

Direct Response Copywriting — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into a sales letter you can actually finish. Work through one section per module: lock the market and avatar, run the RMBC research and find your mechanism, engineer the Big Idea and draft the letter section by section, then build the offer and a test plan. Fill in every field and template, because a sales letter you have not researched is a sales letter you will guess at, and guessed copy does not convert.

Set the Dials Before You Write

Decide what direct response means for your project, then set your reader's awareness and the market's sophistication.

Worksheet: Define the Tracked Action

Pin down the single measurable action this letter must produce. If you cannot name how you will count it, you are writing brand copy, not direct response.

The product or offer this letter sells

The one action I want the reader to take (buy, opt in, call, order)

Exactly how I will measure whether the copy produced that action

The price point and whether this is a considered purchase that justifies long copy

The traffic source and how cold or warm those readers are

Worksheet: Awareness and Sophistication Dial

Place your market on both Schwartz scales, then write what each setting forces your lead to do. This decides your opening before you draft.

Awareness stage (unaware, problem-aware, solution-aware, product-aware, most aware)

Evidence from research that this is the right stage

What this awareness stage means my lead must do first

Sophistication stage (1 to 5) and how many similar claims this market has heard

What this sophistication stage means for my mechanism and claim size

My one-line conclusion: the kind of lead this market needs

Exercise: Find the Dominant Emotion

Direct response is driven by emotion. Identify the single strongest feeling your avatar has about this problem, then make it concrete with their own words.

- Which core driver is strongest here: fear of loss, greed, status, health, or curiosity?
 - What exact phrase from a real review or comment shows that emotion in the avatar's words?
 - How will you stir that emotion in the first 100 words, and what logical proof will you hand them right after to justify acting on it?
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Checklist: Strategy Readiness Checklist

- I have named the single tracked action this letter must produce
- I can state exactly how I will measure conversions
- I have placed the market on the awareness scale with evidence
- I have placed the market on the sophistication scale and know if I need a unique mechanism
- I have identified the one dominant emotion and a real quote that proves it
- I have decided whether the price justifies a long-form letter

Run the RMBC Research

Build the one-person avatar, mine real language, and find the unique mechanism that makes your claim believable.

Worksheet: One-Person Avatar Profile

Write to one specific human, not a demographic. Give them a name and enough detail that you could write them a personal letter.

Name, age, and one-line description

A typical day and where the problem shows up in it

The precise version of the problem they have

What they have already tried that failed

Their deepest fear about the problem and their dream outcome

The objection most likely to stop them from buying

Exercise: Voice-of-Customer Mining Run

Spend one focused session collecting real language. Read 40 to 60 reviews, comments, and threads across the sources in the course, and copy vivid phrases verbatim into the four buckets below.

- List five pain phrases in the avatar's exact words, with their spelling intact.
- List five dream-outcome phrases the way customers actually said them.
- List the three objections that came up most often across the sources.

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- Which single phrase repeated most across many people, and could it be your headline?
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Worksheet: Unique Mechanism Builder

Name the villain and the hero, both rooted in something true. This is what lets you compete in a tired market. The true root cause of the problem (the mechanism of the problem)

A memorable villain name for that cause

Why everything the avatar tried before did not address this cause

The one real reason your product addresses the cause (the mechanism of the solution)

A memorable hero name for that mechanism

The proof — ingredient, study, method, or result — that backs both halves

Checklist: Proof Inventory Checklist

- I have at least three specific testimonials with real names and concrete numbers
- I have any studies, third-party data, or research that supports the mechanism
- I have a demonstration or before-and-after I can describe vividly
- I have credentials or authority figures I can cite
- I have hard usage numbers (units sold, customers, years in business)
- Every major claim I plan to make has a matching proof element ready

Big Idea, Lead, and the Letter

Engineer the one concept the letter is built on, choose the lead, and draft the sales letter section by section.

Exercise: Engineer Your Big Idea

Find the single fresh, emotional concept the whole letter will dramatize. It is not the product; it is the angle that makes the reader see the problem in a new way.

