one like the hook, right? Like jab, jab, hook. Although as I physically did that, I didn't do the hook.

So, these are just different ways that can inspire you to go into different rhythms. Again, I'm about adopting the-- like understanding the principle. And then hopefully you're not sitting down and saying, "Oh Roy said I should write a one shot bullet, and then I should write a one-two punch, and then I should write a jab, jab, hook." Instead, we're saying like, "Oh, some of your bullets should be short and just have one chunk of information. Some should have two. Some should have three, and like one of them should be like the really compelling one and it should probably beat the last one."

Another is the idea of a mini list. So it's you would have like, you know, three types of superfoods and it could be like, I don't know what best superfoods, you know, kale, cinnamon, and a surprising entry from your pantry that you would never expect. So, just coming up with like different ways, including like listing things, right, as ways to change up the rhythm of the bullets.

The other thing, this is not quite a bullet rhythm in itself, but this is something that I've used a lot in bullets is the parenthetical comment. So that means in parentheses, it's a comment. So we could say, you know, men who do this one thing almost never die of heart attack. And then in parentheses, it could say "30 year Harvard backed study shows why this is true," right. So this is just the idea of like, you can throw in additional things in parentheses just to make the rhythm flow and change a lot more.

And then one thing-- actually in preparation for this, I was going through some bullets and looking at some bullets. And I added something that wasn't in the list that I sent you ahead of time, which is the bullet plus. And you see this in a lot of old Boardroom promos, and I realized that I do the same thing where it is we tend to write in paragraphs, right, we tend to write in paragraphs because that's like how

we're taught to write. And what Boardroom would do and what I've done is what-- they contain the paragraphs to a fairly small chunk, but they started the paragraph with a bullet. And then they added a little bit more information about that bullet in the paragraph. So it's almost like the bullet is the headline for the paragraph. As a side note, I do the same thing for testimonials. I get a testimonial from the client and I find like the best bit of information or a way to, like, frame the entire testimonial, and I write a headline for the testimony.

So this idea, like, is to-- you can actually use bullet writing as like the intro to the paragraph. And what you'll find in some promos is-- a good example of this would actually be in a lot of offers. You have the explanation of what the actual stuff is that you're getting of the offer. So if it's like a membership website, it could be members only website, although probably give it a better name. So like VIP members area for you know, for devoted fitness, you know, kettlebell fitness enthusiasts, and then there would be a description of what that contains that is expounding on the opening bullet to that paragraph. Does that make sense? Do these make sense?

Mikhail: Yeah, yeah.

Roy Furr: Yes?

Mikhail: I think yeah. I think that's pretty straightforward stuff. Yeah.

Roy Furr: Yeah, yeah. Awesome. So, again, just really quickly, the six kind of different ways to inspire your rhythm of your bullets is a one shot, a one-two punch, jab, jab, hook, a mini list, the parenthetical comment and the bullet plus. But then, like, what do the bullets contain? What do they contain? Well, on a high level again-- I keep bringing this up, so I feel like I have to speak to it here. I actually wrote-- I wrote an article called The Architecture of A-List Copywriting Skills. And what I explain is that a lot of new people just look at things like this stack of headline templates, and they're looking at very tactical implementations of the skill, right? And when we're new, like, those are exciting to us learning the tactics and maybe some techniques, right? But if you go deeper than that, there is a strategy, like, how are we using bullets? Why are we using bullets here? Where is it appropriate to use bullets and not use bullets? Where, you know, like, where is this skill appropriate elsewhere? And then underneath that is like the principles behind, like, okay, what makes an effective bullet? What does the effective bullet do? And so people who are really great at their craft. And actually I found this when I went to Titans of Direct Response was, like, the people up there, were talking about things that would be really boring to beginners, because it's these deep level principles underneath what works. And then from the principles, somebody who's skilled, develop strategies and then from that you learn techniques. And from that you learn tactics. And it's the tactical implementation that everybody sees that's like the superficial, you know, list of bullets that you see in a sales letter. But without the principles understanding, you're nowhere near as good at applying it tactically. And if you change your principles, if you get better principles, all of your tactics will perform better versus if you change your tactics but don't understand the principles beneath, you're not going to get any big breakthroughs. So I always approach it from that perspective, like, what are the principles and strategies?

