

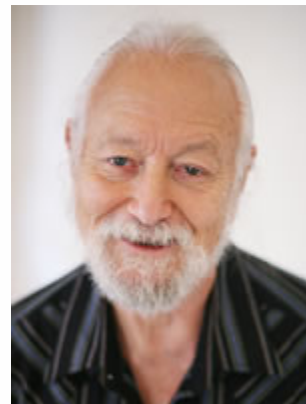
The Only Person Who Can Really Tell You About Your Prospect

By Will Newman

Welcome back. Over our last few articles, we've talked about breaking free of the 'fear and greed' trap by getting to know your prospect as a real person. (Click [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) if you've missed these articles.)

Yesterday, we looked at two ways to get to know your prospect: demographics and psychographics. You get this information from your client.

While these are good ways to develop a 3-D picture of your prospect, they don't really give you a full a picture. This problem came up in an email to me from *Circle of Success* member Jennifer ...



Will Newman

I'm currently working on putting together an image of my prospect, but I'm having trouble connecting some dots and dialing in to a deeper picture of this person. How can you be sure you're not projecting your ideas onto him? (A 60-ish man in my case.)

Is it the real prospect or only you ...

One challenging but enjoyable aspect of developing a 3-D image of your prospect is harnessing your imagination. Where does reality end and personal bias begin?

You risk slipping over that line as long as you rely solely on demographics and psychographics or similar information.

You avoid this trap by reaching out to *real individuals*. This isn't as difficult as it sounds. Three strategies help you get "up close and personal" with potential prospects without contacting them personally.

Best prospects are as close as your computer ...

Internet discussion groups are good places to find real words from real people about your copywriting topic.

In your favorite search site, type in "forum" (without quotation marks) and your topic (for example, diabetes).

You'll come up with a wealth of ideas ... written by people with diabetes (in this example) or with loved ones with diabetes. These forums get to the heart of what people worry about, what they hope for, what they feel.

Here's an example:

Hi ... I'm a 24-year-old diabetic patient. A few days back, I injured my knee. Diabetes with knee injuries are so horrible. I'm taking joints supplements with diabetic remedies. Are there side effects with this kind of medication?

This one entry gives new insight into what diabetics are thinking. Think what you could learn from digging deeper.

Your prospect has already spoken with your client ...

Ask your client's Customer Service Department for customer letters.

Your prospect is speaking directly in these letters. The Leads Targeted Learning Program highlights a long-running control from Kent Komae. He fashioned his promo around a letter from a satisfied customer.

The absolute best way ...

The best way to know your prospect personally is also the way that's often ignored or avoided.

Quite simply talk to him ... in person.

Here's how I answered Jennifer ...

How do you connect with a 60-ish man? Talk to him in person. This could be a husband, father, friend, etc. Don't talk just about the product. Find out about his life in general. Get to know him more personally without pushing him away by prying.

You already know your ideal prospect. Look at your family, friends, and acquaintances. Offer to buy them coffee or lunch.

Tell them why you're taking up their time. But here's a secret: Don't ask specifically about the product. Rather, ask about problems or life circumstances the problem affects.

So if you're writing about joint pain, you could start this way: "You know, as I get older, I'm worried about not being able to do things I want to because of sore joints. Does this concern you?"

In a short time, you'll get more insight into your prospect's emotions than you'd get from all the generalized demographics and psychographics you lay your hands on.

Which is best?

When it comes time to develop your 3-D prospect image, which strategy works best? Talking directly? Reading customer service files? Demographics/psychographics?

Use all of them. The more insight you have on the real person who's your prospect, the easier it'll be for you to write a successful promotion to him.

I hope to see you back here again tomorrow when we visit with another *Circle of Success* member.

But I'd love to hear from you. Comment below to tell me what you think of today's article. Or about anything you want to discuss.

Published: May 19, 2016

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12 Responses to "The Only Person Who Can Really Tell You About Your Prospect"

Hi Will, Your article today about digging deeper to know your prospect reminds me of a story I heard about 20 years ago in a seminar on human nature.

Two men sat next to each other for a 2 hour flight. One was conducting an experiment for an article on human needs. During the flight, he did nothing but ask his companion questions, one playing off the other.

When the flight landed, the interviewee said to his wife, I just sat next to one of the most interesting men I've ever met!

[FROM WILL: Enjoy able story ... and very instructive. Thank you.]

