

The Art of Writing Great Email Subject Lines!

**How to increase your open rates through logic
and optimization.**

By Richard Winsor

Table of Contents

How to increase your open rates through logic and optimization.....	1
Table of Contents.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Step #1: Clarity First	5
Step #2: Draft 4-8 Subject Lines	7
Step #3: Weed Out The Duds.....	8
Step #4: Additional Considerations:.....	9
Conclusion.....	11

Introduction

Hello,

Email subject lines are often overlooked in the marketing process. By following the steps in this guide, you will:

- Gain knowledge that will help you becoming even better as a marketer
- Have a better relationship with your list by increasing the trust factor
- And increase your profits.

Mastering the art of writing great subject lines means you'll avoid the mistakes others make and improve your opt in rates. Sound good?

Sadly, I can't just hand you the perfect email subject line that works 100% of the time. As we'll see, that kind of thing is short lived. Every situation is unique. What I want to show you is a thought process you should go through when you write your subject lines. It can be a little challenging to rethink what you may be doing, but the benefits outweigh the challenge.

The process itself is pretty simple:

Step 1. Clarity first: how to eliminate confusion for your reader.

Step 2. Draft subject lines to increase your chances of success.

Step 3. Weed out the duds and run with the winner!

Step 4. Additional considerations.

Let's get started.

First, let's go over some background information to put everything in context.

Why are subject lines so important?

No one wants to read your email. Gary Vaynerchuck said that marketers have ruined email. It went from "Oh boy, I got mail!" to scrolling through miles of spam in a few short years.

We live in a "blink" world in which people make split second decisions whether or not to open your email. Picture opening the door to meet your blind date for the first time. Your brain makes a judgement call in less than a second.

Not only are people tired of email, but it's pretty easy to click unsubscribe or "report spam" even if they knowingly signed up for it! Doh.

Why all of this is great news for you.

I'm not a glass half full guy. Look at the upside: Once you know the terrain, you can successfully navigate it. I have identified email subject lines as one of the weakest links in most marketers "chain."

Strengthening this link is a great edge on the competition that's flooding your customer's inboxes.

With that as our perspective, let's go on to step one...

Step #1: Clarity First

Clarity is the foundation of all successful communication. If your thinking at the start is fuzzy, there is no way it will wind up becoming clear at the end. You want to be clear on the purpose of your email from the start.

Is it to inform them of something?

Is it to persuade them to take some action?

Is it to entertain?

Is it to provide value?

Maybe you want to provide a mix of the above. That can work, but I wouldn't recommend that at first. Only you can answer the questions above based on your situation. But even just a few minutes of pondering these questions upfront can really get you started on the right foot.

In the world of journalism, there's "the lead." The lead is one sentence that explains "who did what." The lead is usually the first sentence in most news stories.

Example: "A local man was bitten by a dog this morning."

Everything after that is adding details. Journalist work hard to take a story and clarify it to a lead sentence.

Can you boil your communication down to one sentence?

Another consideration:

Without going too far into the world of grammar, we should consider verbs for a second. Subject lines are short, and we want to pack as much punch as we can.

Here are some examples of putting the verb first:

Stuck making nothing?

Stop going in circles!

Imagine getting (result).

The eye is drawn to action verbs. Of course, anything use dot often can become less effective, so bear in mind I'm pointing out tools.

Another strong tool is "benefits first." One of the previous examples: Imagine getting (result) has the added bonus of giving the reader a benefit to imagine.

Think of subject lines as mini calls to action. People will only click if they think it will benefit them in some way.

To sum up step 1:

- Clarify your message to the point that it can be said in a single sentence. (Research news articles to see how they do it.)
- Consider powerful verbs.
- Consider benefits.

Step #2: Draft 4-8 Subject Lines

It's kind of shocking to know how careless many people are with their subject lines. They just type in something off the top of their heads and move on.

If you're a 9th degree black belt marketer, you probably have the ability to do that successfully. However, if you're a mere mortal like the rest of us, it might be a good idea to game out a few potential subject lines.

Your first thought is not often your best thought. I might even go so far as to say that your first thought is often your worst thought because it's obvious. It took no effort to create. That puts you in company with all the laziest marketers out there. Remember, we are looking for the edge here.

By brainstorming 4 to 8 subject lines, you clear out the first obvious thoughts and dig a little deeper to find something unique. If you only write one line, you have no choice: you have to use it. I'd rather have options to compare.

Note: I would add that the best practice would be to write at least 10 subject lines. It helps flex your idea muscles and you may be surprised at what idea 9 or 10 has to offer. I know we are all busy people, but we should spend a few extra minutes a day becoming stronger marketers. (You can even save some of them in your swipe file for the future!)

To sum up step 2:

-You increase your chances of success by increasing the quantity of subject lines you can generate. Quantity creates quality.

Step #3: Weed Out The Duds

Now you can start applying some judgements to your ideas.

Golden Key: Read everything out loud. Have you ever written something, it looks perfect, and then you read it out loud and found out that it doesn't make any sense? It has happened to all of us. When it happens to me, I am thankful because I caught something that could have been embarrassing. It takes a lot of practice I writing before you can skip this step.

Remember: your customer will read your subject line and hear it in their head. If it is clunky or unclear, they will bail.

What is the emotional content of your subject line? I'm not saying it should read "Fire! Get out!" It should have some potential to stir some emotions in your reader.

I've seen lame subject lines that just say, "hey." That's it. No emotion, no benefit. Those don't get read.

If your subject line creates curiosity, can you deliver on it?

If you mention a benefit, can you follow up on it?

To sum up step 3:

-Weed out the loser subject lines that have no benefit or emotional content for the reader.

-Make sure you can deliver on your emotion and/or benefits you mention.

Step #4: Additional Considerations:

How To Reverse Engineer Your Inbox

It's crazy how many people unsubscribe from marketers and complain about it. They don't realize that they are getting a master class from top marketers for free!

To understand your market's buying behaviors, you must first examine your own.

Take a look at your inbox. Who do you click on no matter what?

You see, a click is not just a click.

There are many variables going into the click such as:

- Your prior relationship/experience with the marketer.
- The message to market match.
- The pushing of hot buttons (depending on the market.)

How To Burn Your List

I'd say that the biggest mistake marketers make involve using "tricks" to get people to open their emails.

Tricks are the ultimate way to burn your list. Let's go over some of the offenders:

- Subject line: **Bad news..**

Marketers once claimed this got the most opens. And, like any other trick, it works until it doesn't. (The bad news inside the email usually took the form of "you only have 2 more hours to send me money. Hurry!")

-Subject line: **Your mother is dead**

Inside the email: “Dead tired of waiting for you to send her flowers. Call us now...”

-Subject line: **I’m at the hospital..**

Inside the email: “My sister just gave birth to twins!”

-Subject line: **Important: open or get deleted from this list**

I don’t respond well to threats, so I didn’t open it, and I’m STILL on this marketer’s list!

The worst trick is what I call zombie marketing. I unsubscribe from a terrible marketer’s list and keep getting emails from them under a new email address. I kill ‘em, but they keep coming back from the dead.

These are the tricks that give all marketers a bad name. You don’t want to be like these folks.

Conclusion

The first thing you should done when you finish reading this e-book is the reverse engineering. Study your inbox like a scientist and note what succeeds and fails. Sign up for every list you can. (You may need a separate email account just for that.)

I want to wish you the best of luck in your future adventures in email!

Richard Winser