So what do bullets contain on a principles level? Well, there's actually three things. One, they can completely just give away information. Now, this is by far the most rare type of bullet, although it can be

useful to instill credibility and believability in your copywriting to just give away a little bit of information here and there.

And so, you know, it could be like the number one ingredient in our focus, formula, colon, L-Tyrosine. And so you could be saying like, this is the number one ingredient in our supplement. And that's a giveaway. Like, we're just giving it away. Now, the reason that you don't necessarily want to use that a lot, especially if you're selling information versus like a supplement, is because when you give too much away, people don't have that curiosity provoked that causes them to go buy. So, on the flip side of that, like, if you imagine it as a spectrum, over here we're giving away all the information, right? Over here, we're not telling them anything. And so it could be like the number one food for focus. So it's just completely blind, it's just not giving them any information. And then somewhere in the middle, well, all throughout the middle of the spectrum, right, is the half blind bullet. And that is where you give away something. But you hold something else back.

So, for example, cinnamon is pretty well known at this point as something to help with babies, right. And so your half blind bullet could be like, most-- you know, most people understand cinnamon helps control blood sugar but it works best if you use it in exactly this way on a daily basis. Or it works best if you do this with your cinnamon at this time of day where you are giving away the cinnamon part, which works especially well with something that people are already familiar with. Like if you hide the fact like the surprising ingredient that you put in your oatmeal that might help with diabetes, because that market is very aware of cinnamon, you may-- like people are just going to feel like, "Oh, I already know this," right? But if people are familiar with it, they're going to recognize, "Oh, yeah, cinnamon. But oh, is there a specific way that I'm supposed to be taking it?"

So we have giveaways where we're just giving away all the information. We have blind, and then we have half blind, and every bullet that you write is going to fall somewhere on that spectrum, like more towards giving it away, more towards holding it back. But that's how you should approach writing bullets. And again, depending on what you're selling, if you're selling information, there should probably be a lot more curiosity, a lot more, like, curiosity hooks that are left unfulfilled, right, versus if you're selling supplements, you're probably going to be-- or you're selling something that is-- where they're actually buying the product related to their health, there's probably going to be a little bit more information given in the bullets because you're not relying on them wanting the information to get the sale. Right? Cool?

Mikhail: Yeah, sounds good. Yeah.

Roy Furr: All right. So let's dive into some approaches to writing bullets. And this is kind of a long list. And so what I like to do, you know, just thinking on the fly here, what I'd like to do is maybe go through-- and try and quickly give a, like, each item in the list with a little bit of a description and then maybe we could dive a little bit deeper into whichever ones make you most curious, as far as how to write. And I have a note to myself, and actually I have some tabs open to sciencedaily.com, which is just a great place for, like, lots of health studies.

And so I'll go through this list, and then we'll see if we can play around a little bit. So, most great selling involves a problem and a solution. Most great offers are the solution to a problem. Like this Eugene

Schwartz, the market awareness model goes from unaware to "problem aware" to "solution aware" to "you aware" to deal ready, right. And so the fundamental assumption behind that is that problems are markets, or a group of people who share a problem are market, which sets up the first approach to writing bullets, which is to reveal the problem, and to hide the solution.

So your blood pressure spikes after a meal. You know, here's how to make your body manage that in a healthy and natural way, or something like that. Right? So we're revealing the problem of blood-- did I say blood pressure? Blood sugar is what I intended. Blood sugar spiking after a meal, and then we're not telling the solution. Make uninteresting info interesting. So " Bills It's Okay to Pay Late," it's a great example of like, you know, it's accounts payable management for small businesses or something like, you know, you find like, what is the application of this that's fascinating versus what I'm reading on the page in this information, right? Make impersonal info personal.

