



How to Write a High-Converting Video Sales Letter

The Complete Framework for VSLs That Sell Millions

36 Chapters • 4 Appendices • 34,000+ Words

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Welcome

You're holding the most comprehensive guide to Video Sales Letter copywriting ever assembled.

This book synthesizes the proven frameworks behind billions of dollars in tracked revenue — from Stefan Georgi's RMBC II system and Peter Kell's VSL God Process to Chris Haddad's hook taxonomy, Todd Brown's E5 Method, and Jon Benson's original VSL format that started it all.

I didn't write this to give you theory. I wrote it to give you a system.

A system for researching your market so thoroughly that writing becomes assembly. For developing mechanisms so compelling that even a rough draft converts. For structuring your VSL so every scene earns the next one — a slippery slide from the first frame to the buy button.

Here's what you'll find inside:

- **Part I** lays the strategic foundation — awareness levels, market sophistication, and the research process that makes writing easy.
- **Part II** reveals the unique mechanism — the single element responsible for 70% of your VSL's success.
- **Part III** walks you through the complete VSL structure, section by section, from hook to product reveal.
- **Part IV** builds the close — the longest and most important section of your VSL.
- **Part V** covers advanced techniques including short-form VSLs, ADHD super hook ads, and financial copy.
- **Part VI** sharpens the craft — slippery slide technique, fascinations, proof stacking, and emotional mastery.
- **Part VII** gives you the process — from brief to draft to optimization, including a complete AI-accelerated workflow.

Whether you're writing your first VSL or your fiftieth, this book gives you the strategic framework, the structural templates, and the craft techniques to create scripts that sell.

Every chapter is designed to be actionable. Read it, apply it, test it, profit from it.

Let's get to work.

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PART I: FOUNDATIONS

BEFORE YOU WRITE A WORD

CHAPTER 1

What a VSL Actually Is (And Why It Still Dominates)

In 2007, a copywriter named Jon Benson did something that changed direct response marketing forever. He took a long-form sales letter, broke it into simple slides with text, recorded himself reading it aloud, and put the resulting video on a landing page.

No talking head. No B-roll. No graphics. Just words and voice.

It shouldn't have worked. The production quality was terrible by any standard. But it crushed everything else he'd ever tested — and it kept on crushing. Over the next decade, that ugly format — the Video Sales Letter — generated over \$1 billion in tracked revenue across Benson's clients and licensees.

The reason it worked then is the same reason it works now, and it's worth understanding deeply before you write your first word of VSL copy.

Why VSLs Outperform

A sales letter on a web page has a fatal flaw: the reader controls the experience. They skim. They jump to the price. They scan for bullet points and skip the story. All that careful psychological sequencing you built — the open loops, the mechanism reveal, the ascending proof stack — evaporates the moment they scroll past it.

A VSL eliminates that problem entirely.

The copywriter controls the pace, the sequence, and the emotional journey. The viewer can't skim ahead. They can't jump to the price before you've built the value. They experience your argument in the exact order you intended, at the exact speed you chose. Every beat lands.

This is why Benson's ugly text-on-screen format beat polished sales pages. It wasn't about production value. It was about pacing control.

Joe Sugarman — author of *Advertising Secrets of the Written Word* and one of the great mail-order copywriters — articulated the principle decades before VSLs existed: "The sole purpose of every element of your ad is to get the first sentence read. The sole purpose of the first sentence is to get the second sentence read." He called this the Slippery Slide.

A sales letter aspires to be a slippery slide. A VSL enforces it.

The Data Says VSLs Are Getting Stronger

If you've been told that VSLs are dying — that attention spans are too short, that people won't watch long videos, that TikTok has ruined everything — the data says the opposite.

Patrick Stiles is the founder of Vidalytics, a video hosting platform built specifically for VSLs. The platform has driven an estimated \$3 billion in sales. His dataset spans thousands of VSLs across every major market — health, finance, biz-op, skincare, info products, devices. It's the largest VSL performance dataset that exists.

Here's what that data shows as of early 2025:

Average VSL conversion rate: 1.78%. That's up from 1.2% in 2023 and 1.56% all-time. Conversion rates are going UP, not down.

Average VSL length: 36 minutes. And that number is getting LONGER — up roughly 15% since 2021. The market is rewarding longer VSLs, not shorter ones.

47% of all conversions happen at the very end of the video. Only about 3% of viewers make it to the end, but those viewers represent nearly half of all purchases. Your close copy matters enormously — a point we'll return to repeatedly in this book.

Best-converting front-end VSL length: approximately 20 minutes.

Performance drops off sharply past 60 minutes, but the sweet spot is far longer than most people assume.

The best-performing VSLs drop the first CTA at 30% into the video.

The worst performers wait until 79%. That's a massive gap, and it tells you something important: don't wait too long to ask for the sale. More on this in Part IV.

These aren't cherry-picked success stories. This is platform-wide data across billions of dollars in tracked revenue. The VSL format isn't declining. It's accelerating.

The Core Truth

Here's the thing that separates a great VSL from a mediocre one, and it has nothing to do with production quality, video length, or fancy animations.

A great VSL is a story that sells.

Not a pitch. Not a lecture. Not a presentation with bullet points. A story.

Every winning VSL that Peter Kell has reverse-engineered across the biggest campaigns on the internet — Gundry MD, Beverly Hills MD, V-Shred, Mindvalley, Nucific, Dr. Marty's — follows a narrative arc. The prospect never feels sold to. They feel like they're hearing a fascinating story that naturally ends at a product.

Stefan Georgi, whose RMBC method has been used to write hundreds of millions of dollars in direct response copy, puts it this way: the lead is an advertisement for the rest of the VSL. Its only job is to sell the prospect on the value of *watching the rest*. If the lead works, the viewer enters a state Peter Kell calls "trance" — a flow state where they're so engaged with the story that they forget they're watching an ad.

This is the state you're trying to create. And the rest of this book is about how to create it reliably, across any market, for any product.

A Note on Production

Because Benson proved that script quality matters more than production value, you'll notice this book focuses entirely on the writing. We won't talk about cameras, lighting, editing software, or voiceover talent. Not because those things don't matter — they do — but because the script is the engine. Everything else is bodywork.

A brilliant script with mediocre production will outperform a mediocre script with brilliant production. Every time.



The Strategic Decisions That Determine Success Before You Write

Most copywriters start a VSL project by opening a blank document and trying to write a hook.

This is like a builder showing up at a job site and immediately starting to hammer nails. Without blueprints, without knowing the soil conditions, without even knowing what kind of building they're constructing.

The uncomfortable truth is that the highest-leverage work on a VSL happens before you write a single word of copy. Get the strategy right, and even a rough draft will convert. Get it wrong, and no amount of wordsmithing will save you.

The 5 High-Leverage Points

Luke Iha, from the Genesis/Copy Coders team, distilled VSL success down to five creative decisions. Everything else, he argues, is window dressing. Here's his hierarchy:

1. The Hook/Opening

If you lose someone in the first 30 seconds, nothing else matters.

This seems obvious, but consider the implication: a VSL with an amazing mechanism, ironclad proof, and a perfectly structured close will completely bomb if the hook is boring. You can have the best product in the world, and if the first fifteen seconds don't snap the viewer out of their scroll trance, they'll never hear about it.

The Vidalytics data confirms this. Engagement follows what Stiles calls a "plane landing" curve: a massive nose-dive in the first few minutes, then it smooths out as completion bias kicks in. The viewers you lose in the first thirty seconds are gone forever. The ones who survive past two minutes tend to stick around.

This is why Stefan Georgi's team member Dario tested 130 different microleads before finding the one that let them scale to several million dollars a month. Not 5. Not 10. One hundred and thirty. If you're testing fewer than a dozen leads, you probably haven't found your winner yet.

2. The Mechanism/Big Idea

This is the big one. Iha estimates that roughly 70% of a VSL's success is determined by the mechanism — the unique explanation of WHY the problem exists and HOW your solution fixes it.

Four questions tell you whether your mechanism is strong enough:

Is it NEW? Actually different from what the prospect has heard before? If you're selling a weight loss product and your mechanism is "eat less, move more," you're dead. The prospect has heard that a thousand times. Novelty creates hope in people who have tried and failed.

Does it fit the "meta"? The mechanism needs to graft onto existing mental structures the prospect already understands. Keto, inflammation, gut health, hormone balance, passive income — these are "meta" concepts that large audiences already have mental models for. A mechanism that requires building a completely new mental model from scratch is a much harder sell.

Does it feel BIG? Is this a paradigm shift or a minor tweak? The best mechanisms feel like revelations — "Oh my God, THAT'S why nothing has worked."

Is it INTUITIVE? People need an "oh, that makes sense" reaction, not a "let me think about this for twenty minutes" reaction. The best mechanisms use what Iha calls interoceptive explanations — things people can feel in their own body — and natural metaphors: clogged pipes, rusty hinges, a tent with collapsed poles. If you have to reference BH51 hormones targeting mitochondrial cells affecting lymphatic glands, you've gone too far.

We'll spend all of Part II on mechanism development, because this single element is the difference between a campaign that generates millions and one that never gets off the ground.

3. The Characterization/Delivery Mechanism

This is how you describe or "characterize" your solution. Not what it does, but how it looks, feels, and arrives in the prospect's life.

In health: "gummies," "red foam," "purple peel," "morning ritual."

In biz-op: "5-minute phone trick," "push-button system," "copy-paste method."

In digital products: "plug-and-play blueprint," "fill-in-the-blank templates," "3-step sequence."

The key insight: make your solution insanely tangible and concrete — something you can hold in your hand and visualize. Colors and textures work incredibly well. "A red foam" is more compelling than "a dietary supplement." "The purple peel trick" is more compelling than "a skincare technique."

DIY solutions connected to known objects create instant understanding: "The Coca-Cola trick that regrows hair." You don't know what it is, but you can already picture it. That's the power of characterization.

4. The Format

Match your sales message to the organic consumption patterns of your audience. If you're talking to women aged 40-50, what kind of media do they already consume? Facebook posts? News articles? Health blogs? Make your ad look like content they're already consuming. This bypasses their "ad radar."

Every format innovation in direct response history follows this principle — from Gary Halbert's A-pile letters (personal-looking envelopes that got opened first) to the podcast-style VSL (feels like listening to a conversation, not watching an ad). Benson's original text-on-screen format worked partly because it didn't look like a commercial. It looked like a presentation — something educational.

5. "Global Changes"

This is the catch-all lever for optimizing an existing VSL:

- ▶ Lowering the reading level throughout

- ▶ Adjusting the structural order
- ▶ Cutting significant portions
- ▶ Shortening overall and increasing velocity

These sound minor, but a global reduction in reading level across an entire VSL can produce a meaningful conversion lift. Every word your prospect has to work to understand is friction on the slippery slide.

The Implication for How You Spend Your Time

Here's what most copywriters get wrong: they spend 80% of their time on the draft and 20% on strategy. The leverage is inverted. The draft is the lowest-leverage part of the process. The mechanism, the hook, the characterization — the strategic decisions captured in the brief — are where campaigns are won or lost.

Iha lays out the optimal model:

Step	Leverage	Where Value Lives
Product idea + mechanism	HIGH	Strategic thinking
Marketing brief	HIGH	Strategic thinking
Writing the draft	LOW	Execution
Editing the draft	MEDIUM	Judgment

The implication is clear: spend more time on your brief, your mechanism, and your hook than on your draft. A brilliant brief produces a good draft almost automatically. A weak brief produces a draft that no amount of editing can rescue.



CHAPTER 3

Know Your Prospect — Awareness and Sophistication

You could write the most compelling VSL ever created, and it would still fail if you aimed it at the wrong audience — or at the right audience with the wrong entry point.

Before you write, you need to answer two questions:

- 1. How much does my prospect already know?** (Awareness)
- 2. How many competing claims have they already heard?**
(Sophistication)

These two dimensions — both mapped by Eugene Schwartz in his 1966 masterpiece *Breakthrough Advertising* — determine everything about your VSL's opening, structure, length, and proof requirements. Getting them wrong is the single most common reason copy fails.

The Five Levels of Awareness

Schwartz identified five levels of prospect awareness. Your VSL's lead must match the level your prospect actually occupies. Here's a principle worth tattooing on your writing hand: **never write copy for a higher awareness level than your audience actually has.**

An Unaware prospect will bounce from a Product Aware lead — it feels like a pitch for something they've never heard of and don't yet care about.

Conversely, a Most Aware prospect will bounce from an Unaware lead — it's too slow, too indirect, and feels like it's wasting their time.

Level 1: Most Aware

The prospect knows your product, knows what it does, and has decided they want it. All they need is the deal — how much and where.

Your lead: Price, offer, deadline, bonus. Don't oversell. Get out of the way.

Example: "Last chance — Astro Pro is 60% off until midnight."

VSL length: Short. Often you don't need a VSL at all — just a sales page.

When you encounter this level: Email lists, retargeting, branded search traffic. These people already know you. Respect their time.

Level 2: Product Aware

They know your product exists but haven't pulled the trigger. They need convincing — more proof, better comparison, reduced risk.

Your lead: Proof, testimonials, comparison to alternatives, risk reversal.

Example: "See why 14,000 women switched from [Competitor] to [Your Product] this month."

VSL length: Medium. Focus on proof and overcoming objections.

Level 3: Solution Aware

They know solutions exist for their problem, but they don't know YOUR solution. They're shopping. They've probably tried competitors and been disappointed.

Your lead: Unique mechanism. Why YOUR approach is fundamentally different from everything else they've tried.

Example: "Most horoscope apps use sun signs only. Here's why that's giving you the wrong advice."

VSL length: Medium to long. You need to establish your mechanism before presenting the product.

This is where most VSL markets live today. Your prospects have tried things. They've been burned. They're skeptical but still hoping. Your mechanism is the vehicle for renewing that hope.

Level 4: Problem Aware

They feel the pain, but they don't know a solution exists. They might not even realize the problem has a name. They just know something is wrong.

Your lead: Agitate the problem, then introduce the category of solution. No product mention yet — you'd be jumping too far ahead.

Example: "Why does every relationship start amazing then fall apart at the 3-month mark?"

VSL length: Long. You need to educate before you can sell. This is where full mechanism sections, background stories, and extended proof become essential.

Level 5: Unaware

They don't even know they have a problem. Or they won't admit it without being led there by your copy.

Your lead: Story, curiosity, identification. Never mention the product early. The viewer needs to be drawn into a narrative that gradually reveals the problem they didn't know they had.

Example: "A Stanford astronomer just discovered something about your birthday that could explain your entire love life."

VSL length: Longest. Fully indirect. Story leads, curiosity hooks, slow revelation.

Schwartz's classic headlines for this level are masterpieces of indirect entry:

- ▶ *"They Laughed When I Sat Down At The Piano — But When I Started To Play!"*
- ▶ *"Often A Bridesmaid But Never A Bride"*
- ▶ *"Blow some my way."* (Four words that opened the women's cigarette market.)

Each one pulls the reader in without revealing what's being sold. The product doesn't appear until the prospect is already emotionally invested.

How to Determine Your Prospect's Awareness Level

The awareness level isn't a property of your product — it's a property of where the prospect encounters your message. The same person can be at different awareness levels depending on the channel:

Traffic Source	Typical Awareness
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Cold traffic (Facebook, YouTube pre-roll)	Problem Aware or Unaware
Search traffic (Google, SEO)	Solution Aware or Product Aware
Email list	Product Aware to Most Aware
Retargeting	Product Aware or Most Aware
Affiliate traffic	Varies — depends on the affiliate's pre-sell

Stefan Georgi's RMBC II process makes awareness assessment the very first step of research. Before anything else, he feeds the Schwartz awareness framework plus product/market details into multiple AI systems and asks each to estimate the percentage of the total addressable market at each awareness level. The majority awareness level — where the largest segment of potential buyers sits — determines the lead strategy, funnel length, and copy intensity for the entire campaign.

The Five Stages of Market Sophistication

Awareness tells you how much your prospect knows. Sophistication tells you how much advertising they've already endured.

This is a crucial distinction. A prospect can be fully Problem Aware — they know they have joint pain, they know it's getting worse — but they've also seen three hundred ads for joint supplements. They've heard every claim, seen every mechanism, and been burned by every guarantee. Their awareness is high, but so is their cynicism.

Sophistication determines not **WHAT** you say but **HOW** you say it.

Stage 1: Be First

You're the first product in the market. Simply state the claim directly. No fancy copy required.

"Now! Lose ugly fat!"

This almost never applies today. Nearly every market has moved past Stage 1.

Stage 2: Enlarge the Claim

Competitors have appeared. Make your claim bigger, bolder, more specific. Outpromise them.

"Lose Up To 47 Pounds In 4 Weeks — Or Receive \$40 Back!"

Specific numbers, specific timeframes, specific guarantees. You're in an arms race of promises.

Stage 3: Introduce a Mechanism

Here's where it gets interesting — and where most markets live today.

Claims are exhausted. Everyone promises the same thing. Your prospect has heard "lose weight fast" a thousand times. The promises have lost their power.

The headline shifts from WHAT to HOW. The claim itself — lose weight — is compressed to a single word or implied. The mechanism dominates.

"Floats Fat Right Out Of Your Body!"

The promise (weight loss) is barely mentioned. Instead, the mechanism (floats fat out) carries the entire load. It's new, it's visual, it's intriguing. It makes the old promise feel fresh again.

Schwartz: *"What this market needs now is a new device to make all these old claims become fresh and believable again. In other words, a new mechanism — a new way to make the old promise work."*

This is why mechanism development is the 70% factor in VSL success. In a Stage 3+ market, your mechanism IS your competitive advantage.

Stage 4: Enlarge the Mechanism

Competitors have copied your mechanism. Make yours bigger, more proven, more unique.

"First No-diet Reducing Wonder Drug!"

At Stage 4, you're stacking proof, credentials, and specificity onto your mechanism. It's not enough to have a mechanism — you need the BEST mechanism, backed by the most compelling evidence.

Stage 5: Identification / Story

All mechanisms are exhausted. The prospect is numb to advertising. They no longer believe claims or mechanisms.

Here, you abandon direct selling entirely. You lead with pure story, identity, and emotion. The product is almost secondary.

The Marlboro Man is the canonical example. No claims. No mechanisms. No promises. Just cowboys — and the identity of the kind of person who smokes Marlboros.

Schwartz traces the entire cigarette industry through all five stages, showing how each stage was dominant for a period and then exhausted:

Stage	Headline
1	"I'd Walk A Mile For A Camel!"
2	"Light Up A Lucky, And You Won't Miss The Sweets That Make You Fat!"
3	"Luckies — they're Toasted!"
4	"Philip Morris — all The Harshness Baked Out!"
5	Marlboro cowboys (no words needed)

Then the introduction of filter cigarettes **reset the entire cycle back to Stage 1**, and the process began again.

This is the critical insight for VSL writers: sophistication is not permanent. A genuinely new mechanism can restart the cycle. Your job is to figure out

where your market sits on this spectrum and calibrate your approach accordingly.

Practical Application

Stage	Your Lead	Your Proof	Your CTA
1	Simple claim	Minimal needed	Direct
2	Bigger claim + specifics	Testimonials	Direct
3	Mechanism-first	Studies + credentials	Curiosity → reveal
4	Enhanced mechanism	Avalanche of proof	Urgency + proof
5	Story / identity	Embedded in narrative	Soft, emotional

The NESB Check: Is Your Offer Ready for a VSL?

Before you write a single word of VSL copy, run your offer through Kyle Milligan's NESB framework. Milligan — one of Agora Financial's top copywriters — argues that every promise, headline, and mechanism should score high on four dimensions:

N — New. Does this feel like something the prospect has never encountered? Novelty is the most powerful attention-grabber. If the reader thinks they've seen this before, they walk away. Being familiar is death.

Newness creates hope in people who have tried and failed. It gives them a reason to believe that THIS time will be different. Use power words: Breakthrough, Discovery, Revealed, Proprietary. But the newness must be real — or at least a genuinely new angle on an existing approach.

E — Easy. Does the prospect believe they can actually do this? People are fundamentally lazy and insecure. Your mechanism might be brilliant, but if it sounds like hard work, they'll bounce.

Milligan has a specific technique here: **Not Statements**. These do double duty — they build intrigue (the reader wonders "what IS it then?") while conveying ease (by eliminating hard things the reader fears).

"You can earn \$1,000 a week in passive income starting next Monday... And you don't have to be a financial genius, or even have finished high school. You don't have to have any coding or web experience. And you don't have to have a lot of money... all you need is \$10!"

Each "not statement" removes a barrier while making the reader more curious about what the method actually IS.

S — Safe. Does the prospect feel protected from risk? Psychology shows that when people perceive something as risky, they judge its benefits as less valuable. Conversely, when something feels safe, they attribute higher value to the same benefits.

Key insight from Milligan: a 100% certainty claim creates MORE skepticism, not less. "119 wins and 0 losses" is more believable than "100% success rate" — even though they're the same claim. Specificity signals truth. Round numbers signal bullshit.