- What deep desire or fear from your research will the Big Idea tap?
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- How does your unique mechanism make that idea feel new and credible?
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- State your Big Idea in one specific, dramatic sentence, then answer: would the avatar stop scrolling to hear more?
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Worksheet: Headline and Lead Selector

Write your headline options, then pick the lead type that matches your awareness setting. Cold readers need indirect leads; warm readers can take a direct one.

My pre-head (the line above the headline)

My three strongest headlines out of the 25 I wrote

Chosen lead type (offer, promise, problem-solution, big-secret, proclamation, or story)

Why this lead type fits my market's awareness stage

My opening two sentences, written to be short and impossible to stop reading

The open loop or emotional hook that pulls the reader into the body

Worksheet: 13-Step Letter Outline

Write one or two lines for each step of the sales-letter skeleton. This outline becomes your draft. Do not skip the proof step or the PS.

Headline and lead (one line each)

Problem and agitation: the pain in their words

Mechanism of the problem: the named villain

Solution and its mechanism: the named hero

Desire and benefits: the after state, vividly

Proof stack: the strongest two or three proof elements

The offer, the bonuses, and the price reveal

Scarcity, the guarantee, the call to action, and the PS

Checklist: Slippery-Slide Checklist

- My headline leads with self-interest, news, or curiosity
- My first sentence exists only to make them read the second
- Every section ends in a way that makes the reader want the next one
- I agitate the problem before I introduce the solution
- My proof section is the most specific, number-heavy part of the letter
- My PS restates the biggest promise, the deadline, and the guarantee

VSL, Offer, and Test Plan

Adapt the letter to a VSL hook, build an offer the reader cannot refuse, and plan the split test that proves it.

Exercise: Write Your 15-Second VSL Hook

Draft the pattern-interrupt opening that has to stop a viewer in the first 10 to 15 seconds. Read it aloud until it sounds like a person talking, not a script.

- What bold claim, question, or warning will interrupt the pattern in the first line?

- How do you call out the avatar and tease the mechanism within the opening seconds?

- What specific payoff do you promise by the end, and does the whole hook fit in 15 spoken seconds?

Worksheet: Offer Stack and Price Reveal

Build the complete offer so the value-to-price gap feels irrational to refuse. List each item with a believable value, then anchor before revealing the real price.

Core product and its stated value

Bonus 1, 2, and 3, each with a value and the objection it answers

Total stated value of everything included

The anchor price or comparison I will state before the reveal

The real price and any payment plan

The guarantee (length, terms, and how easy it is to claim)

The real scarcity (true deadline, capped quantity, or expiring bonus)

Exercise: Compliance Pass

Run your strongest claims through the credibility rules before anything ships. The goal is persuasion that is also truthful and substantiated.

- Which claims in my letter need substantiation, and do I have the evidence on hand?
 - Where do I need a not-typical-results disclaimer near a testimonial?
 - Have I avoided disease-cure or guaranteed-income language, and where should I soften to may, can, or helped?
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Checklist: Edit and Test Readiness Checklist

- I ran the clarity, proof, cut, rhythm, and slippery-slide editing passes
- I read the whole letter or script aloud and fixed every stumble
- I cut at least 15% of the words on the cut pass
- Every claim has nearby proof and respects the claims rules
- I have defined the one element to split-test first (headline and lead)
- I know how many conversions and what significance I need before calling a winner

Your Action Plan

1. Name the single tracked action and how you will measure it, then set the awareness and sophistication dials with real evidence.
2. Build a one-person avatar with a name, a routine, the failed attempts, the fear, and the dream.
3. Run one focused voice-of-customer mining session and fill the pain, dream, objection, and surprise buckets with verbatim phrases.
4. Build your unique mechanism by naming the villain (the real cause) and the hero (why your product works).
5. Assemble the proof inventory so every claim you plan to make has a matching proof element.
6. Engineer one Big Idea, write 25 headlines, and choose the lead type that matches your awareness stage.

7. Outline the full 13-step letter, then write the draft fast and ugly to beat the blank page.
8. Adapt the opening into a 15-second VSL hook and read it aloud until it sounds like speech.
9. Build the offer stack, justify and reveal the price, and add a strong guarantee with real scarcity.
10. Run the five editing passes, do a compliance pass, then set up a split test on the headline and lead and let the numbers pick the control.

