



## Ray Edwards Show, Episode 541 What Copywriting Really Is

**Announcer** ([00:01](#)):

Ray Edwards Show, Episode 541. What Copywriting Really Is.

**Announcer** ([00:09](#)):

The Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for prosperity, with purpose.

**Kris Edwards** ([00:17](#)):

Hello there. And welcome to episode 541 of the Ray Edwards Show. This is a first for us because the content from this episode actually comes from a different podcast. So let me give you the backstory on that. Sometime in 2018, I believe it was, our friend, Jeff Goins. If you don't know Jeff Goins, you really should. Amazing blogger. Bestselling author. Has a great podcast called *Hey Creator*. If you create stuff you're going to like it. We're going to have links to all things Jeff in the show notes for this week's episode, but Jeff invited Ray to guest host his podcast, like not be interviewed, just come on and explain to his audience, who are you? What is copywriting? And how do I do it? And he had to do all that in very limited time. So what we ended up with is really good coverage of the fundamentals. Now, if you're new to copywriting, this is definitely the best place to start. If you're not so new, I guarantee you at some point, you'll write something that does not meet your performance expectations, and you'll scratch your head and say, well, uh, why is that happening? Uh, where's all my money or something. But usually, the first test is you go back and say, okay, am I doing all the right things? Do I have the fundamentals right before you start picking nits, you go to the basics and say, am I checking the boxes here? Am I applying the PASTOR formula? Because I know that works. So, this episode is going to be a fantastic succinct review of what it takes to write great copy. And with that, I'll shut up and we'll jump in.

**Announcer** ([01:52](#)):

And now, our feature presentation.

**Ray Edwards** ([01:54](#)):

We're going to dive right in and I've never done this before, like this, guest hosted someone's podcast when they're not even present. So I don't even really know how to do it. I'm just going to go through some questions that Jeff asked me and share my thoughts on them and my answers and try to help you. Why should you listen to this show? Well, the reason you should

listen is I'm going to explain to you how to communicate in a way to get people, to buy more of your books, to read more of your blog posts, to listen to more of your podcasts, to sign you to a book deal. In other words, I'm going to teach you how to communicate in a way that gets people to do what you want them to do. As long as it's in their best interest. I'm not going to teach you anything that, well, that should be used to manipulate people into doing stuff that's not good for them. You could use these tools for that purpose, but I'm trusting that you won't. So those are the reasons to listen. This is how it will benefit you. So Jeff's first question is who are you? And what's your story. This is awkward because this is the part that other people usually take care of on these podcasts. So I'll try to answer this in a way that tells the story and doesn't sound too braggadocios. I grew up in Eastern Kentucky. I started in the radio business when I was 14, loved that business and loved helping advertisers come up with clever ways to advertise their local businesses, to get people to come in and put cash in their register. I just loved that. And I know that makes me kind of a weird marketing geek, but that's what I enjoyed doing, probably because I grew up in a family of entrepreneurs. My mom had her own business. My uncles and aunts had their own businesses. It was just ran in the family. And so I understood that what a business owner wants is not branding or to get their name out there to project a certain image. But the business owner wants is to get cash in the drawer today. For us as writers, what we want is we want people to buy our books, to sign us to a book deal, to read our blog posts, to listen to our podcasts we're creating, and we want people to consume what we create. So it's really no different than what the merchant is doing. We're just merchants of ideas instead of merchants of goods and services. And ultimately I think for most of us, as you can see, in Jeff's example, we start as merchants of ideas and we become merchants of other stuff. So I grew more and more successful in radio because I came to understand that the people who drove the nice cars at the radio station were not the DJs. They were the salespeople because the salespeople generated the money. I befriended them. And I went with them on client calls and I started studying people like Jay Abraham and David Ogilvy and John Caples, the classic masters of direct response marketing, which let me just pause and give you a definition of that. That's the kind of marketing that asks people to do something directly. That's the kind of marketing that says at the end of the ad call 1-800-gets yours now and make the order. So it's not just building an image. It's asking for the order in the ad itself. It may seem like a small distinction, but it's very powerful and very important. It can mean the difference between a company being here next year or being bankrupt before then. So I understood that this was powerful stuff for local business owners. And then I figured out that not only could I help the clients at the radio station, the advertisers, I could also help the radio stations themselves. So I used direct response marketing and copywriting, which is the art of writing that marketing material that gets people to do stuff now, I could use that to sell the radio station to listeners and we could do direct response offers like listen to our station for a chance to win a hundred thousand dollars or to win a free CD or whatever the contest was we were having. We had a variety of different ways to make direct calls to action for our listeners to grow our audience. And I was very successful doing that. And then along came the internet and wrecks the whole deal because the internet killed radio. In fact, radio is still alive, but barely- they're on life support, because think about it. We went from having to listen to a radio station that had, that played maybe 12 to 16 radio ads, an hour, commercials an hour with a bunch of inane DJs talking all the time. And they maybe only played six or eight songs an hour to now we have thousands of songs in our pocket on a thing called an iPhone with no commercials. Well, that's going to cause a fundamental shift in the radio business. So I determined I needed to get out of that business and transfer my skills somewhere else, and the natural place to take my skills for writing, marketing and advertising copy was to the internet, where much to my amazement, I discovered people were willing to pay a lot of money for this service. Now let me pause and give you an explanation of why I just said that in the radio business, hardly anybody gets paid to write the copy. This will be shocking to you if you advertise on radio and it may change the way you think about it from now on. So if you don't want to hear this, if you don't want this to ruin your opinion of radio advertising, please stop listening now. Okay.