B — Big. Does the magnitude command attention? Big numbers, big transformations, big comparisons. The prospect should feel like they're standing on top of a mountain of opportunity.

Before writing your VSL, score your offer against all four dimensions (1-5 each). A strong offer hits 4+ on all four. Weakness in any single dimension creates a gap the reader's skepticism will exploit — and no amount of copywriting craft can compensate for an offer that scores a 2 on "New."

If your NESB score is low, fix the offer before you write the copy. The greatest VSL ever written can't save an offer that feels old, hard, risky, and small.

Todd Brown's Promise Exposure Spectrum

Todd Brown — creator of the E5 Method — adds another useful lens with his Promise Exposure Spectrum. This maps where your market sits in terms of how many times they've heard promises like yours:

- 1. Promise** — Market hasn't heard this promise before. Just state it.
- 2. Promise Expanded** — Competitors enlarging the same claim.
Diminishing returns.
- 3. Promise + Unique Mechanism** — Introduce WHY your product delivers differently. **This is where the E5 Method operates, and where most VSL markets sit today.**
- 4. Promise + Expanded Mechanism** — Competitors copied your mechanism. Differentiate further.
- 5. Prospect** — Focus entirely on the prospect's experience. Most difficult level.

The key rule: a message designed for a given level works for all levels below it (to its left). Always find the LOWEST level that's still appropriate — that's your most efficient entry point.

This framework aligns perfectly with Schwartz's sophistication stages, and it gives you a practical tool for calibrating your VSL. If you're writing in a market where every competitor already has a named mechanism, you're at level 4. If you're entering a fresh market with a genuinely new angle, you might be at level 1.

CHAPTER 4

Research — The Work That Makes Writing Easy

There's a reason Stefan Georgi titled the first step of his RMBC process "Research" and not "Writing." There's a reason Peter Kell spends hours in structured interviews before his copywriter writes a word. There's a reason

Todd Brown's E5 Method starts with "Examine" — a full research phase that precedes all creative work.

The research is the work. When the research is thorough, writing becomes assembly. When the research is thin, writing becomes agonizing.

Every experienced VSL copywriter has had the experience of sitting down to write with a stack of great research — transcripts, testimonials, mechanism notes, competitive analysis — and watching the VSL practically write itself. They've also had the experience of sitting down with a one-paragraph product description and staring at a blank screen for hours.

The difference isn't talent. It's preparation.

Stefan Georgi's 5-Step Deep Research Framework

Georgi's RMBC II system provides the most systematic research framework available for VSL writing. It's designed to produce a single output — the Unified Research Document — that feeds into every downstream piece of copy: mechanisms, briefs, VSLs, ads, emails, upsells.

Step 1: Product/Market Awareness Research

This is where you determine the awareness level we discussed in Chapter 3. But Georgi doesn't guess — he uses a structured process.

Feed the Schwartz awareness framework plus your product and market details into multiple AI systems. Ask each one to:

- ▶ Estimate the total addressable market (TAM)
- ▶ Estimate the percentage of TAM at each awareness level (Unaware through Most Aware)
- ▶ Give a FINAL selection for the majority awareness level
- ▶ Use signals: social media conversation, search trends, influencer content, competitor sales data

Run the same prompt through at least three AI systems. Each one has different strengths in web research and will surface different data points. Then synthesize the outputs.

The majority awareness level — the level where the largest segment of potential buyers sits — determines everything downstream. If 60% of your market is Problem Aware, you're writing a long-form VSL with an indirect lead and a heavy mechanism section. If 60% is Solution Aware, you're writing a mechanism-forward VSL with a more direct opening.

Step 2: Competitor Research

You need to know what your prospect has already seen before you can show them something new. For each major competitor, research:

- ▶ **Target demographic** — Who are they talking to?
- ▶ **Main acquisition funnels** — How do they sell? (Ad → VSL → checkout? Ad → advertorial → VSL? Ad → quiz → VSL?)
- ▶ **Core messaging** — What hooks, angles, and big ideas appear in their advertising?
- ▶ **Recurring mechanisms** — What unique mechanisms are they using? If three competitors all use an "inflammation" mechanism, you need a different angle.
- ▶ **Pricing structure** — Where does your offer sit relative to theirs?
- ▶ **Customer sentiment** — What do customers love? What do they complain about? (Reviews, Reddit, social media, forums)
- ▶ **Estimated revenue** — How big are their hero products? This tells you whether the market has proven demand.

Focus on direct-to-consumer brands who sell primarily online through eCommerce or direct response funnels. That's your competitive landscape — not the brands selling through retail or Amazon (though their reviews can be valuable for psychographic research).

Step 3: Psychographic Deep Research

Demographics tell you who your prospect is. Psychographics tell you what keeps them up at night.

This is where most research processes fall short. They tell you the prospect is a "woman aged 35-54 with household income of \$75K+" and stop there.

That description matches tens of millions of people with wildly different emotional landscapes.

Georgi's psychographic framework goes deeper:

Insights into the demographic:

- ▶ What attitudes do they have? (Religious, political, social, economic)
- ▶ What are their hopes and dreams?
- ▶ What are their victories and failures?
- ▶ What outside forces do THEY believe have prevented their best life?
- ▶ What are their prejudices?
- ▶ Sum up their core beliefs about life, love, and family in 1-3 sentences

Their experience with existing solutions:

- ▶ What is the market already using?
- ▶ What has their experience been like?
- ▶ What do they like and dislike about existing solutions?
- ▶ Are there horror stories?
- ▶ Does the market believe existing solutions work? If not, why?

Curiosity and conspiracy angles:

- ▶ Has someone tried to solve this problem in a very unique way? What happened?
- ▶ Is there a conspiratorial story behind why old solutions didn't work?
- ▶ Are there older attempts — pre-1960s solutions that are unique and forgotten?

Corruption narratives:

- ▶ Is there a belief that the problem used to not exist, or wasn't so bad?
- ▶ Is there a belief it's been exacerbated by outside forces?

That last category — corruption — is particularly powerful for biz-op and finance copy, where the "enemy" narrative (greedy corporations, rigged systems, government complicity) can form the backbone of the entire UMP

section. But it works in health too: the suppressed remedy, the ingredient Big Pharma doesn't want you to know about, the doctor who was silenced.

An optional but valuable follow-up: ask for the exact words, phrases, and emotional language the market uses to describe their pain. This raw language is gold. When your VSL uses the prospect's own words back at them, they feel deeply understood — and understanding builds trust faster than any credential.

Step 4: The Unified Research Document

All of this research is useless if it's scattered across multiple documents and chat transcripts. Step 4 is synthesis.

Combine everything from Steps 1-3 into a single document containing:

- 1. Target Market Demographic Overview** — focused on Problem Aware and Solution Aware segments (your largest conversion pool)
- 2. Target Market Psychographic Overview:**
 - Problems and pain points (specific, emotional, in their language)
 - Hopes and dreams (ideal future state when the problem is solved)
 - How they view themselves — language to use and language to avoid
 - Primary promises they want to hear
- 3. Biggest objections** to marketing campaigns and how to address them
- 4. Existing solutions** tried and why they're inadequate

This document becomes the foundation for everything downstream: mechanism ideation, brief creation, VSL drafts, ad concepts, email sequences. Every AI project you set up, every prompt you write, starts by uploading this document.

Step 5: Ingredient/Feature Research (When Relevant)

For supplements and physical products with active ingredients, you need a separate research layer focused on scientific backing.

The goal: specific, citable claims for each ingredient tied to published studies. Not blog posts — actual journal references, preferably randomized controlled trials with humans.

For each ingredient, you want:

- ▶ How it supports the unique mechanism you'll be presenting
- ▶ How it alleviates the market's specific pain points
- ▶ Specific study results with numbers (dosage, timeframe, percentage improvement)

For digital products, this step translates to feature/benefit research: what specific components of your product deliver which specific outcomes? What proof do you have for each?

The key instruction, whether you're working on supplements or software: keep the claims digestible with references. Your UMS section will draw from this material, and it needs to feel like a revelation — not a biology lecture.

Peter Kell's Pre-Work Process

While Georgi's framework is systematic and AI-driven, Peter Kell approaches research from the storytelling side. Before he sits down with an authority figure to extract the VSL story (via his VSL God Process, which we'll cover in Chapter 9), he gathers a different kind of raw material.

Kell's pre-work checklist:

- ▶ **Text the authority figure beforehand:** "What's been the most effective way to sell this? What are the most amazing and impactful stories?"
- ▶ **What does the data say is the best angle?** (Let the numbers guide your hook, not your gut)
- ▶ **What are the most mind-blowing one-liners you can find on your own?** (Before the interview, hunt for quotable moments)
- ▶ **What is the irrefutable proof that this works?** (The single strongest piece of evidence)
- ▶ **What science is on our side?** (Studies, data, expert consensus)
- ▶ **What are the best testimonials?** (Specific results, specific people, specific timeframes)

- ▶ **What is in the product week by week?** (The actual content or ingredients)

Notice the difference in emphasis: Georgi starts with the market's psychology and competitive landscape. Kell starts with the story's raw material — the characters, the one-liners, the proof points, the emotional peaks.

Both approaches are valid. Both are necessary. The most thorough research combines both: the strategic landscape from Georgi's process and the narrative ammunition from Kell's.

Using AI to Accelerate Research

AI has fundamentally changed the research phase of VSL writing. What used to take weeks can now be compressed into hours — if you use AI as an accelerator rather than a replacement for your judgment.

The principles that will outlast any specific tool:

Use multiple AI systems for the same research task. Each model has different training data, different strengths in web research, and different biases. Running the same prompt across three or four systems produces more diverse outputs than running a single system four times. The best insight might come from a model you didn't expect.

Be model-agnostic. Georgi's recommendation: never commit to a single AI system for research. Test the same prompt everywhere. Today's best model for competitor analysis might not be tomorrow's. The principle is what matters — comprehensive, multi-source, multi-perspective research — not the tool.

AI handles volume. You handle judgment. AI can generate fifty mechanism ideas in ten minutes. Your job is to evaluate which three are worth pursuing. AI can surface a hundred data points about your market. Your job is to identify which five will actually move the needle in your VSL. The filtering, prioritizing, and strategic selection — that's where your experience as a copywriter earns its keep.

Synthesize aggressively. Don't let your research sprawl across dozens of chat transcripts. Consolidate into one Unified Research Document. Upload that document into a dedicated AI workspace, and use it as the foundation for every downstream prompt.

Research quality determines copy quality. The old computer science maxim applies perfectly: garbage in, garbage out. If your research is superficial — a few Google searches and a skim of Amazon reviews — your mechanism will be generic, your proof will be thin, and your VSL will sound like every other VSL in your market. Deep, thorough, multi-source research is the unfair advantage.

The Research-to-Writing Bridge

When your research is complete, you should be able to answer these questions without hesitating:

- 1. What awareness level is my majority audience?** (This determines your lead strategy and VSL length)
- 2. What sophistication stage is my market?** (This determines whether you lead with a claim, a mechanism, or a story)
- 3. What mechanisms are my competitors already using?** (This tells you what to avoid)
- 4. What does my prospect believe is causing their problem?** (This is the starting point for your UMP)
- 5. What language does my prospect use to describe their pain?** (This is the voice of your VSL)
- 6. What proof do I have that my solution works?** (This determines the strength of your UMS and close)
- 7. What stories do I have access to?** (Authority figure origin story, customer transformations, discovery narrative)
- 8. What is the single strongest one-liner in all my research?** (This might be your hook)

If you can answer all eight, you're ready to move to Part II: developing the mechanism that will carry your entire VSL.

If you can't answer them all — go back and do more research. The time you invest now will save you ten times as much in the writing phase.

End of Part I

Next: Part II — The Mechanism: The 70% Factor



PART II: THE MECHANISM

THE 70% FACTOR



CHAPTER 5

The Unique Mechanism — Why It's Everything



If there's one concept in this book that matters more than all the others combined, it's this one.

The unique mechanism is the centerpiece of all direct response persuasion. It's the reason a prospect who has tried everything and been burned by everything is willing to give your product a chance. It answers the two questions that every skeptical buyer is silently asking:

"Why hasn't anything worked for me before?"

And:

"Why should I believe this will be any different?"

When your mechanism answers both of those questions convincingly, the sale is almost inevitable. When it doesn't, no amount of proof stacking, urgency, or emotional copy will compensate. You'll be pushing a boulder uphill with every word.

This is why Luke Iha estimates that roughly 70% of a VSL's success is determined by the mechanism. Not the hook, not the close, not the testimonials — the mechanism. Get it right and a mediocre draft can still convert. Get it wrong and brilliance everywhere else won't save you.

The Two-Part Structure: UMP and UMS

Stefan Georgi's RMBC II system makes a distinction that most copywriting education glosses over. The unique mechanism isn't one thing — it's two things, and they serve different psychological functions.

The Unique Mechanism of the Problem (UMP): This is the "real cause" that the prospect doesn't know about. It explains why past solutions failed. It fills a knowledge gap that the prospect didn't even know existed.

The Unique Mechanism of the Solution (UMS): This is the "real solution" that directly addresses the root cause revealed by the UMP. It makes your product believable and fundamentally different from everything else.

The two halves work as a logical pair. The UMP creates a problem-shaped hole in the prospect's understanding. The UMS fills it perfectly. Without the

UMP, the UMS is just another claim. Without the UMS, the UMP is just an interesting but useless piece of information.

Here's the key: by the time prospects come to you, they've tried numerous solutions. Your job isn't to convince them that a solution exists — they already know solutions exist. Your job is to educate them about the REAL reason past solutions didn't work. They've been missing ONE CRUCIAL PIECE OF INFORMATION — that knowledge gap is what's held them back.

The UMP reveals the gap. The UMS fills it. The product delivers it.

The System Malfunction Framework

One of the most useful contributions from Georgi's RMBC II is a specific structural framework for constructing the UMP. He calls it the system malfunction approach, and it works across virtually every market:

Step 1: Here's how this system or process is supposed to work.

Start by explaining the normal, healthy function. In health, this is the body's natural mechanism. In finance, it's how wealth creation is supposed to work. In relationships, it's how attraction or connection is supposed to function. You're establishing baseline expectations.

Step 2: Here's why that system isn't working.

This is the malfunction — the breakdown point. Something has gone wrong with the normal process. This is where the "aha" moment lives. The prospect hears this and thinks: "Oh my God, THAT'S why nothing has worked."

Step 3: What external factors or culprits are causing the malfunction?

Here you identify the villain. In health, it might be environmental toxins, hormonal shifts, or a specific ingredient in common foods. In biz-op, it might be corporations rigging the system or algorithms designed to keep the little guy down. In finance, it might be Wall Street insiders exploiting a structural advantage.

The three-step structure is elegant because it mirrors how people naturally understand problems. Something is supposed to work a certain way. It's

broken. Something broke it. That logic chain is intuitive, satisfying, and — most importantly — it points directly toward a solution.

Examples Across Markets

Health — The Nooro (edema/swelling device, 16-minute medium VSL):

- 1. System:** Your heart sends blood down to your extremities. Your calf muscles contract to pump that blood back up — they function as your body's "second heart."
- 2. Malfunction:** When your calf muscles weaken, the vein valves can't push blood back up to the heart. Blood pools in your calves, feet, and ankles.
- 3. External culprit:** Sitting for long hours, aging, and decreased physical activity — all of which weaken the calf muscles over time.

The VSL's summary line: *"Starting to see how it all fits together? Weak calves cause your vein valves to weaken. Weakened vein valves fail to send old blood back up. Blood pools around calves, feet, ankles."*

Notice how simple this is. You can hear it once and explain it to someone else. That's the standard.

Health — Beverly Hills MD Pinch Test (skincare, long-form VSL):

- 1. System:** Collagen keeps your skin firm, taut, and lifted. It's skin's "primary support system."
- 2. Malfunction:** A hormone called DHT inhibits collagen production, causing sag and wrinkles.
- 3. External culprit:** Menopause triggers both declining collagen AND increasing DHT simultaneously — a double hit that accelerates skin aging far beyond normal rates.

This mechanism is slightly more complex — it introduces a specific hormone (DHT) — but it's still explainable in two sentences. The "double hit" of menopause is the kind of revelation that makes a woman stop scrolling and start watching.

Biz-op — Airbnb Arbitrage:

- 1. System (implied):** The path to financial freedom is supposed to be: work hard → earn more → save → invest → build wealth.

2. **Malfunction — "The Asset Gap":** You've been trying to solve an Asset Gap problem with Income Gap solutions. Side hustles, freelancing, extra shifts — these are all Income Gap solutions. They exchange your time for money. They never let you cross from the world of labor into the world of assets.
3. **External culprit:** The entire economy is designed to keep you selling time. Schools teach you to be an employee. Banks lend to asset owners, not laborers. The system benefits from your ignorance of the gap.

Notice how the biz-op example follows the same three-step structure, but the "system" step is more about a worldview than a biological process. The framework is flexible enough to work anywhere.

Finance — Agora "Secret Trust Fund" (Jim Rickards promo, 1,000+ subscribers/day):

This promo didn't use the system malfunction framework explicitly — instead, it used what Georgi calls **transubstantiation**: wrapping dry material (mining stock recommendations) in a compelling metaphor (a secret trust fund that every American is entitled to).

The "mechanism" here is really a reframing: \$150 trillion in mineral rights on federal lands, technically belonging to every American citizen, that can be accessed through specific investment vehicles. The copywriter slowly unwound the metaphor throughout the promo: "fund" (mentioned 28 times) gradually shifted to "asset" (mentioned 5 times) as the reveal approached.

Transubstantiation is a powerful technique for markets where the raw product is boring or technical. Mining stocks? Nobody cares. A secret trust fund containing \$1.1 million per American household? That's a paradigm shift.

We'll explore the financial copy techniques in detail in Chapter 26.

The Kindergarten Test

Peter Kell has a brutally simple standard for mechanism quality: the Kindergarten Test.

"If you can hear it one or two times and just go tell somebody — like 'hey, here's why you have edema' — that's the right level of complexity."

If explaining your mechanism requires a whiteboard and ten minutes, it's too complex. If it requires referencing specific hormones, cell types, and biochemical pathways that the prospect has never heard of, it's too complex. If YOU have to look at your notes to remember how it works, it's too complex.

The goal isn't simplicity for its own sake. The goal is repeatability. You want the prospect to feel so clear on the mechanism that they could explain it to their spouse over dinner. When they can do that, two things happen: first, they believe it (because understanding creates conviction). Second, they become evangelists — they tell other people, who then seek out your VSL.

After extracting story material from an authority figure, Kell runs the Kindergarten Test: write the whole pitch — problem, mechanism, solution — as a "Kindergarten Simple Pitch." If you can explain the entire thing simply, in language a child could follow, the mechanism is ready for a VSL. If you can't, simplify until you can.

Complexity Calibration

Kell's test gives you the floor. But there's also a ceiling — and it shifts based on your market.

When to go deeper:

- ▶ Long-form VSLs (40-60 minutes) for educated, high-price audiences
- ▶ Markets where the prospect already has a baseline understanding (e.g., experienced investors, health enthusiasts)
- ▶ When your UMS requires explaining why specific components (ingredients, features, steps) work together

When to keep it simple:

- ▶ Short-form VSLs (3-7 minutes) for broad audiences
- ▶ In-feed ads where you have seconds to hook
- ▶ Lower price points where the decision is more impulse than deliberation

Even in long-form VSLs for educated audiences, Georgi warns against over-complicating the UMP specifically:

"One or two studies in the UMP is fine. But I see people rattling off study after study trying to prove the problem exists. With a doctor spokesperson, you don't need that."

Save the study references for the UMS section, where they serve as proof that the SOLUTION works. The UMP section should feel like a revelation, not a lecture. Light on proof, heavy on insight.

When Biz-Op Can Skip the UMP

Georgi makes an important distinction for biz-op copy: you can sometimes skip the UMP entirely and go straight to the UMS (solution).

Here's when you DON'T need a UMP in biz-op:

When the method is genuinely novel to the market. If your prospect has never heard of Airbnb arbitrage, Amazon private labeling, or whatever specific method you're selling, you don't need to explain why their previous approach failed. They don't have a previous approach. You can go straight to "here's how this incredible thing works."

Here's when you DO need a UMP in biz-op:

When the market has already tried the type of solution you're selling. If your prospects have tried dropshipping and failed, have tried Amazon FBA and failed, have tried crypto and failed — you MUST explain why their version didn't work and what's fundamentally different about yours. Without the UMP, you're just another course promising the same results they didn't get last time.

The Amazon FBA example from RMBC II illustrates the skip: the spokesperson came from a Costco job, tried real estate, recycling, and the stock market (dead ends, not UMP), then discovered private labeling on Amazon and went straight into explaining how it works. No root cause analysis, no system malfunction framework. The method was new enough that "here's how this works" was sufficient.

The UMP/UMS Must Match the Awareness Level

One final strategic point that's easy to miss: your mechanism must align with the awareness level you're targeting.