So, something very impersonal could be, you know, weight loss. And the personal side of that could be, "When my wife saw me in my new swimsuit, she told me she wasn't attracted to me anymore. Here's what I did next." Like, all of a sudden, we take this weight loss thing and we turn it into a personal story, right. And, actually, that rolls right into the next recommendation, which is to tease a story. Like if there is a story. This works especially well in copy, where, like, in line by line copy, at the opening of like a video sales letter or tech sales letter where you have a story buried deeper down in the copy. You can actually just tease the story that's coming without telling the story, right?

Teasing a secret, you know. Teasing, like, why your doctor will hate this video. You know, there's a secret in there. Or, you know, secrets the pharmaceutical industry hopes you never find out. We're again just teasing secrets, right? Some of these may feel old, some of them may not feel completely fresh to your project. But the reason that you study this like older formula is that once you understand, again, principles and strategies, you find how it is relevant to your project. And that's what copywriters are paid for.

Reveal the mechanism of the problem. And I have to give a huge hat tip to Stefan Georgi for this because even though I had done it multiple times, and I had-- even though I've done it multiple times and I had done it unconsciously and I'd seen it done, I didn't have awareness on this like mechanism of the problem idea, which is fundamentally like why haven't you solved the problem yet. And if you can do that in the context of again, Eugene Schwartz's market awareness model, you suddenly are able to open up all these mature markets. So a mature market is a market where it's not like a new problem that people are suddenly facing. You know, health is a huge one. Wealth is another one. Relationships is another one. These are mature markets where your audience has had the problem, the solution to the problem promised to them a thousand times before. And you have to speak to them in a way where even if they've tried to solve it a dozen times, they've bought a dozen products to try and solve it, you have to speak to them in a way where your thing feels different. And so by giving them a new understanding of their persistent problem, by revealing what they didn't understand about the problem that they now understand, and now allows them to solve it, you suddenly create this whole opportunity for you to position your product, it's the only legitimate solution to the problem. So revealing the mechanism of the problem would be something like, you know-- actually a great example from the fitness part of the health world is Pavel Tsatsouline-- how come I can't pronounce his name when I'm on video. Tsatsouline. His Simple and Sinister program, which is all about anti-lactic kettlebell training-- I

think I'm completely butchering the actual scientific term there. But basically the reason that our muscles get sore after we workout is because of lactic acid build up. And he looked at the science and he developed a program around how to do workouts that don't cause lactic acid build up. And so it has to do with timing. It has to do with the number of reps in a set and so on. And he created this entire protocol around how to do workouts that don't cause lactic acid build up. And ever since I read that book, like, aside from doing something that is not a planned workout, I haven't had any muscle soreness. And I workout like multiple times a week. And, like, I lift weights that are heavy multiple times a week. And it was-- he gave me a new understanding of the problem of delayed onset muscle soreness and just muscle soreness after exercise that actually allowed me to solve it. There's also revealed the mechanism of the solution which could be, you know, it could be sticking with working out with fitness that, you know, small sets build strength, for example. So the mechanism of the solution of a strength building program is going to revolve around doing sets of like three to five lifts per set. And so it's going to be revealing the mechanism of the solution.

Share proof. Proof is huge. Proof is huge, right. I did a whole separate training on proof credibility and believability and about the 26 different ways that you can bring in proof and credibility and believability. And proof, like, so, for example, in the health space, it's always about like, you know, what the doctor-- you know, this person is a doctor, Harvard medical study or you know whatever, Johns Hopkins medical study or whatever proven study or research that has been done on something bring that into your bullets.

Propose a test. This is the next one. So, you know, the idea behind this is try doing this thing for 28 days straight and see how fit you feel. Like, you're asking somebody to put your advice to the test.