You're still listening, so I assume you want to know the secret. The secret is at most radio stations, there is no paid position for copywriter. There's no professional person writing your ads to make sure they work. It's usually just a last minute thought of, well, we sold this package of spots to this advertiser, get one of the DJs to write the spot. Yikes. Your advertising success depends on that. So outside of radio, I discovered people understood the value of copy and of good marketing and are willing to pay top dollar for it.

(06:51):

So I began getting clients that were fairly impressive. Many of whom were New York times bestselling authors. I've had the privilege of working with people like Tony Robbins, Jack Canfield, and Michael Hyatt and many others. And then a lot of entrepreneurs you've never heard of. And then I've taught now thousands of entrepreneurs and small business people, how to write their own marketing copy and do for themselves what I've done for me and my clients, and what I've done for me and my clients is I've been able to sell an estimated \$300 million worth of goods and services on the internet using the power of direct response copy and direct response marketing. So now I help other people do that for themselves. Jeff's next question is "what is copywriting and why does it matter?" I kind of already got into this copywriting is the art of writing words that sell. That could be selling a product or service. It could be selling an appointment to find out more about a product or service. It could be selling an idea. It could be selling a belief. I mean your pastor every Sunday at church has written copy, about 20 minutes worth usually. And it's written to sell you on an idea on a new behavior, on a new way of thinking. Every politician is writing copy. Some of it is crazy, but some of it is good. It's all designed to get you to think in a new way about a certain subject to convince you. Nora Ephron, who is the great screenwriter and filmmaker responsible for films like *You've Got Mail*. Her mother was a journalist and taught Nora at a young age, everything is copy. And in fact, there's a documentary you might want to watch on Netflix called *Everything Is Copy*. It's about Nora Ephron- well worth watching. I think anybody who listens to this show would be interested in seeing that movie. But the point is, everything is copy, that's why it matters. Everything you do from the letter you write to your publisher, to the about page on your blog, to what's printed on your business card, to how your telephones are answered to what you say at a party when you meet somebody, it's all copy. And the reason it's important is it shapes the way the world sees you. And the way the world sees you, determines how they treat you, which means it determines whether they do business with you or not. Whether they trust you or not. Whether they like you or not. There is a basic structure to writing copy. And Jeff's next question is "what are the basics of copywriting?" And so I have a 10 week course that I teach where I walk people through all this in great detail. Some would say laborious detail, but I'm going to give you like the five minute overview of a framework you can use to write persuasive copy in any context. Now this could be on a page that's designed to sell your book. It could be on a page it's designed to sell your consulting or coaching services. It could be just in a blog post where you're trying to convince somebody of an idea. So just think of the call to action. At the end of the copy, we're going to ask people to do something. That might be, we might ask them to buy something. We might ask them to write their Congressman. We might ask them to make a comment. We might ask them to give a video on YouTube a thumbs up or to share it, but we're always asking them to do something. We're making a call to action. That's the sale. Here's the structure that works for anything you're writing. It's called the PASTOR structure. You may have heard me talk about this before. I've added some refinements now. So it's a little bit different. So it's worth listening to this again. PASTOR stands for, well, let me just back up and say, this is not about being a preacher. It's got nothing to do with religion. It's about acting in the role of the original meaning of the word pastor, which is as a shepherd, leading people to a good decision. And the shepherd, their job is to protect the flock, to keep away the predators, to make sure the flock has food and water and comfort and is healthy. So think of yourself in that way, with

your audience, with your tribe, you're their shepherd. And you will never come across as salesy or pushy because you're there to take care of them.