If your core market is Problem Aware, write a mechanism that speaks to Problem Aware people. Don't write a UMP that assumes they already understand the landscape of solutions (that's Solution Aware language). Don't write a UMS that assumes they know your product category exists.

If your core market is Solution Aware, you can skip much of the "here's why you have this problem" education and move faster to "here's why previous solutions failed" — because they've already tried those solutions.

The mechanism doesn't exist in isolation. It's calibrated to a specific audience at a specific awareness level. A brilliant mechanism aimed at the wrong awareness level will miss.

CHAPTER 6

Developing Your Mechanism with AI

The mechanism is the 70% factor. It deserves a systematic development process, not a flash of inspiration while you're in the shower.

Stefan Georgi's RMBC II provides a four-step process for mechanism ideation, evaluation, and expansion. The process is designed to be AI-accelerated — using artificial intelligence for the volume and variety of ideation, while reserving human judgment for the selection and refinement.

The specific tools will evolve. The principles won't.

Step 1: Mechanism Ideation

Start with your Unified Research Document from Chapter 4. Feed it — along with your product description, target awareness level, and (for supplements) your ingredient list — into multiple AI systems.

Your prompt should explain what a unique mechanism is (both UMP and UMS), specify the awareness level you're targeting, and ask for as many mechanism ideas as possible.

Run this prompt across at least three different AI systems. Each will generate different ideas based on different training data and reasoning approaches.

The goal is volume and variety — you're brainstorming, not selecting.

Georgi's approach: run the same ideation prompt through four different systems, then compile every idea that surfaces. At this stage, nothing is too wild. An idea that seems ridiculous might contain the seed of your winner.

What to look for in the raw output:

- ▶ Mechanisms that make you think "Oh, I've never heard that angle before"
- ▶ Mechanisms that feel intuitively true — the "that makes sense" reaction
- ▶ Mechanisms that create a genuine knowledge gap — "I didn't know that, and now I need to know more"
- ▶ Mechanisms that naturally lend themselves to naming — "The [Memorable Name]"

What to discard:

- ▶ Mechanisms that are already being used by your competitors (you found these in Step 2 of your research)
- ▶ Mechanisms that are too complex to explain simply (the Kindergarten Test)
- ▶ Mechanisms that have no proof pathway — you can't substantiate the claim with available evidence
- ▶ Mechanisms that don't connect logically to your product — the solution must address the specific root cause

Step 2: Mechanism Shortlist

From the raw ideation output across all AI systems, select the most promising candidates. You're looking for mechanisms that score high on five criteria:

Believability and logical coherence. Does the mechanism make sense on its face? Could a reasonable person hear this and think "yeah, that tracks"? A mechanism that requires a leap of faith is weaker than one that feels like common sense once you hear it.

Connection to the target market's beliefs and pain points. This is where your psychographic research pays off. The best mechanism isn't the one that's objectively most correct — it's the one that fits most naturally into what your prospect already believes. If your market already suspects that "big pharma doesn't want you to know," a mechanism involving a suppressed remedy will resonate. If your market believes in personal responsibility, a mechanism that blames an external system might feel off.

Novelty. Does this feel like a genuine revelation? If the prospect could have encountered this idea in a competitor's ad, it's not novel enough. The mechanism needs to feel like something they're hearing for the first time — even if the underlying science or logic isn't actually new. Finding a new angle on familiar concepts is a skill you'll develop with practice.

Ability to differentiate from competitors. Your mechanism is your competitive moat. If three competitors are all talking about inflammation, and your mechanism is also about inflammation, you're in a commodity fight. Find the angle that's genuinely yours.

Supportability with proof elements. A brilliant mechanism that you can't prove is worse than a good mechanism with ironclad proof. Make sure you have studies, testimonials, expert endorsements, or logical arguments that support the mechanism you choose.

Typically, you'll shortlist 3-5 mechanisms from the ideation phase. More than that and you'll struggle to evaluate them meaningfully. Fewer than that and you might be settling too early.

Step 3: Mechanism Evaluation and Ranking

Take your shortlisted mechanisms and run them through a structured evaluation. Upload the shortlist along with your Unified Research Document into AI systems and ask them to rank the mechanisms from most to least likely to succeed.

Specify the evaluation criteria:

- ▶ Potential for connecting emotionally to the target market
- ▶ Persuasiveness for driving purchase (not just attention, but conversion)
- ▶ Alignment with the market's beliefs, attitudes, and awareness level
- ▶ Competitive differentiation (is any competitor already using something similar?)
- ▶ Availability of proof (studies, testimonials, expert support)

Run the ranking through multiple AI systems to get consensus. If three out of four systems rank the same mechanism first, you have strong signal. If the rankings are scattered, you may need more research to break the tie — or the differences between your top mechanisms are small enough that any would work.

The human layer here is critical. AI can rank based on the criteria you specify, but it can't fully assess "gut feel" — the intangible sense that a mechanism will resonate with a specific market. Trust the data, but trust your instinct about your audience too.

Step 4: Mechanism Expansion

Take your winning mechanism and expand it into full, VSL-ready copy. Set up a dedicated AI workspace for mechanism expansion. Upload your Unified Research Document, the selected UMP/UMS summary, and the target awareness level. Then ask the AI to write the mechanism section of a VSL — the full UMP and UMS — in a voice appropriate for your market. The output from this step isn't a final draft. It's a detailed, fleshed-out mechanism narrative that you'll incorporate into your Brief 2.0 (which we'll cover in Chapter 33) and eventually into the full VSL script.

Key principles for expansion:

- ▶ The UMP should follow the system malfunction framework: normal function → malfunction → external culprit
- ▶ The UMS should go MACRO first (the big concept, the theory) then MICRO (the specific proof, the studies, the components)
- ▶ The mechanism should be named — give both the problem and the solution memorable, proprietary-sounding names
- ▶ The language should be conversational, not academic
- ▶ Include "reader check-in" moments: "Starting to see how it all fits together?"

The Non-Negotiable Human Layer

A note on AI's role in this process: AI is the accelerator, not the brain.

AI is extraordinary at generating volume — fifty mechanism ideas where you might have brainstormed five. It's good at pattern matching — finding connections in research data that you might have missed. It's decent at evaluation — comparing mechanisms against specified criteria.

But AI cannot tell you which mechanism will make a 53-year-old woman in Ohio stop scrolling and watch a 40-minute video about her joint pain. That judgment — the synthesis of market knowledge, emotional intuition, competitive awareness, and hard-won experience — is yours.

The copywriters who use AI most effectively aren't the ones who accept its output uncritically. They're the ones who use it as a brainstorming partner with infinite patience, then apply their own judgment ruthlessly.

CHAPTER 7

The Hook — Your Mechanism's Emotional Wrapper

You have your mechanism. It's clear, novel, provable, and it passes the Kindergarten Test. Now you need to package it in a way that makes someone who's scrolling through Facebook at 10:47 PM stop everything and watch your video.

This is the hook — and it's important to understand that a hook is NOT the same thing as a mechanism.

The Critical Distinction: Hook vs. USP vs. Mechanism

Chris Haddad — known in the direct response world as "Mr. Moneyfingers" — draws a distinction that most copywriters miss:

A USP (Unique Selling Proposition) is what sets your product apart. It's factual, product-level differentiation. "Diet based on the teachings of the Bible."

A mechanism is HOW your product delivers the promise. It's the logical engine. "A specific combination of Biblical foods that reverses metabolic dysfunction."

A hook is the EMOTIONAL ARTICULATION of what makes your product and sales message special. It slides like a puzzle piece into the hopes, fears, prejudices, values, and culture of your target prospect.

Taking Haddad's own example — the Salvation Diet:

- ▶ **USP:** Diet based on the teachings of the Bible.
- ▶ **Mechanism:** Biblical foods that correct metabolic imbalance.
- ▶ **Hook:** "Secret diet Atheists and 'Culture Warriors' don't want you to know about, developed by a Christian who has seen so many God-fearing people die young... 'Science' changes all the time, the Bible never does."

See the difference? The USP is factual and flat. The mechanism is logical and explanatory. The hook is emotional, identity-driven, and inflammatory. It takes the same underlying product and wraps it in the prospect's worldview

— their faith, their suspicion of mainstream culture, their tribal identity as a Christian.

The hook makes it PERSONAL. That's its job.

John Carlton, one of the great long-form copywriters, defined hooks this way:

"It's more like a black hole that sucks your prospect into the ad, kicking and screaming, and jettisons him through your pitch in a breathless ride that has his heart pumping and his deepest desires roiling."

That's not a description of a mechanism. It's a description of an emotional experience. The mechanism is the engine. The hook is the feeling of the engine roaring to life.

Haddad's 10 Hook Types

Haddad's taxonomy is the most comprehensive classification of hooks available. Understanding these types gives you a vocabulary for analyzing winning VSLs and a brainstorming framework for creating your own.

Type 1: The Magic Mechanism

The seemingly "magic," "done-for-you," "automatic" or "easy" way of fulfilling the big promise.

"Cure Your ED By Drinking This Milkshake!"

"Text Your Ex Back" (Yes — you can do it without having to look her in the eye, and the texts are done for you!)

Great Magic Mechanism hooks feel like a "thing" — something tangible, concrete, holdable. They require no creativity or thinking from the user. Haddad's gold standard: "As Easy As The Roomba." A Roomba cleans your floor while you sit on the couch. That's the feeling your mechanism hook should evoke.

For info products, the Magic Mechanism typically takes the form of:

- ▶ **Technology:** "Text Your Ex Back" vs. "Get Your Ex Back" — same promise, but the technology makes it feel effortless

- ▶ **Method/Technique:** A named system with a proprietary feel
- ▶ **Software:** "Just enter your info for a personalized report"
- ▶ **How the Pros Do It:** The insider technique that professionals use

This hook type maps directly to the "E" (Easy) dimension of the NESB framework from Chapter 3. When you nail the Magic Mechanism hook, you're automatically scoring high on Easy.

Type 2: Secret Terror Under Your Nose (STUYN)

The common, everyday thing you thought was safe — or even good for you — revealed to have devastating consequences.

"3 'Healthy' Foods Never To Eat"

"The Healthy Exercise You Must Not Do After 40"

"The 'Safe' Online Business That Is Sending Regular People To Jail"

This hook attacks the prospect's sense of safety and creates anxiety and doubt. It works because it activates a primal fear: things in your environment that you trusted are actually hurting you.

The best STUYN hooks target something the prospect does every day — eating, exercising, using a product, following advice — and reveal that this routine behavior is the source of their problem. The emotional logic: "I've been DOING THIS TO MYSELF this whole time?"

Type 3: The "I Knew It!"

A variation of STUYN — but instead of revealing something the prospect didn't know, it CONFIRMS something they've secretly suspected or feared.

"Women are secretly hornier than men (and you can have all the sex you want if you know these 3 words)"

This hook works because people love to be told they're right. It closes an anxiety loop ("I always suspected this was true, but I wasn't sure"), bonds the prospect to you ("You're like me — you see the truth"), and creates an "us against them" mentality.

Haddad's insight: *"If you can articulate what they secretly believe better than they can, they will listen forever."*

The variation — "I Didn't Know It" — takes a terrible fear and turns it completely around. Something the prospect assumes is bad is actually good. *"Why you MUST sleep with a man on the first date if you want him to fall in love with you."*

Type 4: The Outrage Society

What terrible thing is "the other side" doing that demands righteous anger?

"Fed sticks it to the little guy by raising interest rates. Here's what you must know to fight back!"

"Unlabeled GMO foods are being snuck into school lunches"

This hook taps into tribal identity and moral outrage. The "other side" could be Big Pharma, Big Tech, the government, mainstream medicine, Wall Street, or any institution that your prospect already mistrusts.

The question to ask: *"What can you think of that would PISS YOUR NICHE OFF and make them say 'That is not right and I won't stand for it'?"*

This hook type is the natural partner for the "enemy narrative" UMP structure described in Chapter 5 — particularly powerful in biz-op and finance, where the "rigged system" angle provides both the hook AND the mechanism.

Type 5: Ancient Secrets Revealed

What did ancient cultures discover that has been lost in time?

"Ancient Secret Of Kings — How ancient kings accumulated amazing wealth!"

"Beauty secrets of Cleopatra"

"The Salvation Diet — The secret to great health was in The Bible all along"

This hook taps into a deep yearning for a "better time" and for magic. People aren't happy, and they can't imagine that the present is better than the past. There's a romance and mysticism to ancient wisdom that makes it feel more trustworthy than modern science — ironically, because it's less verifiable.

The variation — **Foreign Wisdom** — taps into unease about Western culture: *"Why French Women Don't Get Fat."* The underlying message:

people in other cultures have figured something out that we haven't.

Type 6: New Science!

An astonishing new discovery makes a formerly insurmountable problem easy.

This hook taps into the desire to be on the cutting edge and provides a built-in explanation for why nothing worked before: "*The thing I tried before didn't work because I didn't know THIS.*"

Any science will work — psychology, neuroscience, genomics, microbiome research. The key is that it must feel recent and breakthrough-level. You can even combine existing sciences into something new: "Psystrology" (Astrology + Psychology) was a Haddad creation that performed extremely well.

Type 7: The Yoda of the Niche

A famous, revered master reveals secrets to elevate you to the next level automatically.

This requires someone who has had incredible accomplishments — or a newer name who can demonstrate incredible skill. Niche fame is far more important than mainstream fame. The person must be someone your prospect WANTS TO BE.

The strongest version: someone who has "refused to teach before now." The combination of mastery and reluctance is irresistible.

Type 8: Cautionary Tale (The Anti-Pattern)

Haddad includes this as a warning, not a recommendation. Relying purely on celebrity or fame without combining it with other hook types doesn't work. He cites the Patti Stanger "Single Girls' Handbook" example — a well-known TV personality whose product launch failed because fame alone, without a compelling hook, doesn't create urgency or curiosity.

The lesson: fame attracts attention, but only hooks convert it into engagement.

Type 9: The Unknown But Fascinating Guru

The opposite of Type 7 — someone the prospect has never heard of, but who is the best in the world at what they do.

This requires strong credibility ("the secret guru behind Tom Petty's songwriting success") and a compelling reason why they've decided to teach ("I was tired of watching amateurs struggle with problems I solved twenty years ago").

Bonus points for something "weird" and fascinating about them — a one-legged golfer whose disability is precisely WHY he discovered the perfect swing.

Type 10: "I'm Just Like You But Worse"

A regular person with massive obstacles who discovered the answer.

"Morbidly obese and almost died of a heart attack in high school... just finished a marathon"

"Ten years in jail for a crime I didn't commit... now a millionaire"

Pure hero's journey. The prospect identifies completely because the hero's starting point is WORSE than theirs. If this person — with these disadvantages — can do it, surely I can too.

This hook type maps directly to the "Regular Guy Meets Yoda" authority figure archetype from Peter Kell's framework, which we'll explore in Chapter 9.

Hook Stacking: The Multiplier Effect

Here's Haddad's most powerful strategic insight: **the best VSLs don't use just one hook type. They stack multiple hooks together.**

- ▶ **Language of Desire:** Magic Mechanism (words) + I'm Just Like You (#10) + I Knew It! (#3)
- ▶ **Language of Lust:** Magic Mechanism (words) + I'm Just Like You (#10) + Outrage Society (#4)

- ▶ **Psystrology:** New Science (#6) + Ancient Secrets (#5) + I'm Just Like You (#10) + I Knew It! (#3) + Secret Terror (#2)

Notice how Psystrology stacks FIVE hook types into a single VSL. That's not an accident. Each additional hook creates another psychological anchor — another reason the prospect can't look away.

When you're developing your hook strategy, don't stop at one type. Ask: which 2-3 hook types are the most natural fit for this mechanism, this authority figure, and this market? Then layer them.

The first hook stops the scroll. The second hook deepens the engagement. The third hook makes it impossible to leave.

The Big Marketing Idea: Todd Brown's Framework

Todd Brown approaches hooks from a slightly different angle — what he calls the Big Marketing Idea. His formula:

E.C. (P.P. + U.M.) + I.I. = Big Marketing Idea

Translated:

- ▶ **E.C. (Emotionally Compelling)** = Your Primary Promise + Your Unique Mechanism. This appeals to the heart.
- ▶ **I.I. (Intellectually Interesting)** = The element that piques curiosity and creates a feeling of discovery. This appeals to the head.

Both halves are necessary. An idea that's emotionally compelling but not intellectually interesting is just hype — the prospect feels excited for a moment but doesn't engage deeply. An idea that's intellectually interesting but not emotionally compelling is just education — the prospect finds it fascinating but doesn't buy.

Brown's Big Marketing Idea checklist:

- ▶ [] One single core idea (not two ideas competing for attention)
- ▶ [] A new angle or perspective not previously presented to this market
- ▶ [] Unique and different from competitors

- ▶ [] Fresh and timely (feels urgent and current)
- ▶ [] Specific (not vague or general)
- ▶ [] Curiosity-inducing
- ▶ [] Taps one core emotion (fear, greed, curiosity, hope, identity)
- ▶ [] Immediately understandable

If your Big Marketing Idea doesn't pass this checklist, keep developing it. A weak Big Idea produces a weak VSL, regardless of how well the individual sections are written.

The Three Types of Mechanisms (Brown)

Brown also offers a useful classification for the mechanism itself — which can unlock ideas when you're stuck:

Actual Mechanism: Your product has a genuinely unique element. A proprietary formula, a patented technology, a truly novel methodology. This is the strongest position but the rarest.

Unspoken Mechanism: Your competitors have the same feature but don't talk about it. Claim it first and own it. "Luckies — they're Toasted!" Every cigarette was toasted. Lucky Strike was just the first to say it. By claiming it, they made it theirs.

Transubstantiated Mechanism: Take your ordinary methodology and give it a proprietary name. "The 3-Step Clarity Sequence" is more compelling than "a three-step process." The naming itself creates perceived uniqueness. Transubstantiation is the most accessible of the three — you can apply it to literally any method or process. Give your system a name. Give your framework a name. Give each step a name. Naming creates ownership, and ownership creates differentiation.

Hook-First Development: The Moneyfingers Method

Most people create a product first, then scramble to find a hook. Haddad's approach is the reverse:

- 1. Start with the market:** What's going on in your niche's culture, prejudices, beliefs, fears, ambitions, hopes, or desires? What does your prospect WANT — even if they don't know they want it?
- 2. Create a "pre-hooked" product idea BEFORE** creating the product. Develop the hook first. Design something you already know will sell because the hook proves market demand.
- 3. THEN create the product**, making sure every section relates back to the promises, big idea, and hook of the VSL.

His example: the "Language of Desire" product. The team had the hook — "How To Make A Man Sexually Obsessed With You Without Even Touching Him" — and the mechanism (words/language) BEFORE creating the product. Everything in the course was designed to deliver on "Dirty Words That Make Him Yours." The hook came first. The product was built to fulfill the hook's promise.

This is a radical reframe for most copywriters, who are usually handed a finished product and told to write copy for it. But if you're in a position to influence the product — as many direct response copywriters are — the Moneyfingers Method dramatically increases your odds of success. You're not trying to find a hook that fits an existing product. You're building a product that fits a proven hook.

Even if you can't influence the product, the principle still applies to your creative process: develop your hook concept FIRST, then build the VSL structure around it. Write your ads and headlines before you write the body copy. If you can't write a compelling headline, the mechanism isn't strong enough yet.

Using AI for Hook Generation

Georgi's process for generating hooks at scale — particularly for the ADHD super hook ad format we'll cover in Chapter 25 — offers principles that apply to any hook development:

Deep research first. Run hook generation prompts across multiple AI systems. Upload transcripts of successful ads in your niche as examples. Ask

each system to generate as many hook-driven statements and questions as possible, leveraging social media, blogs, forums, and other sources.

Curate, then generate again. Take the best hooks from the first pass, compile them into a database, and feed that database back into AI with instructions for more. This second pass typically produces stronger results because the AI has better examples to pattern-match against.

Specify fragments, not fascinations. This is Georgi's critical instruction, and it dramatically improves output quality: *"Please notice that a lot of the hooks are just snippets. They are NOT fascination curiosity bullets. They are fragmented. Speaker one might say 'This is how often you should really be washing your face.' A different speaker might say 'What about sunscreen?' They don't have to be closed loop. Many should be the first half of a puzzle, not the completed puzzle."*

Without this instruction, AI defaults to writing complete, resolved statements. You don't want resolution — you want tension. You want the first half of the puzzle. The prospect has to watch the video to get the second half.

Separate hook development from body copy. If you're using an AI workspace to generate hooks for ads that drive to a VSL, upload **ONLY** the first half of the VSL (through the mechanism). If you include product details, pricing, and ingredients, the AI will leak product information into the ad hooks. You want ads that sell the **CLICK**, not the product.