Increase results. You're just promising better results, promising like lose weight faster with this one tip, you know. Decrease the effort. How to make the pounds melt off, you know, without fad diets, without starving yourself, without working your butt off in the gym, all of that. So we're increasing the results. We're decreasing the effort.

These three words are super powerful: faster, easier, cheaper. Just offer them something faster, easier, cheaper. Show them how to get something faster, easier, cheaper.

Give something a name. So actually we'll just go back to Pavel's thing, the Simple and Sinister method to, you know, shred pounds, get stronger, and look as good as you ever have even if you're over 40. And so the Simple and Sinister method is giving something a name or as Mark Ford/ Michael Masterson called it, nominalization. Again, that's a fancy word for give something a name. Include a number, three secrets, 12 secrets, 11-- you know, 11 powerful tips. The number one, that's a different way to include a number. The number one tip. And then myth busting. This is the last one on the list.

So, you know, what medical school never teaches doctors about your health and it's as simple as paying attention to the next breath you take. There's actually a really great book called Breath, or Breathe, by James Nestor. I can't remember if it's Breath or Breathe now. Came out this year. And it's all about breath and health. So, myth busting, like what myths exist in your marketplace.

So those are the different approaches to writing bullets. And I guess I did share a little bit more and went through some more examples as I went through. Was there any that you had questions about or would like me to dive deeper into, Mikhail?

Mikhail: I think-- I guess the one that's folks may have the most trouble doing is making uninterested and for interesting. I think that's probably going to be the biggest challenge for folks.

Roy Furr: Yeah. So I was actually thinking about Mel Martin. I did some googling. And first I found a Brian Kurtz's article about Mel Martin, and then I found a Target Marketing magazine article from Denny Hatch about Mel Martin. And there was a quote in there from Marty Edelston that said Mel Martin is the slowest copywriter. Mel Martin is the slowest copywriter we work with. And that is because he would just sit there and he would go through page after page after page of the book and he'd highlight things that were interesting and he take some notes and he would just keep digging in and keep digging in and keep digging in and keep digging in. And all of that just to write, you know, like 10 pages of bullets or something. And he would spend months like combing through every page of this book, reading it multiple times. Eugene Schwartz did the same thing and he was big on bullet writing. And one of Boardroom's-- actually he was essentially the copywriter that made the difference in launching Boardroom. And it was really the same approach. It was sales detective work. He was just like, "How can I think about this in different ways? How can I understand it? If I play with this idea, like, what comes out of playing with it?"

And another, like, great marketing mind our times is Jay Abraham. And Jay teaches like a Socratic approach, based on Socrates, right. And basically what Socrates would do is he would just keep asking questions. Just keep asking questions. Like, what does this mean? Why is that important? Like, what's so interesting about that? And that disposition, I don't even want to call it a skill because it's not that much of a skill, it's just like the choice to ask questions and go deeper and go deeper. What that can do is it can just-- like if you just play with ideas that you're seeing on the page, like, how is this applicable? How can I go deeper? Or like, what impact does this have on the person's life? What can they do or not do because of this? Who's going to hate them because they discovered this? Like all of that. Just keep asking questions. Keep asking questions about the information. And you'll start to develop a skill of finding that.

I'm going to give two other very quick things with regards to that because I do recognize we're coming up on about an hour long. And one is 5 Whys technique and that came out of Japanese manufacturing. I don't remember the exact-- I think it's out of Toyota actually, the founder of Toyota maybe. And he basically would say, "Why? Why? Why? Why?" So we're having-- you know, we're having problems with the spark plugs in this car or something like that, right. And he'd say why. Well, it's because they're not doing this or they're-- something is happening. But why? So like a little bit deeper. And he just keep asking why. And the idea is if you ask why about five times, you're going to find the root of the issue, right. And so, like, why is this information interesting? Why is that important? Why, why, why? And so you keep asking.