(10:16):

You've got their best interest at heart. So keeping that in mind, PASTOR is an acronym that stands for the different pieces of your copy. It's a framework for writing copy. P stands for person, problem, and pain. So you gotta start with the person you're writing to. You got to know about them. You've got to understand them. You got to understand their world. You have to enter into their situation and understand what is the problem that they're having as they are aware of it. Now, this is vitally important. If they're not aware, they have a problem. You're not going to make a sale. Because one thing I can guarantee you is you have no solution for somebody who thinks they have no problem. They're not going to listen to you. So you've got to start by identifying what do they think the problem is? And then we move on to pain, which is how does it hurt for them? Now this is vitally important because we get so caught up in writing copy from our viewpoint about our brilliant product or our brilliant service about how it solves the problem that we think they need to solve. We forget that all that stuff does not matter to the reader. What matters to the reader is do they think they have a problem? And if they do, how do they perceive the pain of the problem? So let's take a very common subject that is a problem that's addressed by many books, many programs, many coaches, many trainers. That's the problem of obesity. Usually the marketer who's trying to sell the weight loss program likes to start with the facts, the facts of what percentage of people are obese, what diseases it leads to, how it affects your health percentages and studies and proof, proof, proof that it causes heart disease, maybe cancer, diabetes, maybe Alzheimer's, hypertension. So many problems caused by obesity and they want to barrage you with these facts. The problem is none of that matters to people or they'll say it matters cause they know it should matter, but you're connecting with their head and you need to connect with their heart. If you start by connecting with their head, you connect with the head. You're dead. You're not gonna make any progress. You connect with the heart. Now we can start. So how does the pain hurt from the perspective of the customer? In the case of obesity, it's not about the facts. It's not about the figures. It's not about the diabetes, the heart disease or the cancer or any of that stuff. It's about the guilt and shame and fear and isolation and the feeling that they're not enough, that they're somehow deficient. That's how you connect with their heart. You speak to those emotions. This is hard for many writers, especially those who are in the marketing business because they feel like I don't want to be manipulative. You're not being manipulative. You're being considerate by speaking in a language that means something to the person you're writing to. You're speaking their language. Then you can begin to talk about the A in PASTOR which is the amplify. Amplify the pain of not solving the problem, what will happen if they don't solve this problem? What's the cost of doing nothing. The cost in this case is tremendously high. Now you can talk about heart disease and diabetes, but you still got to do it in a way that emotionally connects, not again, connect with the head, you're dead connect to the heart, now you can start. Instead of citing facts and figures about diabetes, you might say in your copy to that grandmother or grandfather, you're writing to, you might say, if you don't solve this obesity problem, do you realize what's going to happen? Picture this picture; your eight year old granddaughter standing in front of your coffin, staring at your cold dead body, weeping her heart out. Wondering why her grandma has left her. Isn't it tragic that you could have prevented that from happening by simply changing the way you eat. Now, you might say that is too much, Ray. Is it? Is it prevents that scene from happening, is it too much? I'll leave it to you to answer that question. So the, A stands for amplify, but it also stands for aspirations. Now show them the other side of the picture. Show them being at their 18 year old granddaughter's wedding, little young to be getting married, but hey, work with me here. Maybe their 25-year old

granddaughter's wedding, still maybe a little young, but better. Show them that picture of what they aspire to. If you dare show them their secret heart secretly, what obese people really want is they want to look like the fashion models they see on the front of magazines.

[\(14:08\)](#):

They want to have the six pack, abs the perfect body, the toned tush that makes people turn and take a second look and say, wow, dang, that looks good. They won't tell you this because it's their secret heart. It's shameful and embarrassing to them. That's what's really going on. So speak to that. You can say it. They can't, they can even chide you and say "I don't care about that. That's so superficial." But inside they're thinking, that's what I want. So speak to it. The S in PASTOR stands for story, struggle, solution. This is where you tell the story of how you faced the same problem or someone in your story faced the same problem. They struggled through trying to solve it. Maybe they went through a couple of failure cycles because everybody does. That's a way to relate to people. Show them, admit. Yeah, I've had this problem too. And I too have given into the cheesecake, the refrigerator in the middle of the night. I ate the whole dang thing. Not just a piece, the whole thing. I was so ashamed. Make that admission. You struggled. And then tell the story of how you solve the problem. What flipped the switch for you and made things change. When did you draw the line in the sand and why and how, and then you move to the transformation to T in PASTOR; transformation and testimony. So now you show how your life has transformed or how the life of your perfect customer has transformed by your process, by your product, by your coaching, by your book, by whatever you sell, you show the before and after. That's why before and afters are so powerful in advertising. Think about infomercials and think about how often they show before and after pictures. Why do they do that? Because it's effective because the before is how we look now, it's our life. Now we looked at and say, yep, that's me. And it's painful to look in that mirror, but then immediately they show us the after and that's how we want to be. And we say, yes, that's what I want. Then we segue immediately to testimonials. This is where other people tell the story of how your product or solution empowered them to become the after picture. Proof, proof, proof. Not facts and figures, not science, not evidence. Stories. Again, go back to the infomercials and look at them, pay attention to how much of the infomercial is made up of testimonials, unprofessional, regular people who got a result who talk about the result they got. That's not proof it's anecdote, but yet 70% of most infomercials, the successful ones, consist of just that.