Bringing It All Together: From Mechanism to Hook

The sequence, then, is:

- 1. Research** (Chapter 4) → Unified Research Document
- 2. Mechanism development** (Chapters 5-6) → Named UMP/UMS pair
- 3. Hook development** (this chapter) → Hook stack (2-3 types layered)
- 4. Hook validation** → Does it pass Brown's Big Marketing Idea checklist?
Does the mechanism pass the Kindergarten Test? Does the hook make you feel something — curiosity, outrage, hope, fear?

When all four steps are complete, you have the strategic foundation for your entire VSL. The mechanism is the engine. The hook is the ignition. Everything that follows in Parts III and IV — the structure, the story, the proof, the close — is built on top of these foundations.

If the mechanism is weak, the VSL will be mediocre no matter how brilliantly you execute the structure. If the hook is weak, no one will watch long enough to hear the mechanism. Both must be strong. Both must work together.

Get these right, and the writing becomes almost easy. The story flows naturally from the mechanism. The proof supports the mechanism. The close is inevitable because the mechanism has already done the selling.

Get them wrong, and you'll feel it in every paragraph — the constant struggle to keep the prospect engaged, to overcome objections that shouldn't exist, to sell a product that doesn't feel differentiated.

The mechanism and the hook are the 70% factor. Everything else matters — but nothing else matters as much.

End of Part II

Next: Part III — The VSL Structure: Section by Section



PART III: THE VSL STRUCTURE

SECTION BY SECTION



CHAPTER 8

Choosing Your Flow — The 18 Ways to the Sale



Before you outline a single section, you need to answer a question that most copywriters skip entirely: **what is the shape of the story?**

Not the words. Not the mechanism details. Not the lead type. The shape — the scene-by-scene narrative architecture that carries a stranger from curiosity to purchase.

Peter Kell calls this the "Way to the Sale," and it's the single most important strategic decision in VSL creation. His central principle: you don't invent a new path. You study the proven paths, find the one that fits your story, and walk down it.

The Flow Bible: 18 Proven Maps

Over the course of building and consulting on some of the biggest VSL campaigns online, Kell reverse-engineered 18 monster campaigns — Gundry MD, Beverly Hills MD, V-Shred, Nucific, Dr. Marty's, Mindvalley, Unify Health, and more — and broke each one down into its scene-by-scene story flow.

What he found was striking: despite different markets, different products, and different authority figures, nearly all of them followed the same underlying narrative architecture.

The meta-pattern, stripped to its bones:

- 1. Fascinating hook** — "Why do some people have amazing [benefit] while others don't?"
- 2. Authority introduction** — "Hi, I'm [expert]. I specialize in solving [problem]."
- 3. Inciting incident** — "One day I encountered two people doing everything the same, but one had [humiliating problem] while the other had [incredible benefit]."
- 4. Confusion/mystery** — "I was stumped. They did the exact same things. What was different?"
- 5. Root cause discovery** — "After deep research, I discovered the one hidden difference: [root cause mechanism]."

6. **The unknowing solution** — The person with good results was UNKNOWINGLY addressing the root cause. This is the "aha" moment.
7. **Isolation of the solution** — "We took these secrets, tested them, combined them."
8. **Proof/testing** — "We gave it to the person with the problem. Results were dramatic."
9. **Put it in a bottle** — "We made it accessible as a product."
10. **Scarcity + CTA** — "Unfortunately, we didn't make enough. Buy today."

This pattern works because it does three things simultaneously: it educates the viewer on a root cause they didn't know about, it builds authority through a discovery story rather than credentials, and it creates a logical chain where the product is the inevitable conclusion of the narrative — not a pitch bolted on at the end.

The viewer feels like they arrived at the buying decision themselves.

The Slippery Water Slide

Kell's central metaphor for a great flow: the entire video should feel like riding a slippery water slide. Once you start, you glide all the way down to the buy button without friction. There's no point where the viewer has to "decide" to keep watching.

What makes the slide slippery:

- ▶ Every scene answers the question the previous scene raised
- ▶ The story creates open loops that **MUST** be resolved
- ▶ Everything is wrapped in narrative — no "lecture" sections
- ▶ The product reveal is the natural climax of the story, not a pivot

What creates friction:

- ▶ Switching from story mode to lecture mode
- ▶ Introducing the product before the root cause is established
- ▶ Breaking chronological flow of the discovery narrative
- ▶ Any moment where the viewer thinks "wait, is this an ad?"

The Beverly Hills MD Breakdown

To see the meta-pattern in action, consider Kell's breakdown of the Beverly Hills MD Derm Repair Complex campaign — a massive winner that ran for over five years.

Scene 1 — Fascination hook: "Have you ever noticed how some women never seem to age? Some are youthful well into their 80s." Opens with a universal observation that triggers curiosity. Not selling anything — just asking a fascinating question.

Scene 2 — Authority intro: "Hi, I'm Dr. Lakeian. I'm a cosmetic surgeon. I've been helping celebs get firmer, tighter skin." Credentials established through what he does, not a list of degrees.

Scene 3 — Inciting incident: A mother and daughter came into his office. He thought they were sisters — one looked 20 years younger. The "two people, same situation, different results" setup creates an irresistible mystery.

Scene 4 — Controlled variables: Same diet. Never smoked. Rarely drank. No sun damage. Systematically eliminates every obvious explanation. The viewer is now as confused as the doctor — and fully hooked.

Scene 5 — Mystery deepens: Yet the younger sister's skin was creasing and sagging way faster, while the older sister's skin was taut, tight, and lifted. The gap between expectation and reality creates maximum curiosity.

Scene 6 — Root cause discovery: Deep research revealed three "super ager" habits — starting with DHT, a hormone that increases with age and stops collagen production. The viewer learns something they didn't know. The root cause reframes the entire problem.

Scene 7 — The unknowing solution: The younger-looking sister happened to take saw palmetto (lowers DHT), amino acids (boost collagen), and hyaluronic acid. She was unknowingly addressing the root cause. Makes the solution feel discovered, not invented.

Scene 8 — Testing: They gave these ingredients to the older-looking sister. Results were dramatic. Proof through story, not clinical data.

Scene 9 — Expanded proof: Tested on even more people. Results were consistently amazing.

Scene 10 — Bottled it + scarcity: Put it into a supplement. Unfortunately didn't make enough. Buy today.

The brilliance of this flow is that nothing feels like selling until the very end. The viewer is absorbed in a mystery — two sisters, same lifestyle, dramatically different skin. The product emerges as the natural answer to that mystery. If you removed the product reveal entirely, the first 80% would still be a compelling piece of health content.

That's the standard to aim for.

How to Match Your Story to a Flow

Kell's process for selecting the right flow:

Step 1: Know Your Story Pieces

Before you can match a flow, inventory what you have:

- Do you have an authority figure? What's their backstory?
- How was the root cause discovered?
- How did the product come to exist?
- What proof or testing results do you have?
- What pieces are MISSING that you'll need to find or create?

Step 2: Compare Against the Proven Flows

Go through the 18 campaign flows and ask: which one sounds like MY story?

Kell demonstrates with his own VSL Masterclass offer. His story: struggled with marketing, met media buyers, learned Facebook, committed to VSLs, everything exploded, now teaches others. Best match: the SuperBrain flow — "nightmare to mastery to teaching." Why it fits: both are "struggled, cracked it, became one of the best, now teaches everyone" arcs.

Why the Silva UltraMind flow does NOT fit: that flow requires "nobody believed him, so he tested on others to prove it." Kell's story was self-tested based on mentors' advice, not external skepticism. Forcing his story into that flow would create friction on the slide.

The key: don't force your story into the wrong flow. Find the one where your true story naturally aligns.

Step 3: Test Multiple Flows for the Same Product

Once you have your first VSL using one flow, you can test entirely different flows for the same product. "What if I was powerless to help people who kept coming to me?" (a different angle, same product). "Why do some brands explode while others can't get their Facebook accounts running?" (a fascination lead opening into a different flow).

Each angle is a different Way to the Sale — a different treasure map to the same destination.

Building a Flow When You Don't Have All the Pieces

What if you have a great product but no authority figure and no story?

Kell walked through this exact scenario with an NAD anti-aging skincare product. Great reviews, proven product, but no campaign flow, no authority figure, no story. Just "marketers who found a dope product."

His process:

- 1. Start from a known winning flow** — He chose the Gundry Total Restore flow as a template.
- 2. Identify what the flow requires** — An authority figure who discovered the root cause and created the product.
- 3. Go find that person** — He searched for people whose real stories would fit the flow. Found Hollywood nurses injecting celebrities with NAD (Justin Bieber, etc.). Constructed a story: a Hollywood nurse saw the life-changing benefits of NAD injections on celebrities, but injections couldn't scale. She went on a mission to put it into a supplement form with similar results.

The authority figure doesn't need to exist yet. You can go find or recruit someone whose real story fits the flow you need. Craig Clements built an entire business model around this: finding authors who had written books

about health topics but hadn't yet created supplements. The story already existed in the book. The credibility was pre-built. He just connected the dots. *"A lot of times, just finding authors who haven't yet gotten to a supplement is a huge thing."*

The Flow Is the Business

One final point worth absorbing: Golden Hippo sold 33% of their company for \$170 million, built primarily on the back of two VSL flows. V-Shred does close to \$200 million per year using variations of the same flow architecture. The flow isn't just a creative tool. It's a business asset.

Get your flow right, and you have something that can be run, tested, optimized, and scaled for years. Get it wrong, and you'll keep rewriting scripts that never quite work — because the architecture is flawed, not the copy.

CHAPTER 9

The Authority Figure — Who Tells the Story

Every monster campaign has an authority figure. The question isn't whether you need one — you do — but what KIND of authority figure, and what story they tell.

Peter Kell's insight: most experts already have amazing stories that would work for VSLs. You don't need to invent anything. You need to recognize which archetype their story fits, and then use his extraction process to pull the story out in the right order.

The 10 Authority Figure Archetypes

Kell has catalogued ten distinct narrative patterns across the highest-performing campaigns. Each archetype has a specific psychological mechanism — a reason it works on the audience.

1. The Expert Who Quit Mainstream

Pattern: A credentialed expert inside the system realizes the system never addresses the root cause. They walk away from prestige and money to pursue what really works.

Why it converts: Validates the viewer's suspicion that mainstream medicine/finance/education is broken. The whistleblower frame — this person sacrificed their career for the truth — makes the mechanism feel urgent and suppressed.

Example: Dr. Gundry (Gundry MD) — a heart surgeon who quit because surgery never targeted the root cause.

Kell: *"If you ever find somebody, an authority figure who is an expert and he quit because he never targeted the root cause of the problem — that is banger. That is a monster opportunity."*

2. The Famous TV Expert

Pattern: A well-known expert with TV appearances lends pre-built authority.

Why it converts: The viewer has already seen this person in a trusted context. The news footage and TV clips serve as instant social proof without building credibility from scratch.

Example: Dr. Marty (Dr. Marty Pets) — a famous pet veterinarian with TV appearances.

Pro tip: One of the biggest tricks is finding someone who has ALREADY been on news shows and TV shows. The hardest part about celebrities is getting news channel footage — if they already have it, you skip the hardest step.

3. The Accessible Researcher

Pattern: Someone positions themselves as a dedicated researcher without elite credentials. "Beauty researcher" rather than "top dermatologist."

Why it converts: Relatability. The viewer sees someone like themselves who just went deeper. This lowers the intimidation factor while granting enough authority to be credible.

Example: City Beauty — called their spokesperson a "beauty researcher." Ran huge on display and native ads.

4. The Regular Guy Who Meets Yoda

Pattern: An ordinary person with a relatable problem meets a doctor or scientist who reveals the solution. The hero is the audience surrogate.

Why it converts: Pure identification. The viewer IS this person. The underdog arc is universal — Luke Skywalker meets Yoda, and the galaxy changes.

Example: MetaCore (ClickBank) — regular guy meets a doctor who reveals ingredients, then partners with another doctor to formulate the supplement.

Kell: *"If you're doing Luke Skywalker kind of shit, the guy's got to meet Yoda."*

This is the workhorse archetype for biz-op, where the spokesperson is deliberately NOT an expert. They're the prospect — just a few months ahead.

5. The Reluctant Hero from an Unrelated Field

Pattern: Someone from a completely different domain makes a lateral connection nobody in the target niche saw. They never wanted fame.

Why it converts: The "unrelated field" detail is a powerful curiosity trigger — it makes the mechanism feel novel. The reluctance to be famous removes the sales frame entirely.

Example: Jose Silva (Silva UltraMind/Mindvalley) — a radio repairman who knew that reducing resistance in a wire makes more electricity flow. Applied that principle to the brain.

6. The Injured Kid Who Became a Genius

Pattern: The authority figure suffered a devastating setback as a child that forced them to develop the very expertise they now teach.

Why it converts: The childhood injury creates immediate sympathy. The expertise feels hard-won rather than academic. And the implication: "If this worked for someone who was THIS broken, it can work for you."

Example: Jim Kwik (Mindvalley/Kwik Learning) — cracked his skull as a kid, leading him to develop brain optimization techniques.

7. The Expert Stumped by a Loved One's Problem

Pattern: A credentialed expert who solves this problem for everyone else suddenly can't solve it for someone close to them. The personal stakes force a deeper discovery.

Why it converts: Creates a paradox ("How can a world-class expert be stumped?"). Removes the commercial frame — this was about saving someone they love, not making money.

Examples: V-Shred (trainer who helps everyone, but one woman's diet won't work — then his MOM calls crying with the same problem). QuiAnnex (anatomy professor who gets tinnitus himself — humiliating for someone who's supposed to know everything).

8. The Beverly Hills Surgeon Stumped by a Patient

Pattern: A high-status specialist encounters one patient whose problem defies everything they know. The solution comes from an unexpected source.

Why it converts: The Beverly Hills/celebrity setting establishes maximum credentials. Being stumped despite those credentials creates maximum curiosity.

9. The Celebrity with a Transformation

Pattern: A well-known celebrity experienced a dramatic personal health transformation. They're not an expert — they're famous. Their role is to attract attention and hand off to a real doctor who explains the mechanism.

Why it converts: Instant attention and trust through familiarity.

Critical lesson — the Activated You case study: This campaign struggled to convert profitably. They were hooking women well but couldn't make the economics work. It was not until they ADDED THE DOCTOR to the VSL that ROI jumped and the campaign became "super, super profitable."

The takeaway is unambiguous: if you have a celebrity, ALWAYS pair them with a credentialed expert. Celebrity attracts attention. The doctor converts it into belief.

10. The Straight-Up Qualified Pro

Pattern: No dramatic backstory needed. A highly credentialed expert speaking about what they're qualified to speak about. Clean, straightforward, brand-friendly.

Example: Nucific — qualified doctor as brand spokesperson.

This is the safest archetype. It may lack the emotional punch of the dramatic storylines, but it works when the product and proof are strong enough to carry the conversion without a heroic narrative.

Extracting the Story: The VSL God Process

Once you've identified your authority figure's archetype, you need to pull the story out of them in the right order. This is Kell's VSL God Process — a structured interview framework designed to extract the raw story material for a VSL.

The process starts with five warm-up questions:

1. Who are you and what do you do — in ONE sentence?
2. Why has teaching this topic become one of your life's callings?
3. How many books and courses have you studied on this topic? For how long?
4. What kind of people do we want to reach with your message today?
5. Can you rapid-fire a few of the worst things you can do that cause [problems]? And the best things for [benefits]?

Then it moves into generating lead material — the hook content for the first 20 seconds to 2 minutes of the VSL. Kell tells the authority figure upfront:

"We need 20 seconds to 2 minutes of pure fire. We need to snap them out of their Facebook trance and inspire them to pay attention."

Lead-generating questions include:

- ▶ What's the biggest mistake people make when it comes to this topic?
- ▶ Is there such a thing as a [problem identity]? ("There's no such thing as a person with a bad memory...")
- ▶ What are the biggest aha moments you've seen people get really excited about?
- ▶ If you had to blow my mind about this topic in ONE SENTENCE, what would you say?
- ▶ What's the biggest secret most people don't understand?

The Re-Tell Technique

This is one of Kell's most powerful interview tools. After every answer, he asks the authority figure to tell it again in a shorter time window.

"Tell me that story again — but this time, can you do it in 30 seconds?"

Then: "Great. Now can you try it in 15 seconds?"

The third or fourth telling is usually the one you use in the VSL. Each compression forces the speaker to find the most powerful, most concise version. The unnecessary details fall away. The emotional core remains.

After the interview: transcribe everything, highlight the best lines (one-liners, emotional moments, proof points), map the material to your VSL structure (Hook, Lead, Story, Mechanism, Proof, Close), and write the Kindergarten Simple Pitch — the whole thing explained simply in 1-2 paragraphs. If the pitch flows, the VSL will flow.

The Lead — An Advertisement for the Rest of the VSL

The lead is where most VSLs succeed or fail. Not the close, not the mechanism section, not the product reveal. The lead.

Stefan Georgi puts it bluntly: "*The lead is an advertisement for the rest of the VSL. Its only job is to sell the prospect on the value of watching the rest.*"

This is worth repeating because it contradicts what many copywriters instinctively do. When they sit down to write a VSL lead, they start educating. They start explaining the mechanism. They start teaching. This is exactly wrong.

The lead is not the place to educate. The mechanism section is where you teach. The lead is where you TEASE. Its job is to create so much curiosity, so much emotional engagement, and so much forward momentum that the viewer cannot stop watching.

Peter Kell's 6 Lead Types

Kell identifies six proven lead types, each with a distinct psychological mechanism. By rotating through these types, you can create endless fresh leads for the same offer — extending campaign lifespan indefinitely.

1. Value Leads

Formula: "Here's an incredible way to solve your problem, but it's not as good as what I'm about to show you."

Give genuine value upfront — share real tips, tricks, or hacks that help with the problem. Then pivot to reveal that the REAL solution is even better.

How to brainstorm: Search YouTube for your benefit topic, filter by most viewed. Screenshot the thumbnails — they're gold for angle ideas. The thumbnails alone will spark dozens of lead directions.

2. Fear Leads

Formula: "Here's a big mistake you're making — try this instead."

Trigger fear about something the audience is already doing wrong. The mistake creates urgency to watch and learn the right approach.

How to brainstorm: Google "worst things for your [skin/brain/health/business]." Find the scary but believable mistakes.

3. Story Leads

Formula: "This person went from zero to hero, all by discovering what we're about to show you."

Classic transformation story compressed to 30 seconds. Person had a problem, discovered the solution, achieved remarkable results.

4. Nightmare Comparison Leads

Formula: "This nightmare is just like your nightmare — here's how to fix it."

Draw a vivid parallel between a relatable nightmare scenario and the viewer's actual situation. The comparison creates instant recognition.

5. Dream Comparison Leads

Formula: "They have a magical secret, and so do we in this video."

Reference a group of people, culture, or tribe with seemingly magical results, then reveal that the same secret is available to the viewer.

6. Important Question Leads

Formula: "What's the deal with this? Is it the real problem? Watch now to find out."

Open with a provocative, unanswered question the audience has been wondering about. The need for resolution keeps them watching.

How to brainstorm: Use AnswerThePublic.com — it surfaces exactly the questions real people are asking in any niche.

The Lead Layering Formula

The strongest leads don't use just one type. They layer multiple types together in a single opening.

Value + Fear + Pivot:

"Japanese rice is one of the best things for your skin. Drinking soda pop is one of the worst. But there's something even more important you need to know about."

Three sentences. Three psychological triggers. Each layer adds another hook, and the pivot creates an irresistible bridge into the VSL body. You can generate endless lead variations by swapping the value and fear items while keeping the pivot structure.

The Agora Lead Types (Mapped to Awareness)

The Agora editorial tradition — the world's largest direct response publisher — uses a six-lead classification mapped directly to Schwartz's awareness levels:

Lead Type	Awareness Level	Directness
Offer Lead	Most Aware	Most direct
Promise Lead	Product Aware	Direct
Problem-Solution Lead	Solution Aware	Moderate
Secret Lead	Problem/Solution Aware	Indirect
Proclamation Lead	Problem Aware	Indirect
Story Lead	Unaware	Most indirect

Todd Brown expands this to eight types, adding Invitation Leads (for Most Aware/Product Aware audiences being invited to an event) and Intrigue Leads (for Problem Aware audiences who need pure curiosity to enter).

The rule across all classifications is the same: **higher awareness = more direct lead. Lower awareness = more indirect lead.** The best Story Leads are "blind" — you don't know what's being sold until deep into the story.

The Lead Checklist

Georgi provides a practical checklist of elements to include in the lead section. This isn't a rigid order — mix and interweave as the narrative demands:

- 1. Call out the problem** — specific to THIS audience
- 2. Promise a solution** — to that pain point
- 3. Promise to save time or money** — "In the next few minutes..."
- 4. Tease the emotional discovery story** — if one exists
- 5. Tease the unique mechanism** — WHAT it is, not HOW it works
- 6. Tease the contrarian nature** — "This flies in the face of what you've been told"
- 7. Work in fascinations** — as incentive for continuing
- 8. Briefly mention credibility builders** — credentials, results, experience
- 9. Qualifiers** — who is this for? Speak to your market.
- 10. Briefly address skepticism** — "I know that sounds unbelievable..."
- 11. Include broad testimonials** — about benefits, don't reveal the product

Repetition of the One Thing

This is a technique that separates great leads from good ones. Your core mechanism phrase — the named concept you developed in Part II — should appear multiple times in the lead alone.

