

Create A Smokin' Tagline

Summary

Did you know you have only 6.5 seconds to connect with prospects?

Advertising research shows that within 6.5 seconds people “lean-in” or the “tune-out”.

Connect and inspire the “lean-in” with a smokin’ tag-line.

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“Tune-out” Tag-lines

- Activity-focused
- Conceptual
- Bland
- Long
- Technical

“Lean-in” Tag-lines

- Client-focused
- Concrete
- Unique to you
- Short & Practical
- Inspires Feel-good

DraftFCB study results:

“Additional provocative findings showed: **insurance and financial industry messages scored the lowest**”

We have 6.5 Seconds

I worked with DraftFCB's Chicago headquarters on leadership development. It was an awesome experience! DraftFCB is one of the largest global leaders in marketing and advertising. Their research reveals that we have exactly 6.5 seconds to make an impact with our message. In that tiny time people decide to *lean-in* and learn more or *tune-out* and disengage. Count to 6, you have just that long to intrigue your audience or they're onto something else.

The “Natural” Problem

As I work with clients on brand messaging, I've noticed a **natural but self-defeating** tendency when drafting their tag-line. People tend to:

- Describe their activities
- Write in conceptual language
- Use the same adjectives as most of their peers
- Write a lengthy paragraph
- Include technical terms

After creating such a tag-line, people intuitively know it's not special. It falls flat, sounds boring, stilted or contrived. It goes in a drawer and there it sits. Many feel defeated and continue to meander in their messaging to clients and prospects.

You're the Expert

Advertising professionals get paid lots to create bold and innovative messaging. If it were easy DraftFCB and all the other advertising agencies would not exist. But, you know what they don't know. You know yourself, your skills, your uniqueness and your ideal clients better than anyone. You are the best expert on you. The key is telling other people in a way that they “get” you quickly. There's six steps to building an evocative and memorable message.



Create a Smokin' Tag-line in 6 Steps

1. **Short** - You have 6.5 seconds, make them count. A phrase or short sentence is all you have to peak interest or lose them.
2. **Concrete** - Every verb and noun should create a mental picture of something real in your listener's mind. A real thing, experience or feeling. Ideally, it will connect to everyday life. Forget the fancy terms. Use words that can be drawn in a picture.
3. **Prospect-Focused** - It's natural to describe our skills, qualifications and activities but it may not communicate what the prospect cares about. At a doctor visit, we don't want the doctor's resume. We want a solution. Share the tangible and intangible you deliver for the client. The activities and biography can come *after* they ask for more.
4. **Speak Native** - Nothing turns people off faster than jargon. Use concrete language that also makes sense for your listener. For example, "I'm a CFO for my clients" is short and to the point, but if your listener doesn't know what a CFO does, then the analogy fails.
5. **Evoke Good Feelings** - Evoke a positive feeling along with the facts. Great branding serves emotional needs as well as practical needs.
6. **Inspire Curiosity** - Say just enough to inspire your listener to ask for more: "How do you do that?", "Tell me more!". You've got the lean-in if you inspire curiosity!

I'll share just one of many examples from coaching professionals. An investment team initially offered a lengthy description of their technical skills and thorough process. I then asked "*What does that actually mean?*" After a moment they came up with a wonderful succinct and concrete answer: "**Our clients have an 80% chance of having MORE money than they expected in retirement.**" How powerful! It's short, concrete, delivers powerful results, feels great and inspires people to lean-in!

What's your brand message? Do people "get" you in one or two sentences? If not, work through the six steps. It's great to do this with an outsider. They're much better at spotting jargon and noticing the most relevant ideas. Below is my short resume, but here's my one sentence tag-line: "**I'm a coach, a personal-trainer for professional life**".

About the Author: Barbara is a business psychologist and productivity coach. She serves professionals, organizations and industry partners through coaching and speaking on: Productivity, Client Relationships, Women, Change, Communication, Time, Teams and Leadership. Author of **The Top Performer's Guide Change** and **The \$14 Trillion Woman: Your Essential Guide to Engaging the Female Client**.



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