Guest (Kathy Moll) – over a year ago

Don't we have to be careful about arranging meetings with people we meet online?

[FROM WILL: I might not of been very clear about this. The people you talk to the people you already know, friends and acquaintances. I would never suggest meeting someone in person that you met online. I agree it's not safe. Thanks for helping me clarify this.]

Guest (David Singleton) – over a year ago

Excellent advice, people are "screaming" into our brains, jumping up and down, waving to us, simply listen to them, they want to feel the emotions that we help them find..simply give them the feelings that they want.

[FROM WILL: This is a good perspective. People do love to talk about themselves. When you ask them the right questions, you have struck a gold mine. Thank you.]

Guest (BEAR) – over a year ago

Notwithstanding getting to know your prospect, compelling ideas are essential. They're boredom's antidote without which God's all we have left. But, unfortunately, Godlessness is a place from which few people escape to duly contextualize the enormity of possibility.

Therefore, compelling ideas are the currency of hope for which faith in anything is otherwise insolvent.

[FROM WILL: Compelling ideas are the starting place of any persuasive endeavor. That is why Mark Ford starts with a compelling idea as the first part of his three-part formula for persuasion. Thank you.]

Guest (Chris Morris) – over a year ago

Take a ride in my head!

Comprehension and connecting came early for this child. All the good attributes of humanity he learned by living the opposite of it,he equated in reverse as if knowing what he is experiencing is wrong and had deduced that he will do the exact opposite of what he is going through. Understanding what real unconditional love is by coming to understand his pain, believing right away he should learn from this.Also the loss of blame by knowing instantly why such a situation exists therefore do not judge,has more meaning to him.

[FROM WILL: Thank you for your comment.]

Guest (Baddeh) – over a year ago

Thanks for your advice I am a retired nurse procrastinating about becoming a copywriter. I was always good in English and also took a college course in writing. I was considering writing anything medical as I have much experience in this field.

[FROM WILL: Procrastinate no more! I urge you to make that small step in the copywriting that can lead to a really good career. And your choice of niche, something related to medical, is an excellent idea.]

Guest (Carole) – over a year ago

Will, your series this week has certainly expanded my thinking. It's not rocket science, but it makes perfect sense, and nothing difficult. Thanks a bunch.

Glenn

[FROM WILL: One of the most compelling aspects of copywriting is that it is not rocket science. If it were, I wouldn't be able to write copy, and my prospects wouldn't be able to understand it. Thank you for the perspective.]

rastus – over a year ago

Attaining the depths of subject insight seems so ready at hand when it is laid out in your 3 step process. Sourcing information from the groupings, gatherings, and garnering(s), gets you well into the process of forming a good copywriting article/project.

[FROM WILL: I'm pleased that you have learned from this series. Thank you.]

Lil Acorn – over a year ago

Thank you, everyone, for the comments you've left and taking the time to leave them.

Good luck, best wishes, and much success, Will

Will Newman – over a year ago

You have answered my main problem with understanding people with your first suggestion. I've often seen forums as a place to promote, but never as a place to study people. Thanks.

If somebody interviewed me (I'm 76) they would get completely the wrong idea about 76 year old men! I have websites. I walk for an hour or two each day. Most of my food comes from my organic garden. I plan to take an extended trip round Central America. I don't smoke, drink, take coffee or tea, eat bread or potatoes.

Escritor – over a year ago

Hello friends,

My name is Fatima Camelo, an automation and control engineer who in love by the pen and paper.

I have a dream, I'd like to become a copy writer but I've to earn some money in order to buy the course.

Yes, I've already have a idea about the market place - B2B manufactures.

I've have experience at the maintnance departure of a foam factory.

In my opinion this is enough to start but I don't have the names...

Regards,

FC

P.S. - I look forward to have your opinion , please

[FROM WILL: I'm not sure what you're asking. But if you're asking whether you should start your copywriting work right now before training, the answer is yes certainly. Recognize that you won't have the skills or the information top copywriters have, but you can still do well. Where should you start? Start where you work and find out if you can do any writing for them. Good luck.]

Guest (Fatima Camelo) – over a year ago

Wow this is a great article, thanks Will.

When I read about reading forums, the question came up if dedicated Facebook groups would also be helpfull alongside forms?

Here's a remark of what I recently did - I went to the Facebook and LinkedIn profile of a person in my target market and studied him.

Francois-dT – over a year ago

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