In the MetaBoost Connect lead (a 9-figure offer that beat its control by 15%), "five tasty superfoods" was repeated throughout the lead. By the time the viewer moves into the mechanism section, the concept is already anchored in their mind. They're not encountering it for the first time — they're getting the full explanation of something they're already curious about.

The principle: anchor the big idea early and often. Repetition isn't boring when it's repeating something the prospect is desperate to understand.

The Power Law of Retention

Georgi shared a retention model that explains why leads matter more than any other section:

- ▶ First 5 seconds → survive to 30 seconds
- ▶ 30 seconds → survive to 2 minutes
- ▶ 2 minutes → survive to 4-6 minutes
- ▶ 4-6 minutes → survive to 12-15 minutes
- ▶ 12-15 minutes → survive to 30+ minutes

Once someone makes it past the first few minutes, a sunk-cost effect kicks in. They tend to stick around. But the lead is where most eyeballs are. If the lead loses people, it doesn't matter what you do downstream — the pool you're optimizing for is tiny.

A 60% hook rate gives you 600 out of 1,000 people to convert. A 20% hook rate gives you 200. No amount of close optimization can overcome a 3x difference in the pool.

This is why Dario's team tested 130 different microleads. This is why Georgi says: *"Always optimize the lead first."*

Testing Philosophy

The lead doesn't need to be 300-700 words of totally different copy each time. You can test different opening lines while keeping the body of the lead consistent. The first 15-30 seconds are what you're optimizing — the rest of the lead can remain stable while you iterate on the hook.

For Facebook in-feed VSLs, expect to test dozens of hooks before finding a winner. And stay humble about what you think will work — Georgi noted that the simple "If you're a woman over 40..." opening, which he personally expected to underperform, is currently working for multiple 8-figure brands. Simplicity sometimes wins.

CHAPTER 11

The Background Story — Building the Bridge to Belief

After the lead hooks the viewer and sells them on watching the rest, the background story takes over. Its job: introduce the hero, establish emotional connection, and create the narrative runway for the mechanism reveal.

The Background Story Framework

Georgi's structure for the background story section:

- 1. Who am I?** — Spokesperson introduction plus credibility builders (when appropriate)
- 2. "Someone like you was in pain"** — An emotional story connecting the spokesperson personally to the prospect's problem
- 3. Traditional solutions/advice weren't working** — Everything the "experts" recommended was wrong or incomplete
- 4. Trigger event** — The problem escalated to where something HAD to change
- 5. Search for truth and answers** — The journey begins

This maps to the classic hero's journey structure and to Russell Brunson's Epiphany Bridge framework: backstory → journey → epiphany → new opportunity → transformation. The prospect is taken through the same "aha moment" the hero experienced, so they arrive at the same conclusion naturally.

The Reluctant Hero

Jon Benson — the inventor of the VSL format — brought a specific storytelling archetype into direct response that remains one of the most powerful: the Reluctant Hero.

The presenter positions themselves as an unlikely, unwilling messenger. Not a guru, not an expert who's been waiting for the spotlight, but someone who stumbled onto something and feels compelled — almost against their will — to share it.

"I never planned to share this..."

"I'm not the kind of person who does videos like this..."

"Honestly, I debated whether to make this public at all..."

The reluctance disarms skepticism. The viewer thinks: "If they don't even WANT the attention, this must be real." It's the opposite of the typical sales pitch energy, and that contrast is precisely what makes it work.

The "I-itis" Problem

Georgi flags one of the most common flaws in background stories: too much "I, I, I" without checking in with the reader.

A background story can easily become a monologue — "I was struggling, I tried this, I discovered that, I realized something." The viewer starts to disconnect because the story is about the HERO, not about THEM.

The fix is simple: periodically relate back to the viewer.

"Have you ever been in a job like that? Maybe you're in one right now where it doesn't matter how much effort you put in — there's a seniority system and you just have to keep treading water until someone pulls you up."

This single sentence — dropped after a few paragraphs of personal story — transforms the narrative from autobiography to shared experience. The viewer stops watching a stranger's story and starts recognizing their own.

Build these reader check-ins into every major section transition. Not just the background story — throughout the entire VSL. After the mechanism reveal: "Starting to see how it all fits together?" After the dead ends section: "Sound familiar?" After the product buildup: "Imagine finally having something that actually works."

Market-Specific Background Story Variations

The emotional beats shift depending on the market:

Health/Supplements: Doctor or researcher who left mainstream practice, often motivated by a personal health crisis. The journey moves from conventional treatments → frustration → deeper research → root cause discovery. Authority comes from credentials PLUS personal experience.

Biz-op/Make Money Online: Ordinary person with a dead-end job. The journey moves from grinding → failed side hustles → mentor discovery → life transformation. Authority comes from results (income walkthroughs, dashboard screenshots) rather than credentials. The spokesperson is deliberately positioned as "just like you."

Finance/Investing: Insider who saw behind the curtain. The journey moves from working within the system → realizing the system is rigged → discovering an alternative approach. Authority comes from insider access plus contrarian insight.

Digital Products/Info Products: Practitioner who solved the problem through real-world experimentation. The journey moves from struggling → trying everything → connecting dots nobody else connected → systematizing the solution. Authority comes from demonstrated results plus the quality of the methodology.

In every case, the emotional core is the same: "I was where you are. I tried everything you've tried. Nothing worked — until I discovered something different."

CHAPTER 12

The Mechanism Sections — Writing the UMP and UMS

You've built the mechanism in Part II. Now you have to WRITE it — and the writing matters as much as the concept.

A brilliant mechanism poorly written will fail to create the "aha" moment. A good mechanism brilliantly written will outperform a great mechanism that reads like a textbook.

Writing the UMP (Unique Mechanism of the Problem)

The UMP section follows the system malfunction framework from Chapter 5, but the writing itself requires specific craft.

Lead with the Revelation

Don't build up to the root cause gradually. Lead with the surprise.

"Here's what nobody's told you about why your joints hurt..."

"It turns out that the real reason you can't lose weight has nothing to do with what you eat..."

"What if I told you that every diet you've ever tried was treating the wrong problem?"

The prospect should feel a jolt — the sense that they're about to learn something that changes everything. If the opening of your UMP section feels like a lecture, rewrite it as a revelation.

Use the System Malfunction Structure

Walk through the three steps from Chapter 5, but keep the language conversational:

- 1. Normal function** — Explain how the system works when everything is going right. Use simple metaphors. "Your body has a built-in fat-burning switch. When it's turned on, your metabolism runs like it was designed to." The viewer needs to understand the NORMAL state before you can explain the malfunction.

2. **The malfunction** — Show what's going wrong. This is the "aha." "But as you age, a hormone called [NAME] starts to interfere with that switch. It's like someone pouring sand into the gears."
3. **External culprit** — Identify who or what is causing the malfunction. "And here's the worst part — the very foods that your doctor tells you to eat are FEEDING that hormone."

Name It

Give the root cause a memorable name. "The Collagen Collapse." "The Metabolic Switch." "The Asset Gap." "The Algorithm Tax."

Naming does several things: it makes the concept feel proprietary (this is YOUR discovery), it makes it repeatable (the viewer can tell someone else about it), and it creates a mental anchor that you'll reference throughout the rest of the VSL.

Keep It Simple

Georgi's rule: one or two studies in the UMP is fine. But don't rattle off study after study trying to prove the problem exists. Especially with a doctor spokesperson, you don't need that. The doctor's authority carries the credibility.

Save the heavy proof for the UMS section, where you're proving the SOLUTION works. The UMP is about insight, not evidence. It's a revelation, not a research paper.

Reader Check-In

At the end of the UMP section, add a summary line that invites the viewer to synthesize:

"Starting to see how it all fits together? [Summarize the mechanism in one sentence.]"

The Nooro VSL does this perfectly: *"Starting to see how it all fits together? Weak calves cause your vein valves to weaken. Weakened vein valves fail to send old blood back up. Blood pools around calves, feet, ankles."*

One sentence. The entire mechanism. If you can't write that sentence, the mechanism is too complex.

Writing the UMS (Unique Mechanism of the Solution)

The UMS is where the prospect transitions from "I understand the problem" to "I believe this solution will work." The structure moves from macro to micro.

Macro Level First

Start with the big concept — the THEORY of the solution. Not the product yet. The category of approach that targets the root cause.

"So the question becomes: how do you reactivate that metabolic switch? The answer lies in a specific combination of compounds that block [ROOT CAUSE HORMONE] while simultaneously feeding your body the raw materials it needs to..."

The macro level creates the logical bridge: "If THIS is the problem, then THAT is the solution." The viewer should be nodding along, thinking "yeah, that makes sense."

Micro Level Second

Now dig into the specifics. For supplements, this is where ingredients get introduced. For info products, this is where the methodology gets broken down. For devices, this is where the technology gets explained.

Each component should be introduced with a mini-CPB chunk (Todd Brown's Claim → Proof → Benefit structure):

Claim: "The first compound is [NAME], a natural extract found in [SOURCE]."

Proof: "In a study published in [JOURNAL], researchers found that [NAME] reduced [ROOT CAUSE] by [X%] in just [TIMEFRAME]."

Benefit: "Which means your body can finally start [DESIRED PROCESS] the way it was designed to."

Stack these chunks for each major component. The cumulative effect is a growing sense of inevitability — "Of course this works. Look at all this evidence."

Fascinations in the UMS

This is where John Carlton-style fascinations earn their keep — irresistible bullet points that tease the content of the product without giving away the complete answer:

"You'll discover the one-sentence phrase that instantly [BENEFIT] (page 12)..."

"Why a common piece of advice you hear from experts is actually SABOTAGING your success — and what to do instead..."

"The 5-minute daily habit that triples your productivity. It sounds simple, but you're probably doing it backward right now..."

Each fascination creates a micro open loop. The prospect can't get the answer without the product, so each bullet adds incremental desire.

Dimensionalization

When making big claims in the UMS — especially in financial copy — make abstract numbers tangible.

"\$150 trillion" is meaningless. "Enough to pay off the national debt four times" is powerful. "Enough to buy every NASDAQ company AND every private home in the US" is unforgettable. "\$1.1 million per American household" is personal.

Stefan Georgi noted that the Agora "Secret Trust Fund" promo mentioned "\$150 trillion" fifteen-plus times and "trust fund" twenty-eight times. The promise never got lost in the story because it was continually anchored to specific, graspable comparisons.

Apply this to any market. Don't say "save hours" — say "save 47 minutes every single morning." Don't say "make more money" — say "enough to cover your car payment twice over." Connect abstract promises to things the prospect already understands in their daily life.



CHAPTER 13

The Product Buildup — Trial, Tribulation, and Triumph

Between the mechanism reveal and the product introduction, there's a section that most copywriters want to skip. Don't.

Georgi is emphatic: *"People try to skip this section. Don't. Having trial and tribulation before the product reveal consistently increases conversions."*

Why This Section Exists

The product buildup serves a specific psychological function: it makes the product feel EARNED. Without it, the transition from mechanism to product feels like a sales pivot — "And now, introducing the product!" With it, the product feels like the hard-won result of genuine struggle and expertise.

The viewer thinks: "They didn't just slap something together. They went through hell to create this. It must be good."

The Buildup Framework

Five beats, in order:

1. Out-of-the-box solution doesn't work

The viewer thinks: "Now that I know the root cause, I'll just go buy the solution myself." The buildup immediately addresses this: no, you can't. Here's why.

For supplements: "I tried buying these ingredients off Amazon. Half of them were contaminated. The ones that weren't were pharmaceutical grade — \$150 per bottle."

For digital products: "I tried Googling everything. The information was scattered across hundreds of websites, half of it contradicted the other half, and there was no way to know what was accurate."

For biz-op: "I tried following a YouTube tutorial. Got halfway through, hit a wall, and realized the tutorial was missing the most critical steps."

2. Why it's flawed

Explain specifically why the do-it-yourself approach fails. Contaminated ingredients, wrong delivery mechanisms, incomplete information, wrong sequencing, missing the crucial piece.

3. Spokesperson must do it themselves

The hero decides: if no adequate solution exists, they'll create one. This moment — the decision to build rather than buy — reframes the product from "something being sold" to "something that had to be invented."

4. Setbacks and trial and error

THIS IS THE CRITICAL BEAT. The product wasn't easy to create. There were failures.

"After several months of testing..."

"The first three prototypes weren't good enough..."

"There were times I thought the technology wasn't ready..."

"People said parts were confusing, the system seemed incomplete..."

"I went through ten different versions..."

Each setback adds credibility. Each failure makes the eventual success more impressive. Each "it didn't work at first" inoculates the viewer against their own skepticism — because the CREATOR was also skeptical, and overcame it with evidence.

5. Breakthrough moment

"And then, after three more months of 12-14 hour days, it clicked."

"Until everyone who used it said it was plug-and-play."

"The results weren't just good — they were dramatically better than anything we'd seen."

The product is born. Not manufactured, not assembled — BORN. Through a journey of struggle and perseverance. The distinction matters.

Section Proportions

Even in short VSLs, the product buildup carries significant weight. In the Nooro VSL — a 3,785-word script, only about 16 minutes long — the product buildup section was 555 words. That's roughly one-sixth of the entire letter.

In a long-form VSL, the product buildup should be approximately 10% of the total word count. Not a throwaway paragraph — a genuine section with real setbacks and real emotional weight.

Market-Specific Variations

Supplements: Partnering with US biotech company, building and testing prototypes, months of failure, manufacturing nightmares, breakthrough after exhaustive testing. Beverly Hills MD's buildup: the NY Attorney General found 19 out of 24 popular supplements didn't contain their advertised ingredients. European lab-grade ingredients cost \$150+ per bottle. The doctors partnered up, but their first formula required too many pills. After months of trial and error, they combined everything into one formula.

Digital products: Simpler but still essential. "I started writing everything down, gave it to friends. They said parts were confusing, the system seemed incomplete. I went through ten different versions until everyone who used it said it was plug-and-play."

Devices/physical products: Partnering with manufacturers, three rounds of prototypes, months of 12-14 hour days, manufacturing nightmares, breakthrough after persistence.

Biz-op: The shortest buildup. The proof came from the beta testers (covered in its own section). The buildup is compressed to: moral obligation → brief trial and error → the system now works for anyone.

CHAPTER 14

The Product Reveal — From Method to Offer

The product reveal is the pivot point of the entire VSL. Everything before it was story, education, and emotional buildup. Everything after it is the close. When done well, the product reveal feels inevitable — the natural conclusion of the narrative. When done poorly, it feels like a jarring shift from content to commerce.

The Announcement

The product reveal should feel like an unveiling, not an advertisement.

"And that's why I'm so proud to introduce you to..."

Product name. Product image or logo. This is a moment of punctuation in the VSL — a visual and tonal shift that signals: we're transitioning from discovery to solution.

What's Inside

Detail the components of the product. For digital products: video modules, downloadable guides, checklists, software access, community membership, template libraries. For supplements: ingredients (already covered in UMS), dosage, delivery format. For devices: specifications, included accessories, setup simplicity.

Frame everything in terms of benefit, not feature:

Not: "12 video modules totaling 8 hours of content."

But: "12 step-by-step video modules that walk you through the entire system — from your first login to your first result — in the exact order that gets results fastest."

"It's all waiting for you inside our secure, private member's area, accessible from any device, 24/7."

Recap Through the Mechanism Lens

Remind the viewer how this product implements the unique mechanism you revealed earlier. Don't assume they've connected the dots — connect them explicitly.

"Remember the [ROOT CAUSE] we talked about earlier — the reason nothing has worked for you before? [PRODUCT NAME] is the ONLY system specifically designed to [ADDRESS ROOT CAUSE] using the [NAMED SOLUTION MECHANISM]."

This is where the UMP/UMS structure pays its dividend. The product isn't just "good." It's the ONLY thing that addresses the real problem. That positioning was established twenty minutes ago in the mechanism section — now you're cashing it in.

More Fascinations

The product reveal is another natural placement point for fascinations. Each bullet teases something inside the product that creates curiosity:

"The exact email script that landed me a [BIG CLIENT/OPPORTUNITY] — I'll give it to you as a copy-and-paste template."

"How to use the 'Lazy Man's' technique for [GOAL] in just 15 minutes a day."

"The one setting that 90% of users never activate — and why turning it on can double your results."

Additional Testimonials

Position 2-3 more testimonials here, after the product reveal but before the price. These should be results-focused and ideally overcome specific objections:

- ▶ "I was skeptical at first, but..."
- ▶ "I'm not tech-savvy at all, and I was able to..."
- ▶ "I'd tried everything else before this, and [PRODUCT] was the first thing that actually..."

The Critical Insight

Georgi's observation about this moment in the VSL is worth repeating: *"The goal is NOT to get somebody to finish your VSL. The goal is to get them to click the button as soon as you tell them to click the button."*

Everything after the first CTA is "free rolling" — taking additional shots at the conversion. Since you don't want them to watch the entire video (you want them to BUY), the length of the close doesn't add friction. It adds opportunities.

This reframe is liberating. It means your close can be — and should be — the longest section of the VSL. You're not testing the viewer's patience. You're giving people with different conviction thresholds different opportunities to convert. The viewer who's ready at CTA #1 clicks and buys. The viewer who needs more convincing stays for the bonuses, the guarantee, and the crossroads close. Both viewers are served.

We'll build that entire close architecture in Part IV.

End of Part III

Next: Part IV — The Close: The Longest and Most Important Section



PART IV: THE CLOSE

THE LONGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT SECTION



CHAPTER 15

Close Architecture — The Multi-CTA Strategy



Here is the single most counterintuitive truth about VSL writing:

The close should be the longest section of your entire VSL.

Not the mechanism section. Not the background story. Not the product reveal. The close — everything from the first mention of price to the final CTA — should occupy roughly 25-35% of the total word count.

Stefan Georgi: "*No one section should be insanely dominant — except the close. The close should always be the longest section.*"

Most copywriters write the close as an afterthought — a few paragraphs after the product reveal to justify the price, drop a guarantee, and ask for the sale. This is leaving money on the table. The close is where conversions happen. Every word in it is working harder than any word in the mechanism section, because the people who reach the close are the warmest prospects you have.

Why Multiple CTAs Work

The second counterintuitive truth: you shouldn't have one CTA. You should have four or five.

This sounds aggressive, but it makes sense once you understand the psychology. Not every viewer is ready to buy at the same moment. Some are convinced after the price reveal. Others need the bonuses to tip them over. Others need the guarantee to feel safe. Others need the crossroads close to feel the emotional weight of their decision.

By placing a CTA after each major persuasion element, you're giving different viewer segments different opportunities to convert at the moment THEY'RE ready — not at the single moment YOU decided to ask.

Georgi reframes the entire close this way: "*The goal is NOT to get somebody to finish your VSL. The goal is to get them to click the button as soon as you tell them to click the button.*"

Everything after the first CTA is "free rolling" — additional shots at the conversion. Since the goal is clicking the button (not finishing the video), the length of the close doesn't add friction. It adds opportunities.

The Close Architecture

Here's the full multi-CTA framework:

Section	Purpose	Ends With
Dismiss alternatives + build value + future pacing	Make the product feel like the only option	—
Price justification + reveal	Make the price feel like a steal	CTA #1
Bonuses	Sweeten for those who didn't click	CTA #2
Guarantee	Remove all remaining risk	CTA #3
Crossroads close + urgency	Emotional weight + deadline	CTA #4
FAQs	Clear confusion, address lingering objections	CTA #5

Each section builds on the previous one. The viewer who clicks at CTA #1 was ready — great. The viewer who stays sees the bonuses, which add value. Still didn't click? Here's the guarantee — zero risk. Still watching? Here are two futures — one painful, one beautiful. Choose.

The structure is designed so that no matter where a viewer's conviction threshold falls, there's a CTA waiting for them at exactly the right moment.

The "Add a Zero" Trick

Before you write a single word of the close, Georgi recommends a simple mental exercise: whatever the price is, add a zero in your head.

If the product is \$47, pretend you're selling it for \$470.

If the product is \$97, pretend it's \$970.

If the product is \$297, pretend it's \$2,970.

This forces you to write with more urgency, more conviction, and more value justification than the actual price requires. You'll stack more proof, build more emotional intensity, and address more objections — because you HAVE to at the imaginary price.

The result: a close that dramatically over-justifies the actual price, making it feel like a no-brainer when the real number appears.

Vidalytics Data: Why the Close Matters

The benchmark data from Patrick Stiles reinforces everything above:

47% of all conversions happen at the very end of the video. Only about 3% of viewers make it to the end — but they represent nearly half of all purchases. These are viewers who watched the ENTIRE mechanism, the ENTIRE proof stack, and the ENTIRE close. They're in what Stiles calls an "anxiety/FOMO state" — they have a problem to solve AND a decision to make. Your close copy is what tips them over.