[\(16:12\)](#):

Why? Because it speaks to people. It motivates behavior. It causes people to take action. So you should do the same thing. So now we're up to the O in PASTOR, which is offer. This is not what most people think. Most people think the offer is primarily what you're selling and how much it is. I'm selling a 10 week copywriting course. And this is the cost. That's not the offer. Those are details of the offer. But the offer,, again is really about the transformation. That's what you're offering people. You're saying trade me this amount of money. And I'll give you this transformation for the P90X program. It's trade me this amount of money, and I'll take you from being pudgy Doughboy to Mr. Ripped, six-pack abs in 90 days, that's the transformation you're offering. Now. The transformation is where you're headed. It's the destination, but you've also got to describe the vehicle that gets you there. So you do have to talk about your 10 week course or your book or your three-day seminar or your ongoing consulting contract, whatever it is you're selling. You have to talk about the vehicle that gets them to the destination, but don't be like most people and get the vehicle confused with what they're buying. Most people just simply spend all their time describing the vehicle when nobody cares about that, they just need to know there is a vehicle. What they care about is the transformation, the destination. That's what you spend 80% of the offer section talking about. The transformation, and you tie it back to the vehicle that gets them there. So they can be

assured that you have a way to get them there. And then finally, the R in PASTOR stands for request a response. Ask for the sale. Ask them to do what you want them to do. That's it P A S T O R. Person, problem, pain, aspiration, amplification, story, struggle, solution, transformation, testimonial, offer, request a response. That's the framework can use for any persuasive piece of writing persuasive speech. I've given speeches using the pastor outline where I made the outline five minutes before I made the talk, because I didn't expect to have to speak. And somebody said to me, I walked into a conference a few years ago and I walked in a day early. I wasn't supposed to speak to the next day. And the guy who was putting the conference on, grabbed me in the hallway and said, Ray, our keynote speaker backed out on us. Can you give a keynote in 10 minutes? And I said, sure. So I sat down with my journal. I wrote out the letters, P A S T O R, I outlined my talk and I gave a one hour speech and it was pretty darn good, if I do say so myself. This framework can help you write quickly. And more importantly, it'll keep you focused on the elements of what it takes to persuade people, to take a course of action. So use it often. Use it everywhere, experiment with it. I would love to hear your success stories about how it's worked for you. I've given it away freely to hundreds of thousands of people all across the world it's one of my best ideas. And I just love hearing the success stories. I've had people tell me, Ray, I could not afford your copywriting course, but I used your PASTOR framework to make enough money so that I could. So now I'm back to buy the course from you to learn more. I don't mind helping people first and then waiting maybe forever. Maybe they never do any business with me, but just knowing that can help people is gratifying to me.

[\(18:58\)](#):

Sometimes it comes back to me in the form of business. There's a lesson in that for your marketing as well. But Jeff's last question that he wanted me to answer for you is "what are my next steps to becoming a better copywriter?" Well, an immediate step would be to apply the PASTOR framework, as I described it in this episode, a further step would be grab a copy of my book called *How to Write Copy That Sells*. It's available on Amazon for I think it's like 12 bucks. Something like that. You can get the Kindle edition for eight bucks, maybe. It's a good primer. It'll get you started in writing. Good copy. And then we do offer a copywriting course. It opens like a college course once a year, but you don't have to do that. You can just practice using the pastor framework. As I described it here, or you can get my book for 11 bucks or 12 bucks, whatever it is on Amazon. It's like any other kind of writing the way to do it is to just do it and practice it. And the way to write really good copy is to write lots of really bad copy first. The rules never change, my friends. It's always the same. I hope this has been helpful. And I hope that you understand that this is about more than just selling stuff. Now I'm all in favor of selling stuff. I think that's what turns the wheels of our economy. It's what will help eliminate poverty in the world. And that's my mission in life is to eliminate poverty through entrepreneurial activity, through helping people start businesses, to giving people jobs. Maybe you don't have as grandiose designs that maybe you just want to make some money to feed your family, or maybe you are cause driven. You want to convince people of an idea. You want to convince people that there are people in the world who need their help. I'm all for that too. So you can use this power of copywriting to convince people to do almost anything. And look it's been used against us so often in the past, through propaganda, through manipulation, why don't we start using it for good purposes to make the world a better place? That's what I would love to see. And I'd love to hear how you're doing that. Let me leave you this one thought, which is a thought I've adapted from Zig Ziglar. And it is this: marketing is something we do for people, not something we do to people.

**Kris Edwards** [\(20:50\)](#):

That does it for this week. Thank you very much, Jeff Goins, for letting us use this audio and remember to check out all of Jeff's stuff. We have links in the show notes. You'll find that at [rayedwards.com/541](http://rayedwards.com/541). See you next week.

**Announcer ([21:24](#)):**

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