And a similar technique that comes from Tom Phillips, and I learned it through Clayton Makepeace, and Tom Phillips, his Phillips Publishing launched Healthy Directions, which was another one of the giant direct mail publishers, taught-- and for whatever reason my mind is going completely blank here--

dimensionalization. There we go it. And the idea is-- so the idea is to add dimensions to-- it's essentially the 5 Whys all over again. But our product has this feature. So our product has this ingredient. Well, what is the benefit of that ingredient? So everybody knows features benefits, right. What's the benefit of that ingredient? And then you ask why is that important. And then you ask like what difference is that actually going to make in the customer's life 10 years down the road or five years down the road. And like what's the bigger impact that that's going to have. And so the idea is to just like keep layering on like what is next dimension, what's the next dimension, what's the next dimension, what's the next dimension, until you discover that, you know, if they take this supplement, they're going to be giving their grandkid a hug as they come running out of school. It's bursting with excitement ready to tell you about their day, right.

And it has nothing to do with, like, the ingredients of the supplement, right. But that's what people are looking for. They're looking for like that life experience. That's completely-- like, nobody wants to take another pill in the morning, right. Nobody wants to buy another book of information. They want what that's going to get them. They want how that's going to change their life. And that's what like dimensionalization is designed to help you find.

Do you feel like that is good?

Mikhail: Yeah, yeah.

Roy Furr: It's a good response? Okay.

Mikhail: You know, we had David Deutsch on a little earlier. I was doing my interview with him. And he mentioned that same technique by Jay Abraham, that Socratic questioning to kind of keep diving deeper and deeper into, you know, copy and just keep asking those questions and asking why. And that's kind of how you keep finding these interesting or new ways of doing something.

Roy Furr: Yeah. A quick story that's not mine, but I'll tell it, this is a tiny thing. John Carlton, very famous for his one-;egged golfer ad. And it was-- and he'd watch this video and it was a boring video about, like, a golf swing technique and balance during your golf swing technique. And then he's like interviewing the guy and he's asking them and he's talking to him for like two hours just trying to, like, figure out like how the heck am I going to sell this, right. And then eventually gets the question of, like, "No, but if we go all the way back to the beginning, like, where did this really come-- like, what was your inspiration for this?" And the guy said, "Well, there was this day that we're out golfing and you know, I'm walking down--" or like "We're playing behind this group and as I'm looking ahead, like, we caught up with a group and I'm looking ahead and I see this guy is like-- he's a one-legged golfer and he just steps up to the tee and, you know, even better than all the two-legged golfers in his group, he just takes a swing and he smashes it just like straight down the fairway, you know, straight for the green, more distance than everybody else." I don't write for the golf market, I don't play golf, so I don't know all the details that really matter there. But it was just like two hours of questioning this guy before the guy's like, "Yeah. Well, I saw this one-legged golfer balancing in kind of a funky way and then I started playing with it and suddenly I can balance in this better way," right. So it's sales detective work.

And David Deutsch is absolutely amazing at that. Like, one of my mentors and heroes and one of the titans on stage with the Titans of Direct Response.

So, should we finish up with the last-- my last expanded bullet technique here? My last tip.

Mikhail: Yeah.

Roy Furr: Awesome. So this actually goes back in, I don't know in 2006 or 2007. My dad had been selling this video on eBay that was "How to cut foam wings from model airplanes." And tiny market. I don't recommend anybody go into it because we own that market for a while online and it's like this big and most people in the market are getting very old and passing away at this point. It's not a growing market. But anyways, so my dad had this video "How to cut foam wings from model airplanes." And it was on VHS. And I stuck it in our VRC and I sat down on a Saturday afternoon and I just pressed play. And every time he said something interesting, I hit pause and I took some notes on a yellow notepad and play/ pause, write, play/pause, write, play/pause, write. And so I wrote all these bullets and I wrote this great sales letter that was full of really compelling bullets about how to cut foam wings from model airplanes. And then I realized, and this is something that I picked up from Perry Marshall, he said, "You basically don't run a paper click ad campaign that is highly profitable without an autoresponder, without an email follow-up series." And so I said alright., well, I want to run some Google traffic to this and I'm going to write an email follow-up series. Well, what am I going to write about? And then I looked at the list of bullets and I said, "I could write an email about every single one of these bullets." We're actually give away some of the information and because we were selling this video demonstration of the method, I could say "And to see this in action, you know, go to our website and buy the video," right.