Best-converting VSLs drop the first CTA at 30% into the video. The worst performers wait until 79%. Don't hoard the ask. Make the first CTA earlier than feels comfortable — roughly one-third of the way through the total video.

CHAPTER 16

Future Pacing — Making Them Feel the Transformation

Before you mention price, paint the picture. Future pacing is the bridge between "I understand this product" and "I WANT this product."

The principle is simple: describe the prospect's life AFTER they've used the product. Not in abstract terms ("you'll feel better") but in specific, sensory moments they can see and feel.

The Technique

Future pacing works because it activates the same neural pathways as actual experience. When someone vividly imagines checking their phone and seeing \$347 deposited overnight, or looking in the mirror and seeing tighter skin, their brain begins processing that scenario as partially real. The desire isn't hypothetical anymore — it's visceral.

Three keys:

Be specific. Not "you'll have more energy" but "you'll wake up before your alarm, feeling like you slept twelve hours, even though you only slept seven."

Use sensory language. What will they SEE? ("The look on your spouse's face when you tell them you're quitting your job.") FEEL? ("That moment when you button your jeans without lying on the bed.") HEAR? ("Your doctor saying 'whatever you're doing, keep doing it.'")

Time-stamp the transformation. "From the moment you log in..." "This time tomorrow..." "30 days from now..." Temporal anchors make the transformation feel imminent rather than hypothetical.

Market-Specific Future Pacing

Health/Supplements:

"No more struggling to find shoes that fit your swollen feet. No more canceling plans because you can't stand for longer than ten minutes. No more hiding your ankles under long skirts. Imagine waking up tomorrow, swinging your legs out of bed, and feeling... nothing. No pain. No swelling. Just your feet — the way they used to be."

Biz-op/Make Money:

"Imagine checking your phone over your morning coffee and seeing \$347 deposited overnight. Not from a boss. Not from a client. From the system you set up in 15 minutes yesterday. Now imagine that number every morning. Monday. Tuesday. Wednesday. While your old coworkers are sitting in traffic."

Finance:

"While your neighbors are panic-selling every time the market dips, you'll be sitting calmly — because your portfolio is built on an entirely different foundation. You'll feel that quiet confidence that comes from knowing something they don't."

Digital Products:

"Imagine opening your laptop Monday morning and knowing EXACTLY what to do. No more staring at a blank screen. No more second-guessing. You open Step 1, follow the instructions, and by lunch, you've accomplished more than you used to in a week."

Notice that each example avoids generic benefits ("feel great," "make more money") and instead describes a single, vivid MOMENT. The bathroom mirror. The phone over coffee. The jeans that button. The laptop on Monday morning. One moment, rendered in full detail, is more persuasive than a list of twenty abstract benefits.

CHAPTER 17

Price Justification, Anchoring, and the Reveal

The price reveal is one of the highest-stakes moments in the VSL. Everything you've built — the mechanism, the proof, the future pacing —

converges here. Get this section wrong, and the viewer feels sticker shock. Get it right, and the price feels almost embarrassingly low.

The Price Anchoring Sequence

The goal is to establish a value reference point so far above the actual price that the real number feels like a gift.

Step 1: Anchor against expensive alternatives.

"A private consultant specializing in this would charge you \$5,000 or more. And they'd give you less than half of what's in this system."

"A weekend seminar costs at least \$2,500 — plus travel, hotel, and meals. And you forget most of it by Monday."

"The average American spends \$X,XXX per year on [alternatives that don't work]."

Step 2: Anchor against the cost of inaction.

"Consider what this problem is COSTING you right now. The missed opportunities. The wasted time. The emotional toll. How much is another year of this worth? \$10,000? \$50,000?"

The Resurge close — which Peter Kell teaches as the gold standard for supplement VSL closes — does this through a series of escalating rhetorical questions:

"How much would it be worth to you to live your life in the body of your dreams? How much would it be worth to literally age in reverse? How much would that extra time be worth? \$10,000? \$20,000? \$50,000? Could you really even put a number on it?"

Each question forces the prospect to mentally assign massive value before seeing the actual price. By the time they hear "\$47," the number feels absurdly small.

Step 3: State what you COULD charge.

"Given that this could change your [area of life] forever, I could easily charge \$997 for this program. And it would still be a bargain."

This isn't bluster — it's framing. You're establishing that the "real" value is \$997. Everything below that is a discount.

Step 4: Ladder down and reveal.

"But it's not about the money for me. I just want to get this into the hands of the people who need it. That's why you won't pay \$997. You won't even pay \$497. For a limited time, you can get complete access for just a one-time investment of..."

The ladder down creates momentum. Each price the viewer DOESN'T have to pay feels like a win. By the time the real price appears, the viewer has mentally "saved" hundreds of dollars.

The Personal Mission Frame

Between the anchoring and the reveal, address WHY the price is so low. This is not optional — without it, the low price creates suspicion rather than excitement. ("If it's so good, why is it so cheap?")

The Resurge close handles this directly: *"This isn't about money for me. If it were, I'd be working at a hospital or private practice and charging hundreds of dollars per hour. I genuinely want to help as many people as possible."*

The best mission statements are honest about BOTH motivations — altruistic AND commercial. Pure altruism feels fake. Pure commerce feels mercenary. The sweet spot: "I want to help as many people as possible AND build something I'm proud of."

The AOV Question

If you're offering multiple pricing tiers (1-bottle, 3-bottle, 6-bottle for supplements; basic, standard, premium for digital products), Georgi offers a caution:

"I'd rather just get the customer. I don't want to encourage them to get one, but I also don't want them to feel shitty about getting one."

Some publishers push the premium package so aggressively that the base conversion rate tanks. A few sentences on why the bigger package is smart,

then "pick whatever package is right for you" — that's the balance. Don't make single-unit buyers feel like they chose the "wrong" option.

Optimize for conversion first. Optimize for AOV after you've proven the offer converts.

CHAPTER 18

Bonuses — The Second Chance Conversion

The bonuses appear AFTER the first CTA. This is by design — they're for people who didn't click.

The viewer watched the price reveal and hesitated. Something held them back. Maybe the price felt slightly high. Maybe they weren't sure the product covered their specific situation. Maybe they just need one more nudge.

Bonuses provide that nudge.

Bonus Design Principles

Each bonus should solve an adjacent problem or overcome a remaining objection. Don't create bonuses that duplicate the core product. Create bonuses that EXTEND the product into areas the viewer is already thinking about.

If the core product teaches a marketing method, the bonus might be a "Quick-Start Accelerator" (solves the "how fast can I get results?" objection), a "Scaling Blueprint" (solves the "what happens after I succeed?" question), or a "Troubleshooting Guide" (solves the "what if I get stuck?" fear).

Use fascinations to sell each bonus, not just list them. A bonus named "Quick-Start Guide" is forgettable. A bonus described as "The one-page cheat sheet that shows you exactly what to do in your first 24 hours — so you can see your first result before you go to bed tonight" is irresistible.

Stack the total value. After introducing each bonus, recap the complete stack: core product plus all bonuses, total value versus today's price.

"All of this — the complete [PRODUCT], plus [BONUS 1], [BONUS 2], and [BONUS 3] — a total value of \$X,XXX — yours today for just \$XX."

The gap between stated value and actual price should be almost comically large. That's the point. You're making the decision feel like a mathematical certainty, not an emotional gamble.

The Venus Factor Example

Georgi highlights the Venus Factor close as a masterclass in bonus stacking.

Notable techniques:

Fascinations with depth: Each fascination is followed by a "why it matters" addendum, giving the bullet more substance than a typical one-liner.

Expert endorsements in the close: Not just customer testimonials — expert endorsements positioned specifically in the bonus section, adding a layer of authority to the stack.

Qualification gate: *"If you're looking for magic pills or gimmick diets, this isn't for you."* This reverse psychology actually INCREASES desire by making the product feel exclusive and serious.

The community bonus as continuity: The "Venus Immersion" community was positioned as a free bonus but was actually a continuity mechanism — a membership that provided ongoing value (and recurring revenue). A clever structural move that serves both the buyer and the business.

The Guarantee — Reversing All Risk

The guarantee is not a legal requirement. It's a conversion tool.

A well-written guarantee transforms the buying decision from "Should I risk my money?" to "Should I risk missing out?" The risk shifts from the buyer to the seller — and with it, the psychological barrier to purchase drops dramatically.

Guarantee Structure

Name it. A named guarantee feels more substantial than a generic one. "60-Day Love It or It's Free Guarantee" is stronger than "60-day money-back guarantee." The name implies a specific promise, not a corporate policy.

Make the terms generous. *"Go through the entire program. If you don't get the results I've promised, or if you're not happy for any reason at all, just send my team a quick email and we will refund every penny. No questions asked."*

The more generous the terms, the more confident you appear in the product. "No questions asked" is the strongest possible framing — it tells the viewer you don't even need to know why they're unsatisfied. You'll refund regardless.

Make contact information prominent. Display the email address and/or phone number. Georgi notes that adding "We respond within minutes" increases conversions because it signals real accountability. The viewer thinks: "This is a real company with real people who stand behind their product."

Reframe the decision. *"I'm not asking for a 'yes' today, just a 'maybe.' All the risk is on my shoulders."*

This is a powerful cognitive reframe. "Yes" feels permanent and heavy. "Maybe" feels light and reversible. You're lowering the perceived commitment while maintaining the actual transaction. The viewer can

always change their mind — and knowing that makes them MORE likely to proceed, not less.

The Resurge Guarantee

Kell's annotated breakdown of the Resurge close shows how the guarantee sits in the overall sequence: it comes AFTER the multi-tier pricing and BEFORE the final CTA and scarcity section. This placement is intentional — the guarantee removes the last objection standing between the price reveal and the purchase decision.

The guarantee is not a section to rush through. Give it its own moment. Its own visual beat. Let the viewer absorb the risk-free nature of the offer before you make the final push.

CHAPTER 20

The Crossroads Close — Two Futures

The Crossroads Close is the emotional climax of the VSL. It's the moment where the entire narrative — the problem, the mechanism, the solution, the proof — converges into a single, binary choice.

The Structure

Step 1: Acknowledge the crossroads. *"As I see it, you have two options right now."*

Step 2: Paint Path 1 (Inaction).

This is where you make doing NOTHING feel like an active, painful decision. The viewer needs to understand that inaction isn't neutral — it's choosing continued suffering.

"Path one is to close this page. Go back to [SPECIFIC PAIN]. Set your alarm for 5 AM again tomorrow. Sit in traffic again. Watch your boss take credit for your work again. A month from now, nothing changes. A year from now, you're still [STUCK IN THE SAME PLACE]. Five years from now..."

Be specific. Not "keep suffering" but "keep hiding your ankles under long skirts." Not "stay stuck" but "keep watching your savings account hover at the same number it's been at for three years." Specificity creates recognition, and recognition creates discomfort.

Step 3: Paint Path 2 (Action).

"Or you can click one button and try something completely new. In just a few minutes, you could be on the inside. This time tomorrow, you could have your first [RESULT]. This time next month, you could be [SPECIFIC TRANSFORMATION]."

Same principle: be specific. The transformation should feel tangible, not abstract.

Step 4: The choice.

"Which path are you going to choose? If you've watched this far, I think you know what the right decision is for your future."

Compressed Versions

Even in short VSLs, the Crossroads Close works — it just gets compressed. The Nooro VSL (16 minutes) distills it to a single line:

"The only risk is the possibility of pain and regret because the swelling won't go away by itself."

One sentence. Two futures. The same emotional logic as a five-paragraph close.

The Fighting Words Option

For aggressive closes — particularly in biz-op and self-improvement markets — add what Georgi calls "fighting words":

"Are you going to put up with that, or are you going to fight back?"

This reframes the purchase as an act of defiance, not consumption. The viewer isn't buying a product — they're taking a stand. This appeals powerfully to prospects who feel victimized by the enemy narrative established in the UMP.

CHAPTER 21

Scarcity, Urgency, and the Final Push

Scarcity and urgency are the oldest tools in direct response. They still work — when they're believable.

Types of Digital Scarcity

Price deadline: *"This special launch price is only guaranteed for today. Tomorrow the price goes back to \$297."*

Bonus limits: *"The fast-action bonuses are only available to the first 100 buyers."*

Enrollment window: *"Enrollment for this program closes Friday at midnight, and I'm not sure when I'll open it again."*

Capacity limit: *"I can only support X new members at a time. When spots fill, enrollment closes."*

Each type has different credibility dynamics. Price deadlines are the most common and the most easily believed. Capacity limits are the most compelling but the hardest to justify for digital products (unless there's a coaching or community component). Choose the scarcity type that fits your actual offer structure.

Logical Urgency

Supplement the tactical scarcity with logical urgency — the rational case for acting now rather than later.

"Every day you wait is another day you're stuck with [PAIN]. How would you feel a month from now if you look back and realize you could have solved this problem today?"

Logical urgency works because it doesn't depend on an artificial deadline. It appeals to the prospect's own timeline and their own cost of delay. The deadline is their LIFE, not your marketing calendar.

The No-Alternative Frame

"You've tried everything else, and it hasn't worked. This is the only solution designed to fix the real problem. And the only time you can get it at this price is NOW."

This connects back to the dead ends section from Part III. You've already discredited the alternatives. Now you're reminding the viewer: there IS no Plan B. This is it.

The Enemy Thread (Biz-Op/Finance)

If your UMP section established an enemy narrative (corporations, algorithms, gatekeepers), the close is where that thread pays its final dividend:

"This window won't stay open. [ENEMY] is already trying to shut this down. I don't know how much longer I can keep this available."

Whether this is literally true is less important than whether it's emotionally consistent with the story you've told. If the entire VSL positioned the viewer as an underdog fighting a rigged system, the close should reinforce that fight — not suddenly shift to a calm, rational sales pitch.

FAQs — The Quiet Closer

The FAQ section is the most underestimated part of the close. Most copywriters treat it as an administrative afterthought — a place to dump answers to questions nobody asked.

In reality, the FAQ section is a stealth selling tool. The tone shifts: you're not pitching anymore. You're being helpful. You're clearing up confusion. You're their friend. And each answer quietly nudges them back toward the order button.

The Tonal Shift

Georgi notes that the FAQ section is where you go back to "being their friend." The selling pressure that built throughout the close dissipates. The viewer can relax. And in that relaxed state, objections that felt too heavy to voice during the pitch can be addressed casually.

This is why the FAQ section often converts viewers who survived the entire close without clicking. The pressure is off. The questions feel genuine. And the answers quietly dissolve the last remaining doubts.

The Essential FAQ List

Every VSL should address these questions (adapted to your specific offer):

- 1. How does this actually work?** — Recap the mechanism in plain, simple language. No jargon, no hype. Just: "You do X, the product does Y, you get Z."
- 2. Is this right for me?** — Define the ideal customer broadly enough to include the viewer. "If you can follow step-by-step instructions, you can do this." For health: "If you're over [AGE] and experiencing [SYMPTOMS]..." For biz-op: "If you have a phone and wifi..."
- 3. What if it doesn't work for me?** — Reiterate the guarantee. "You're covered by our [X-day] guarantee. Zero risk."

- 4. How long will it take to get results?** — Set realistic expectations while maintaining optimism. "Most people see [FIRST RESULT] within [TIMEFRAME]."
- 5. Is this a one-time payment?** — Confirm no hidden charges. This objection is more common than most copywriters realize.
- 6. How do I get access?** — Make the process feel effortless. "Click the button, fill in your info, check your email. You'll be inside in under two minutes."
- 7. Can I wait and buy later?** — This is the stealth urgency question. "30 days from now, you'll either have [RESULT] or you'll still be where you are today. The price won't be lower and the bonuses may be gone."
- 8. What do I do right now?** — The final redirect. "Click the order button below. It takes less than 60 seconds."

Notice how each FAQ ends with a nudge, not just an answer. The FAQ section isn't a dead end — it's a series of gentle ramps back to the CTA.

The Social Proof Bomb Alternative

Georgi notes that the Venus Factor close replaced traditional FAQs with UGC testimonial videos at the end — what he calls a "social proof bomb." Instead of answering written questions, the close simply stacks video after video of real customers sharing their results.

This can be extraordinarily effective when you have strong testimonial content. Each video answers the implicit question "Does this really work?" without framing it as a FAQ.

The choice between traditional FAQs and a testimonial stack depends on your proof assets. If you have compelling video testimonials, the social proof bomb may outperform written FAQs. If you don't, well-written FAQs will do the heavy lifting.

The Final CTA

After the FAQs (or testimonial stack), place one more CTA. Brief. Direct. No elaborate pitch.

"Click below to get started now."

The viewer who has read through every FAQ is either buying or leaving. Make the path to purchase as short and frictionless as possible.

Close Proportions: A Practical Guide

To put it all together, here's how a typical close breaks down by word count within the 25-35% allocation:

Close Section	% of Close
Dismiss alternatives + value building + future pacing	~15%
Price justification + anchoring + reveal	~15%
Bonuses + value stacking	~15%
Guarantee	~10%
Crossroads close + scarcity/urgency	~15%
FAQs or social proof bomb	~20%
CTAs (distributed throughout)	~10%

These are approximate — adjust based on your proof assets, bonus structure, and market. The principle is more important than the percentages: every section of the close has a specific psychological job, and every section ends with an opportunity to convert.

The Resurge Close Formula (Reusable Template)

Kell's annotated breakdown of the Resurge supplement close provides a reusable template that maps neatly to the architecture above:

- 1. Product Introduction** — "The world's first/only [specific claim]"
- 2. Uniqueness Statement** — "There's never been anything like this"
- 3. Usage + Expectation** — Dead simple, vivid future pacing
- 4. Safety/Credibility** — Stack all trust markers (USA-made, FDA-approved facility, GMP certified, all-natural, non-GMO, zero side effects)
- 5. Value Anchoring** — "How much would it be worth to you?" (escalate to absurd numbers)
- 6. Mission Statement** — "This isn't about money for me"
- 7. 3-Tier Pricing** — 1/3/6 options with the largest as the obvious value winner
- 8. Guarantee** — Full risk reversal
- 9. Scarcity + Final CTA** — Limited supply, act now

Each step builds on the previous one in a precise psychological sequence. Product → uniqueness → simplicity → safety → value → mission → price → guarantee → urgency. The prospect's objections are addressed in the exact order they arise, and by the time the final CTA appears, the only remaining action is clicking the button.

End of Part IV

Next: Part V — Advanced Techniques and Variations



PART V

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES AND VARIATIONS



CHAPTER 23

In-Feed vs. On-Page — The Critical Distinction



This might be the most expensive mistake in direct response marketing, and it happens constantly.

A brand sees Gundry MD or Golden Hippo crushing it with educational, content-feeling VSLs on Facebook. The ads don't feel like ads — they feel like health content. They rack up millions of views. So the brand hires a copywriter and says: "Write me something like that."

The copywriter does. They create a beautiful, educational, content-feeling VSL.

And then the brand puts it on their LANDING PAGE — the page where people go AFTER clicking the ad.

It bombs.

Stefan Georgi: *"I can't tell you how many times I've seen big brands waste \$50,000 to \$150,000 for this exact reason."*

Why They're Different

The psychological journey of the viewer is fundamentally different in each context.

In-feed VSL (the ad itself):

- ▶ The viewer is scrolling social media to consume content, talk with friends, be entertained
- ▶ They're NOT in buying mode — they're in consumption mode
- ▶ Educational, native-feeling content works because it feels like content, not advertising
- ▶ The viewer is being WARMED UP through education

On-page VSL (the landing page):

- ▶ The viewer has already clicked — they chose to leave their feed and come to your page
- ▶ They're further along in the buying journey
- ▶ They need classic persuasion: pain amplification, fascinations, mechanism teasing, full story

- ▶ They need the full background, full mechanism, full proof, extended close
- ▶ They're ready for — and expect — a sales argument

The structures in Parts III and IV of this book are on-page VSL structures. They're designed for landing pages where the viewer has already taken an action to get there.

The CA Pro Case Study

Georgi cites a specific example: a member took an in-feed VSL that performed well on Facebook and placed it directly on their landing page. Engagement dropped dramatically.

The reason: the VSL had the educational component (which worked in-feed) but was missing a strong classic lead, pain point amplification, a full mechanism section, and classic sales letter structure — all of which are essential when the viewer has already committed to watching by clicking through.

Why Swiping Gundry Fails

Copywriters see Gundry's educational in-feed ads performing and try to write the same style for a client's on-page VSL. It bombs because the psychological journey is different:

- ▶ **In-feed:** Education first → prospect clicks → now ready for classic VSL
- ▶ **On-page:** Prospect already clicked via ad → needs classic persuasion, not more education

The educational work was done BY THE AD. The landing page VSL needs to pick up where the ad left off — with a classic lead, a full mechanism, a complete proof stack, and an extended close.

The Practical Takeaway

When you sit down to write a VSL, the very first question to answer is: **where will this play?**

If it's an in-feed ad (the viewer encounters it while scrolling Facebook, TikTok, or YouTube), write it as content with a sales architecture underneath. Educational hooks, native-feeling tone, shorter format (3-7 minutes typically), and a CTA that drives to a landing page.

If it's an on-page VSL (the viewer clicked an ad to get here), write a full classic VSL with the structures from this book. Pain amplification, full mechanism, extended close, multiple CTAs.

If you try to use the same script for both, you'll underperform in both contexts.

CHAPTER 24

Short-Form VSL Structures (3-7 Minutes)

Not every VSL needs to be 20-60 minutes. Georgi's RMBC II identifies three proven short-form structures for in-feed ads, short landing page videos, and quick-convert funnels.

When to Go Short

Signal	Short VSL	Long VSL
Awareness	Solution/Product Aware	Problem Aware or Unaware
Price	Under \$50	Over \$50
Proof	Demonstrable/visual	Requires education
Platform	TikTok, Meta in-feed	Landing page

Brand	Known brand, reviews exist	Unknown brand
Competition	Low/blue ocean	Saturated market

The higher the awareness and the lower the price, the shorter you can go. If the prospect already knows they want a solution and your product is affordable, a 5-minute VSL can close the sale.

Structure 1: Problem → Mechanism → Solution

Best for direct product sales — supplements, devices, physical products.

1. **Hook/Problem Callout** (10-15 seconds) — Direct statement of pain point. *"If your toe pain is driving you nuts..." "Think you have a small bladder? Think again."*
2. **Mechanism Reveal** (30-60 seconds) — The "real cause" most people don't know. Scientific explanation made simple.
3. **Solution Reveal** (30-45 seconds) — The natural/different approach. Sometimes names each compound with proof. Sometimes teases a method without naming it (*"7 Second Morning Poop Ritual"*).
4. **CTA** (15-30 seconds) — Quick risk reversal or guarantee. *"If you don't feel the difference, send back the empty bag..."*

Total: 2-4 minutes. Pure efficiency.

Structure 2: Biz-Op Contrarian

Best for business opportunities, coaching programs, investment offers.

1. **Hook** — Contrarian investment/income positioning. Traditional method earns terrible returns. People only do it because they don't know a better way.
2. **Opportunity Introduction** — *"But there's something so much better... it's called [Method Name]."* Quick credibility anchor.
3. **Method Explanation** — Simple example with a physical product or transaction. Key differentiator. Relatable analogy.

4. **Business Model Reveal** — Partnership structure, done-for-you promise.
5. **Objection Handling Sequence** — "Why don't you just do it yourself?"
"Is this a scam?" "What's the catch?"
6. **Qualification + Information Gap** — Financial qualifier, "*I can't explain everything in this video,*" free case study/workshop offer.
7. **CTA with Urgency** — Scarcity + motivational close.

Total: 5-7 minutes. Sells the click to a longer presentation, not the product directly.

Structure 3: Personal Discovery → Solution

Best for both physical products AND information products. Has two paths after the discovery moment.

1. **Audience Hook + Life Change Promise** — "*[Target audience], pause the scroll for a moment.*"
2. **Problem Agitation** — "*I tried [popular solution] before, but [negative consequences].*"
3. **Discovery Moment** — "*But luckily, I came across [discovery source]...*"
- 4A. **Product Reveal Path** (Physical Products) — Product introduction, how it works, key features.
- 4B. **Method Tease Path** (Info Products) — "*It's called the [X]-[Time] [Method Name].*" What it does without giving away details.
5. **Personal Transformation** — "*I can finally [primary benefit].*" 3-4 specific improvements.
6. **CTA** — Direct sale (products) or free information offer (methods).

Total: 3-5 minutes. The "I tried everything until I found this" arc compressed to its essence.

The ADHD Super Hook Ad (A New Format)

A new ad format is dominating Meta — 3-7 minute video ads packed with constant hooks, curiosity, pattern interrupts, and visual stimulation. Stefan Georgi calls them "ADHD mega hook ads" because they're "dopamine machines."

What Makes Them Different

The difference between an ADHD hook ad and a normal ad is simple: **normal ads hook once at the start, then go flat. ADHD hook ads never stop hooking.**

Curiosity and pattern interrupts continue throughout the entire runtime. Multiple speakers. Constant commands ("*watch this*," "*listen to this*," "*you need to hear this*"). Visual variety — color changes, unexpected imagery, screen-in-screen. Contrarian claims that demand attention. Fragmented statements that create open loops.

The V-Shred Breakdown

Georgi dissects a 5-minute V-Shred ad that uses multiple speakers (Dr. Drew, UGC women, Vince from V-Shred, AI voiceover) and relentlessly stacks hooks.

In the first 30 seconds alone:

1. "This is how you get in shape fast" (weird image: protein bars dipped in red sauce)
2. "I think I'm going to start cutting carbs"
3. "If you want to drop THIS, start eating more of THESE" (points to belly, shows mystery treat)
4. "Have you seen this guy?" (Dr. Drew breaks fourth wall mid-B-roll)

5. "You may think this will take years to learn, but we'll teach it in 60 seconds" (countdown timer)
6. "Watch this" (Dr. Drew holding colorful object in a jar)

Six distinct hooks in thirty seconds. Each one creates a micro open loop. Each one demands resolution.

Throughout the rest of the ad: metabolism killer montage repeated four times with different kitchen items, multiple speakers creating variety and social proof, contrarian claims ("stop running on the treadmill, stop cutting carbs"), and a testimonial montage as the CTA.

The AI Hook Generation Process

Georgi's workflow for creating ADHD hook ads at scale:

1. **Deep research across multiple AI systems.** Upload transcripts of successful hook ads. Ask for as many hook-driven statements and questions as possible for your niche.
2. **Curate into a hook database.** Compile the best hooks across all AI outputs into one document.
3. **Second-pass generation.** Feed the curated hooks back to AI with this critical instruction: *"Please notice that a lot of the hooks are just snippets. They are NOT fascination curiosity bullets. They are fragmented. They don't have to be closed loop. Many should be the first half of a puzzle, not the completed puzzle."*
4. **Set up an AI project.** Upload the hook database plus ad breakdowns. Critical: only upload the FIRST HALF of the VSL (through the mechanism). If you include product details, pricing, and ingredients, the AI will leak product information into the ads.
5. **Generate ad concepts.** Ask for 10 concepts with hooks for the first 30 seconds.
6. **Select and write.** Choose the best concepts. Have AI write full 1-3 minute scripts.
7. **Human editing.** Adjust speaker assignments, fix flow, remove excessive repetition.

The project instruction that Georgi uses: "*Your goal is to write hook-heavy meta ads. These ads follow what I call an ADHD super hook framework — numerous hooks throughout, especially in the first 30 seconds. Unless I specifically ask, do NOT talk about the product in the ad. We're selling the click — tease a breakthrough solution and the CTA is 'you need to watch this video.'*"

CHAPTER 26

Financial Copy — Transubstantiation and the Three Tiers

Financial copy is its own discipline within VSL writing. The products are often abstract (stock picks, trading strategies, research subscriptions), the compliance requirements are stringent, and the proof mechanisms are different from health or biz-op. But the techniques that make financial VSLs work at scale are applicable far beyond finance.

The Three Tiers of Financial Promises

Georgi identifies a hierarchy of promise strength specific to financial copy:

Tier 1: Entitlement / Free Money / Birthright (Strongest)

"This money is already yours." The prospect isn't being offered an opportunity — they're being told about something they're already OWED. The Agora "Secret Trust Fund" promo used this exact framing: \$150 trillion in mineral rights on federal lands that belong to every American citizen.

Tier 2: Loophole

"Here's a way most people don't know about." The prospect is being let in on a secret — a legal, legitimate pathway that the mainstream doesn't advertise.

Less powerful than entitlement but more believable.

Tier 3: Opportunity (Weakest)

"Here's a chance to make money." This is where most financial copy sits. It's the weakest tier because it requires the prospect to do something new, take a risk, and trust that it will work.

The strategic implication: if you can frame your financial offer as Tier 1 or Tier 2 instead of Tier 3, you'll dramatically increase conversion. The prospect isn't being asked to take a risk — they're being shown something they already have, or a pathway that already exists.

Transubstantiation

This technique — wrapping dry material in a compelling metaphor — is essential for financial VSLs where the actual product (a newsletter subscription, a stock pick service, a trading algorithm) is inherently unsexy.

The Agora "Secret Trust Fund" promo is the canonical example. The real product: mining stock recommendations. The metaphor: a secret trust fund containing \$1.1 million per American household. The copywriter spent the first 80% of the VSL within the metaphor, then slowly unwound it: "fund" (mentioned 28 times) gradually shifted to "asset" (5 times) as the reveal approached.

Subtle language shifts prepared the reader for the unwinding. Phrases like "raw value of this fund" — funds don't have "raw value," but the phrase subtly introduced the concept that this "fund" might be more literal than metaphorical.

The principle applies beyond finance. Any time your product is dry or technical, ask: what compelling, tangible metaphor could wrap this? A data analytics platform becomes "X-ray vision for your business." A productivity system becomes "a personal assistant that never sleeps." The metaphor makes the abstract concrete and the boring fascinating.

Host as Skeptic

When the claim is massive — as it often is in financial copy — the viewer's first instinct is disbelief. The "Host as Skeptic" technique addresses this by having someone on screen express the same doubts.

"If the host is being skeptical, I as the prospect can let my guard down. I don't have to keep poking holes because the host is poking holes for me." — Georgi

This works with any spokesperson VSL format. Have the host ask the questions the viewer is thinking: "That sounds too good to be true." "How is that even possible?" "What's the catch?" Each skeptical question, when answered convincingly by the authority figure, converts a doubt into a proof point.

Front-Loading Objection Handling

Most VSLs handle objections late — after the mechanism, during or after the product reveal. The "Secret Trust Fund" promo did something unusual: it front-loaded objection handling right after the lead, BEFORE telling the full story.

Georgi's theory: when the big idea is massive enough, the audience WANTS objection handling immediately. They need PERMISSION TO BELIEVE before they'll engage with the story. If you don't address "Wait, is this real?" in the first few minutes, they leave — not because the story isn't compelling, but because they can't let themselves be compelled by something they think is fake.

This isn't the right approach for every VSL. But for offers with extremely bold claims — financial, biz-op, or health — consider whether your audience needs early permission to believe.

Historical Precedent Setting

Another financial copy technique with broad application: establishing that what you're proposing HAS HAPPENED BEFORE.

The "Secret Trust Fund" promo used the Homestead Act: Lincoln gave away 160 acres of land for just \$18 in filing fees. People who took that offer saw

returns of 1,000x or more. The implication: "This has happened before. The government HAS given away massive value to ordinary citizens. Why couldn't it happen again?"

Historical precedent is the most credible form of proof because it's verifiable and inarguable. It happened. You can look it up. If it happened once, the prospect can believe it might happen again — especially when the mechanism you're presenting explains WHY it's happening now.

CHAPTER 27

Market-Specific Adaptations

Throughout this book, we've built a universal VSL framework. But each market has specific adaptations that can mean the difference between a good VSL and a great one. Here's a reference guide for the four major markets.

Health/Supplements

Authority figure: Doctor or researcher. Always. The Activated You case study proved that celebrity alone isn't enough — the doctor is the ROI inflection point. If you have a celebrity spokesperson, pair them with a credentialed expert.

UMP: Almost always needed. In health, the root cause IS the sale. "Here's the real reason you have joint pain" is the mechanism that makes the supplement feel necessary. Skip the UMP and you're just selling another pill.

UMS: Ingredient proof stacking. Each ingredient introduced with a CPB chunk (Claim → Proof → Benefit). Studies from NCBI or scientific journals, preferably RCTs with humans. Keep the language digestible — you're building belief, not giving a lecture.

Product buildup: Emphasize formulation challenges, lab sourcing, manufacturing nightmares, ingredient purity issues. The NY Attorney General finding that supplements don't contain what they advertise is a powerful proof point for why YOUR formulation is different.

Close: The Resurge close formula is the gold standard. Product introduction → uniqueness → how to use → safety/credibility → value anchoring → mission statement → 3-tier pricing → guarantee → scarcity.

Compliance: This is the only market where compliance can sink your campaign regardless of copy quality. Understand the FTC's requirements for health claims, the platform's ad policies (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok each have different rules), and the difference between structure/function claims and disease claims. When in doubt, err on the side of compliance.

Biz-Op / Make Money Online

Authority figure: "Regular Guy Meets Yoda" is the default archetype. The spokesperson is deliberately NOT an expert — they're the audience surrogate. Authority comes from results (income walkthroughs, dashboard screenshots), not credentials.

UMP: Optional. Skip it when the method is genuinely novel to the market. Use it when the market has tried similar approaches and failed — you need to explain why their version didn't work. The enemy narrative (corporations, algorithms, rigged systems) replaces the system malfunction framework.

UMS: "Magic Method" framing — a simple daily ritual that replaces hard work. The solution should feel like a discovery, not a business to build.

Product buildup: Shorter than health. The proof comes from beta testers, not from formulation challenges. Moral obligation framing: "I realized I had to make this available."

Close: Lifestyle and freedom future pacing (quitting jobs, financial independence, time with family) rather than health transformation. The enemy thread resurfaces in the urgency section: "They're already trying to shut this down."

Key difference: Biz-op sells the OUTCOME (money, freedom, lifestyle) first, then the method. Health sells the MECHANISM (root cause, solution) first, then the outcome.

Digital Products / Info Products

Authority figure: Flexible — can be a practitioner, researcher, or expert. The "Reluctant Hero" archetype (Jon Benson) works well: "I never planned to share this, but..."

UMP: Needed when the market has tried similar products (courses, programs, books). The UMP explains why those didn't work and what's different about your approach. Can often be framed as a methodology gap rather than a scientific root cause.

UMS: Named methodology with fascination bullets teasing each component. "You'll discover the one-sentence phrase that instantly [BENEFIT] (page 12)..." Fascinations replace ingredient proof as the primary desire-building tool.

Product buildup: Emphasize iteration and refinement. "I went through 10 different versions until everyone who used it said it was plug-and-play." The setbacks are about clarity and completeness, not manufacturing.

Close: Value stacking through fascinations. Each module and bonus sold through curiosity bullets, not feature descriptions. The Venus Factor close is the gold standard for info products — fascinations with depth, expert endorsements, qualification gates, and community as bonus.

Finance / Investing

Authority figure: Insider or renowned analyst. Credentialed expertise is essential — Jim Rickards "co-crafted the Petrodollar Accord" is the kind of credential that moves the needle.

UMP: Always present, often elaborate. Financial copy mechanisms tend to be macro-level (government policy, market structure, historical cycles) rather than micro-level (personal habits, body chemistry).

UMS: The specific investment vehicle or strategy that capitalizes on the mechanism. Presented through transubstantiation when the raw product is dry.

Product buildup: Minimal in the traditional sense. Instead, the "buildup" is the accumulating weight of evidence: historical precedent, dimensionalized numbers, expert validation, contrarian analysis.

Close: Longest of any market — finance VSLs are the longest on average (per Vidalytics data). The close often includes extensive FAQ-style objection handling and multiple proof modalities (charts, historical data, expert endorsements).

Key techniques: Three-tier promise hierarchy (entitlement > loophole > opportunity). Transubstantiation. Host as Skeptic. Front-loaded objection handling. Historical precedent setting. Dimensionalization of abstract numbers.

End of Part V

Next: Part VI — The Craft: Writing Techniques That Make Every Line Work



PART VI: THE CRAFT

WRITING TECHNIQUES THAT MAKE EVERY LINE WORK



CHAPTER 28

The Slippery Slide — Every Line's Only Job



Joe Sugarman — whose mail-order ads for BluBlocker sunglasses are studied in business schools — articulated the fundamental principle of all persuasive writing:

"Your readers should be so compelled to read your copy that they cannot stop reading until they read all of it as if sliding down a slippery slide."

In a sales letter, this is aspirational. The reader can skim, skip, and scan. In a VSL, the Slippery Slide is enforced — the viewer can't skip ahead (unless you provide a seeking bar, which you shouldn't on front-end VSLs). But enforced pacing doesn't mean automatic engagement. You can force sequential consumption. You can't force attention.

Every line of your VSL script must earn the next line. Every slide must earn the next slide. The moment a viewer thinks "I already know where this is going" or "this is getting repetitive" or "wait, is this an ad?" — the slide is broken and they leave.

Building the Slide

Short Opening Sentences

Sugarman's first sentences are often 3-7 words. *"It had to happen."* *"I was nervous."* *"Here's why."* Short sentences are easy to process — they create momentum. A viewer who processes three short sentences in quick succession is already sliding.

This applies to VSL scripts too. Your opening slides should be punchy. One sentence per slide. Build speed.

Curiosity Seeds

Drop hints about what's coming without revealing it.

"But that's not even the most surprising part..."

"What happened next changed everything..."

"And that's when I discovered something that should have been obvious all along..."

Each curiosity seed is a micro open loop — a small promise that can only be fulfilled by continuing to watch.

Open Loops

Open loops are curiosity seeds with structure. You start a story or idea, then interrupt it with something else before resolving it. The viewer's brain demands closure — they **MUST** keep watching to get it.

The key principles from our vault research:

Stack loops. Open multiple loops before closing any. The compounding curiosity of 2-3 unresolved questions is far more powerful than one.

Close strategically. Close loops only after the viewer has passed a commitment point — after the mechanism reveal, after the product introduction, after the price. Each closed loop is a small payoff that rewards continued attention.

Never open a loop you don't close. Broken promises destroy trust. If you tease "the one food that's secretly causing your fatigue," you **MUST** reveal it. The payoff must be worth the wait.

Don't overuse. 2-3 open loops in a short VSL. 5-7 in a long-form VSL. More feels manipulative and exhausting.

Bucket Brigades

Transitional phrases that carry the viewer from one section to the next. These are the lubricant on the slide:

"Here's the thing..."

"But wait — there's more to this story..."

"Now here's where it gets really interesting..."

"And that's when everything changed..."

"But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me back up..."

Each phrase creates a micro-commitment to keep watching. The viewer doesn't consciously decide to stay — they're carried by the transition.

Pattern Interrupts

Just when the viewer might drift, change the pace. A question after a series of statements. A single short sentence after a long paragraph. A surprising fact. A direct address ("*I know what you're thinking right now...*").

In ADHD super hook ads, pattern interrupts happen every few seconds — new speakers, new visuals, new questions. In long-form VSLs, they happen less frequently but are equally important, especially during the mechanism section where the educational content might otherwise feel lecture-like.

The Environment Analogy

Sugarman compared copy to retail store design. Everything in the store — the lighting, the music, the layout, the smells — is designed to keep the customer moving deeper inside. Your VSL script is the store. Every sentence is a design element. If any element creates friction — confusion, boredom, skepticism, distraction — the customer stops and turns around.

CHAPTER 29

Fascinations — The Art of the Irresistible Bullet

Fascinations — also called bullet points, tease copy, or curiosity bullets — are one of the most versatile and powerful tools in the VSL writer's arsenal. They're mini-hooks that build desire and curiosity throughout the script.

Clayton Makepeace catalogued 21 distinct types of fascinations, and every VSL writer should have this taxonomy internalized. Here are the most important for VSL work:

The Core Types

"How To" Bullets — Appeal to the natural desire for instructional content. *"How to use the secrets of 'loading' your body for maximum power!"*

"Secret To" Bullets — Perfect when your product contains information not commonly known. *"Little known secrets that can steer you to tremendous profits in gold..."*

"Why" Bullets — Build intrigue by promising to reveal causation. *"Why you can't trust your pension fund: Dirty tricks they play with your money..."*

"What Never" Bullets — Alert of a possible mistake (fear), promise protective information (benefit), and build curiosity simultaneously. *"What never to eat on an airplane. The dirtiest, deadliest airplane in the whole wide world."*

"Number" Bullets — Group multiple ways, secrets, or reasons. *"Four ways to stimulate the body to release its own natural pain-killers."*

"Right... WRONG!" Bullets — Bank on the prospect's assumptions, then debunk them. *"Sneezing into a tissue prevents colds, right? WRONG! Page 2 explains why."*

"WARNING" Bullets — Alert of danger. Particularly effective with the fear emotion. *"WARNING — Your #1 asset is now in extreme danger!"*

Fascination Placement in VSLs

Fascinations aren't just for one section — they should be distributed across the entire script:

In the lead — as incentive for continuing to watch. *"In just a moment, I'll show you the one food that's secretly causing..."*

In the UMP/UMS — teasing specific discoveries the product contains. *"You'll discover why a common piece of advice from experts is actually SABOTAGING..."*

In the product reveal — selling the contents of each module or component. *"The exact email script that landed me a [BIG CLIENT]... I'll give it to you as a copy-and-paste template."*

In the bonuses — making each bonus irresistible. *"The one-page cheat sheet that shows you exactly what to do in your first 24 hours..."*

In the close — as final value demonstrations. "*PLUS — How to turn the tables on them and lock-in potential of up to 562%!*"

The Fragment Principle

For ADHD super hook ads and dynamic VSL openings, Georgi's critical insight applies: fascinations should often be FRAGMENTS, not complete thoughts.