And so I called this the expanded bullet technique. So once you've written the bullets, you can just-- once you shrunk the information down to the most clear, concise, compelling and curiosity-provoking format that you can, then you can expand it out and write a quick tip. You can write a story about how you discovered that information. You can write all of this copy and so you can use this for email copywriting, advertorials, Facebook post or Facebook ads, blogs, other content, YouTube videos, whatever, like wherever it is appropriate. If that information is compelling, you can use it over and over again. And so like once you've written the bullets, you can even use the bullet as like the headline for this particular lesson.

Now, of course, you want to make sure that you have some reason for them to-- like, you don't want to kill all the curiosity of your product, right. You don't want to kill what's going to make people respond by just giving away everything free. But frankly, when you give away a ton of free information, the principle of reciprocity kicks in and people tend to want to buy from you. And so yeah, I mean it won't necessarily eat into your sales. And in fact, you know, I ended up writing about 26 different emails set to go out over a period of time for that, and it was highly profitable in terms of ROI. It just wasn't a very big market or very big opportunity there.

So that's the expandable technique. You can use it wherever you want. It certainly works for health. It works for all sorts of different niches. Yeah.

Mikhail: Yeah, it kind of feeds into that what you started off with being the most important copyrighting skill, right. Once you have your bullets, you can kind of use them wherever you need to, you can expand on it. So it kind of comes back full circle back to what you're saying.

Roy Furr: One hundred percent. Yes.

Mikhail: Yup. So I think Roy you definitely delivered on your condensed value. And this is our session. For people who kind of want to know some more about what you do, learn some more about your training, your coaching, where can they go to get that?

Roy Furr: Yeah, well, so the one place that I would send everybody because it's free and it's a turn of value is breakthroughmarketingsecrets.com. Breakthroughmarketingsecrets.com. And it's all one word, no hyphens or anything, just breakthroughmarketingsecrets.com. And what I do there is I publish daily content, Monday through Friday, covering copywriting, marketing, business building, direct response, selling, you know, everything relevant to somebody like me who is involved in copywriting but who is also involved deeper in building businesses.

And so I have like a YouTube channel, but my YouTube videos are usually promoted through Breakthrough Marketing Secrets. So, just sign up for the email there and you'll find much more about me. The one thing that I will say is the most serious copywriters who get to Breakthrough Marketing Secrets will pretty quickly find themselves on BTMSinsiders, which stands for Breakthrough Marketing Secrets Insiders, which is a training library of over 100 hours of training for copywriters, marketers, business builders, direct response people and more, including how to write copy, how to build your copywriting career, like all the stuff that's relevant to you as a copywriter. And it's a low monthly fee to get access to all the training like Netflix, right, and just stream as much as you want and access as much as you want and for as long as you maintain your membership.

But again, just start with breakthroughmarketingsecrets.com. And if you want to go deeper, you'll definitely have the opportunity there.

Mikhail: Yeah. Sounds good. Well, thanks Roy. Thanks again for taking the time. I remember, you know, when I contacted you, you're kind of skeptical in terms of you don't really write for the health market, you're more finance guy. But I think bullets is one of those things that it's the core principle behind copywriting, and it doesn't really matter what market you're writing to. So, again, thanks. Thanks for delivering such great value.

Roy Furr: Awesome. Well, thank you Mikhail for the opportunity. And I'm excited for what you've put together here as far as the entire Health Copywriting Profits summit or-- I'm sorry I missed the exact name for it, but I'm excited for what you have put together and what I get to be a part of here. So, thank you.