"This is how often you should really be washing your face."

"What about sunscreen?"

These aren't resolved. They're the first half of a puzzle. The prospect has to keep watching to get the second half. This is different from traditional fascinations (which are self-contained curiosity bullets with an implied payoff). Fragments create a different kind of tension — rawer, more immediate, less polished — that matches the energy of short-form video.

CHAPTER 30

Proof Stacking — Building an Irrefutable Case

Jon Benson's approach to proof in VSLs was ahead of his time: **layer proof throughout, not just at the end**. Each piece of evidence appears right when a specific objection would naturally arise.

This is the opposite of what most copywriters do — saving all proof for a single "proof section" after the mechanism. By the time the prospect reaches that section, they've already been skeptical for five minutes. Some have already left.

The Proof Stacking Approach

Instead of a proof section, think of proof as a recurring element woven into every major section:

In the lead: Broad testimonials. "*14,000 women have already tried this...*"
No specifics yet — just enough social proof to earn continued attention.

In the background story: The authority figure's credentials, embedded in narrative. Not a resume — a story that happens to establish expertise.

In the UMP: One or two studies supporting the root cause claim. Not a barrage — just enough to anchor the mechanism in reality.

In the UMS: This is where the heaviest proof sits. CPB chunks (Claim → Proof → Benefit) for each major component. Studies, data, expert quotes.

In the product buildup: Beta tester results. Third-party validation. Manufacturing credentials.

In the product reveal: Customer testimonials with specific results, names, timeframes.

In the close: More testimonials, expert endorsements, dimensionalized results. Venus Factor used UGC testimonial videos as a "social proof bomb" at the end.

Types of Proof (Ranked by Power)

- 1. Demonstrable results** — Income walkthroughs, before/after images, live demonstrations. The most powerful proof is **SHOWING**, not telling.
- 2. Specific testimonials** — Names, locations, exact numbers, timeframes.
"Jill from Phoenix lost 23 pounds in 6 weeks."
- 3. Expert endorsements** — Especially from unexpected sources or high-status institutions.
- 4. Scientific studies** — Published research, preferably RCTs with humans. Include journal names and specific findings.
- 5. Historical precedent** — "This has happened before." Verifiable and inarguable.
- 6. Data and statistics** — Market data, trend data, platform data.

- 7. **Media mentions** — Third-party coverage from trusted publications.
- 8. **Borrowed credibility** — Institutions, certifications, manufacturing standards.

Todd Brown's CPB Chunks

The most systematic approach to proof integration. For each belief the prospect must hold:

Claim: State what's true about your mechanism or product.

Proof: Provide evidence — data, study, testimonial, demonstration.

Benefit: Show the payoff for the prospect.

String CPB chunks consecutively to build an irrefutable chain of belief. The prospect isn't asked to make one big leap of faith. They're asked to take many small, well-supported steps. By the time they reach the close, belief isn't a decision — it's a conclusion they've already arrived at.

CHAPTER 31

Emotional Mastery — The 5 Copy Blocks

Stefan Georgi's 5 Copy Blocks framework is the most useful diagnostic tool for evaluating and improving VSL copy. Every piece of copy needs all five blocks. When copy underperforms, at least one block is weak or missing.

The 5 Blocks

1. Promises

What the prospect desires. The outcomes, the benefits, the transformation.

Diagnostic questions:

- Is the core promise clear and specific?
- Are benefits dimensionalized — not just stated but FELT?
- Is the biggest promise in the headline/hook?
- Does the prospect know exactly what they'll get?

Common weakness: Vague promises. "Feel better" vs. "Wake up before your alarm with energy you haven't felt since your twenties."

2. Pain Points

The current state the prospect wants to escape.

Diagnostic questions:

- Is the pain specific to THIS audience (not generic)?
- Is it agitated enough? Does the reader feel it in their gut?
- Are the consequences of inaction made vivid?
- Does the prospect feel understood?

Common weakness: Generic pain. "Struggling with weight" vs. "Avoiding the mirror. Sucking in your stomach every time someone pulls out a camera. Pretending you don't care when nothing in your closet fits."

3. Proof

Reasons to believe. Credibility, testimonials, studies, demonstrations.

Diagnostic questions:

- Is there enough proof for each major claim?
- Are testimonials specific (names, locations, exact results)?
- Is borrowed credibility used (institutions, experts, media)?
- Is proof distributed throughout, or clumped in one section?

Common weakness: Proof concentrated in one place rather than layered throughout.

4. Constraints

Objections that stop someone from buying. Identity, experience, beliefs, resources.

Diagnostic questions:

- ▶ Are the top 3 objections addressed?
- ▶ Are constraints handled proactively (before the reader thinks of them)?
- ▶ Is the guarantee structured to remove the biggest risk?
- ▶ Does the viewer believe this will work for THEM specifically?

Common weakness: Ignoring objections. The prospect thinks "but I'm too old/too broke/too tech-illiterate" and the copy never addresses it.

5. Curiosity / Mechanism

The unique way the product solves the problem.

Diagnostic questions:

- ▶ Is there a named mechanism?
- ▶ Does it explain WHY this works when other things failed?
- ▶ Is it specific enough to be believable but mysterious enough to require the product?
- ▶ Does the mechanism feel NEW?

Common weakness: No mechanism at all — just claims and promises with no explanation of HOW.

Using the Framework as a Diagnostic

Before you publish any VSL, score each block 1-5. A score of 3 or below on any single block tells you exactly where to focus your revision.

The framework is especially powerful for diagnosing underperforming VSLs. When a VSL isn't converting, the instinct is to rewrite the whole thing. The 5 Copy Blocks framework says: don't. Find the weak block. Fix that block. Test again.

Voice, Pacing, and Readability

A VSL is written for the EAR, not the eye. Every word will be spoken aloud — either by a narrator, a spokesperson, or in the viewer's inner voice as they read slides. If a sentence sounds awkward when spoken, it doesn't matter how it reads on paper.

Write for the Ear

Read every line out loud. If you stumble, rewrite. If you run out of breath, break the sentence. If a phrase sounds formal or stiff, make it conversational.

Use contractions. Always "you're" not "you are." Always "it's" not "it is." Always "don't" not "do not." Formality is friction on the slippery slide.

Short sentences. Most sentences in a VSL should be 5-15 words. Longer sentences have their place — for building momentum or stacking details — but the default should be short.

Sentence fragments are fine. More than fine — they're essential. "Because here's the thing." "Exactly." "Not even close." "And that's just the beginning." Fragments create the rhythm of natural speech.

Pacing

Fast before the price reveal. The pre-close sections should feel like they're building momentum. Short sentences, punchy transitions, escalating energy. The viewer should feel like they're being pulled toward a climax.

Allow breathing room after. Once the price is revealed, the energy shifts. The guarantee section, the crossroads close, and the FAQs should feel calmer — like a trusted advisor talking to a friend. The viewer has absorbed a lot of information and a lot of emotional intensity. Give them space to process.

Match section pacing to section function. The UMP reveal should feel like an explosion of insight — fast, surprising, revelatory. The UMS proof

stacking should feel methodical and reassuring — steady, evidence-based, building. The product buildup should feel like a story — narrative pacing, rising tension, resolution.

Reading Level

Every global reduction in reading level across an entire VSL is a potential conversion lift. This is one of Iha's "global changes" — the fifth high-leverage point.

This doesn't mean dumbing down your content. It means choosing simpler words when a simple word says the same thing:

- ▶ "Use" not "utilize"
- ▶ "Help" not "facilitate"
- ▶ "Start" not "commence"
- ▶ "Show" not "demonstrate"
- ▶ "Fix" not "ameliorate"

It means breaking complex ideas into simple, sequential steps. It means using analogies and metaphors to make abstract concepts concrete. It means writing at a level where your prospect can absorb the content while watching TV, cooking dinner, or scrolling on the train.

The Kindergarten Test applies to every section, not just the mechanism. If any part of your VSL requires concentrated, analytical effort to understand, it's too complex for the format.

The "I-itis" Check (One Final Time)

We've mentioned this throughout the book, but it bears one final emphasis: check every major section transition for excessive "I" language. After every 3-5 sentences about the hero, the spokesperson, or the discovery process, relate back to the viewer.

"Have you ever felt that way?"

"Sound familiar?"

"Maybe you've experienced something similar..."

These check-ins transform a monologue into a conversation. The viewer stops observing someone else's story and starts participating in their own.

End of Part VI

Next: Part VII — The Process: From Blank Page to Finished Script



PART VII: THE PROCESS

FROM BLANK PAGE TO FINISHED SCRIPT



CHAPTER 33

The Brief — The Most Important Document You'll Write



The brief is not the draft. The brief is the STRATEGY DOCUMENT that makes the draft possible.

Most copywriters skip the brief entirely. They finish their research, open a blank document, and start writing. This is like a general deploying troops without a battle plan. You might win — but you'll waste enormous resources and the outcome is uncertain.

Stefan Georgi's RMBC II process treats the brief as a formal step — the "B" in RMBC (Research, Mechanism, Brief, Copy). The brief is where all the strategic decisions crystallize into a single document that guides the writing. Peter Kell's "Way to the Sale" serves the same function from a story-first perspective — a scene-by-scene storyboard that reads like a slippery slide from stranger to buyer.

Both approaches produce the same thing: a document that makes writing almost mechanical. When the brief is thorough, you're assembling, not inventing.

What Goes in the Brief

Georgi's Brief 2.0 template covers approximately 25 fields. The essential ones:

Strategic Decisions:

- ▶ Target awareness level (from Chapter 3)
- ▶ Market sophistication stage (from Chapter 3)
- ▶ NESB score (from Chapter 3)
- ▶ VSL format: long, medium, short, in-feed (from Chapters 23-24)
- ▶ Where the VSL will play: on-page or in-feed (from Chapter 23)

The Mechanism:

- ▶ UMP — fully expanded (from Chapters 5-6)
- ▶ UMS — fully expanded (from Chapters 5-6)
- ▶ Named mechanism phrases
- ▶ Core proof elements supporting each

The Story:

- ▶ Authority figure archetype (from Chapter 9)
- ▶ Selected flow / Way to the Sale (from Chapter 8)
- ▶ Key story beats: origin, crisis, discovery, dead ends, breakthrough
- ▶ Best one-liners from research or interviews

The Hook:

- ▶ Hook types selected (from Chapter 7)
- ▶ Hook stack strategy
- ▶ Big Marketing Idea (from Chapter 7)
- ▶ 3-5 lead variations to test

The Close:

- ▶ Price and tier structure
- ▶ Bonus list with fascinations for each
- ▶ Guarantee language
- ▶ Scarcity/urgency mechanics
- ▶ Top 3 objections to address

Voice and Tone:

- ▶ How the spokesperson should sound (conversational, authoritative, reluctant, urgent)
- ▶ Market-specific language to use and avoid (from psychographic research)
- ▶ Reading level target

The Brief as the Handoff

Kell's model makes the brief's function explicit: it's the handoff between strategist and copywriter. The person who does the strategic thinking — mechanism selection, flow matching, authority figure archetype identification — is often NOT the person who writes the script.

"I would find a winning campaign, reverse-engineer the way they got to the sale — the flow of the whole VSL — and hand it off to a copywriter. 'Yo, this

is it. Model this formula. Here's the way we're going to get to the sale, boom boom boom boom, scene by scene. Here's the script we're going to model after.' And he starts cranking it out. That's a solid swing."

The brief turns VSL creation from "write me a sales video" (vague, terrifying) into "follow this proven map" (specific, executable).

Even if you're the strategist AND the copywriter, write the brief as if you're handing it to someone else. The exercise of formalizing your strategic decisions will catch gaps, surface contradictions, and make the writing phase dramatically faster.

CHAPTER 34

Writing the Draft — From Brief to Script

With your brief complete, the writing phase begins. Here's the sequence that produces the best results.

The Writing Sequence

1. Write the Kindergarten Simple Pitch First

Before writing any section, write the entire VSL as a Kindergarten Simple Pitch — 1-2 paragraphs that explain the complete story: problem, mechanism, solution, product, why it's different.

If this pitch flows naturally and makes intuitive sense, the VSL will flow. If it's confusing, clunky, or requires insider knowledge to follow — fix it at this level before expanding into a full script. It's infinitely easier to fix a structural problem in two paragraphs than in forty pages.

2. Expand Into a Detailed Outline

Using your chosen flow (from the brief), expand the pitch into a scene-by-scene outline. Each scene should have:

- ▶ Its purpose (what this scene accomplishes)
- ▶ The key content (what happens / what's said)
- ▶ The transition (how it connects to the next scene)

This outline is your Way to the Sale — your treasure map. Every scene should flow into the next like a slippery slide.

3. Write the Lead LAST

This is counterintuitive but effective. The lead is the hardest section to write — and it's much easier to write when you know the full story, the mechanism, and the proof stack. If you write the lead first, you're guessing at what the most compelling entry point will be. If you write it after everything else, you know exactly what you're selling the viewer on watching.

Many experienced copywriters write the mechanism and body first, then go back and write 3-5 different lead variations. This also sets you up for split testing leads from day one.

4. Write the Mechanism Sections with Research Open

The UMP and UMS sections require your Unified Research Document, studies, and proof elements at hand. These aren't sections to write from memory — they're sections to assemble from your best research, shaped into narrative form.

5. Write the Close at 25-35% of Total Word Count

Don't shortchange the close. Check the word count proportion as you write. If your mechanism section is 3,000 words and your close is 800, something's wrong. The close should be the longest section — budget your word count accordingly.

6. Add Fascinations Throughout

After the main draft is complete, go through and add fascinations at every major section: lead, UMP/UMS, product reveal, bonuses, close. These are

often best written as a batch — sit down and write 20-30 fascinations for the product, then distribute the best ones across the script.

7. Run the "I-itis" Check at Every Transition

Go through the draft and find every section transition. Add a reader check-in at each one. This is a mechanical edit — you can do it quickly and it dramatically improves the feeling of conversation versus monologue.

AI-Accelerated Drafting

The principles for using AI in the drafting phase:

Upload the brief, research document, and mechanism expansion into your AI workspace. Every downstream prompt should have access to these foundational documents. Without them, the AI is guessing rather than assembling.

Request an outline first. Review and modify the outline before requesting full sections. Catching structural issues at the outline stage saves enormous time.

Write section by section. Request individual sections aligned with your flow, rather than asking for the entire script at once. This gives you editing control at each stage and prevents the AI from losing coherence across a 40-minute script.

Generate lead variations in bulk. Request 5-10 different leads using different lead types from Chapter 10. Evaluate them as a set, select the top 2-3 for testing.

Generate fascinations in bulk. Request 30-50 fascinations for the product, then curate the best 15-20 for placement throughout the script.

The human's job: Strategic decisions (which sections to emphasize, where to add proof, where to cut), voice editing (making every line sound like the spokesperson), emotional calibration (is the pain agitated enough? is the future pacing vivid enough?), and fact-checking (are the study references accurate? are the claims supportable?).



CHAPTER 35

Editing and Optimization

The first draft is never the final draft. Editing is where good VSLs become great ones — and where great ones become controls that run for years.

The 5 Copy Blocks Audit

Before any other editing, run the 5 Copy Blocks diagnostic from Chapter 31. Score each block 1-5:

Block	Score	Notes
Promises	/5	
Pain Points	/5	
Proof	/5	
Constraints	/5	
Curiosity/Mechanism	/5	

Any block scoring 3 or below is your highest-leverage edit. Fix that block before touching anything else.

High-Leverage Optimization Order

When optimizing an existing VSL — whether it's a first draft or a live campaign — prioritize in this order:

1. Leads and Hooks (Always First)

The Vidalytics data is unambiguous: the lead is the single highest-impact element you can test.

Set up tracking to fire at the 2-minute mark. Your cost-per-2-minute-viewer is the key metric for lead testing. A lead that costs \$0.30 per 2-minute viewer will outperform a lead that costs \$1.20 — even if the cheaper lead has a slightly lower conversion rate downstream. The math of the pool always wins.

Test different opening lines while keeping the body of the lead consistent. You're optimizing the first 15-30 seconds — the rest can remain stable.

2. Mechanism Clarity and Naming

Is the mechanism clear? Is it named? Does it pass the Kindergarten Test? Can someone who's never heard of it explain it to their spouse after hearing it once?

If the mechanism is unclear, no amount of lead optimization will save the VSL. Fix the mechanism before testing more leads.

3. CTA Timing and Close Length

Per Vidalytics data, the best-converting VSLs drop the first CTA at 30% into the video. If your first CTA doesn't appear until 79% of the way through, you're leaving conversions on the table.

Also check: is your close 25-35% of the total? If it's shorter, expand it with additional testimonials, fascinations, or objection handling.

4. Proof Placement

Is proof distributed throughout the script or concentrated in one section? Are there moments where the viewer would naturally think "I don't believe that" — and is there proof right there to address it?

5. Global Changes

The fifth leverage point: reading level, pacing, structure, length.

Lower the reading level throughout. Cut sections that feel like lectures. Increase velocity in the pre-close sections. Shorten if the video is over 45-50 minutes (the Vidalytics cliff).

Vidalytics Optimization Insights

The following data points should inform your editing decisions:

Player controls: Show player controls (rewind, volume, quality). Videos WITH controls have higher conversion rates — counterintuitive, but confirmed by platform-wide data.

Seeking bar: Remove on front-end VSLs. Add on upsells (60% higher engagement). Add for returning visitors (correlated with higher conversions vs. resume play).

Captions in the first 7 seconds: Average unmute rate is 40%. The top 10% of performers hit 75%. Average time to unmute is 7 seconds. Your first 7 seconds need to work ON MUTE — use live footage (A-roll), not B-roll or text. Make it feel like a movie trailer.

Returning visitors: 12% of traffic, but convert at 65% higher rate than first-time visitors. For returning visitors: show a shorter video, add a seeking bar, drop CTA immediately.

Device optimization: 72% of all Vidalytics traffic in 2025 is mobile. Desktop converts best for straight sales. Mobile converts best for book-a-call. Tablets have 27% lower conversion (browse mode, not buy mode). Consider serving vertical video on mobile and horizontal on desktop.

The 60-minute cliff: Past 60 minutes, engagement and conversions drop off sharply. If your VSL is approaching that length, find cuts.

Testing Philosophy

Georgi's approach: test different opening lines while keeping the body consistent. The first 2 minutes are the single highest-impact test you can run. But stay humble. The simple "If you're a woman over 40..." opening that Georgi expected to underperform is currently working for multiple 8-figure

brands. Sometimes simplicity wins. Sometimes the hook you think is genius bombs. Sometimes the one you dashed off in five minutes becomes the control.

Test constantly. Trust the data over your instincts. But use your instincts to generate the hypotheses that the data evaluates.

CHAPTER 36

The Pre-Publish Checklist

Before you finalize any VSL, run it through this comprehensive checklist. It synthesizes the frameworks from every chapter of this book.

Strategic

- ▶ Awareness level identified and lead type matched (Chapter 3)
- ▶ Market sophistication stage assessed and mechanism calibrated (Chapter 3)
- ▶ NESB score: all four dimensions at 4+ (Chapter 3)
- ▶ Research complete: Unified Research Document, psychographics, competitor analysis (Chapter 4)
- ▶ UMP/UMS developed and named (Chapters 5-6)
- ▶ UMP passes the Kindergarten Test (Chapter 5)
- ▶ Hook types selected and stacked (Chapter 7)
- ▶ Big Marketing Idea passes Todd Brown's checklist (Chapter 7)
- ▶ Authority figure archetype identified (Chapter 9)
- ▶ Flow selected and mapped scene by scene (Chapter 8)
- ▶ On-page vs. in-feed distinction confirmed (Chapter 23)

Structural

- ▶ [] Hook grabs in first 15-30 seconds (Chapter 10)
- ▶ [] Lead sells watching the rest — teases, doesn't teach (Chapter 10)
- ▶ [] Core mechanism phrase repeated 10-15+ times throughout (Chapter 10)
- ▶ [] Background story has "I-itis" checks at transitions (Chapter 11)
- ▶ [] UMP uses system malfunction framework (Chapter 12)
- ▶ [] UMS goes MACRO → MICRO with CPB chunks (Chapter 12)
- ▶ [] Product buildup includes trial and tribulation — real setbacks (Chapter 13)
- ▶ [] Product reveal connects back to mechanism explicitly (Chapter 14)
- ▶ [] Close is 25-35% of total word count (Chapter 15)
- ▶ [] 4-5 CTAs with new persuasion element before each (Chapter 15)
- ▶ [] First CTA drops at approximately 30% of total video (Chapter 15)
- ▶ [] Fascinations distributed across lead, mechanism, reveal, and close (Chapter 29)
- ▶ [] Open loops created and resolved (Chapter 28)
- ▶ [] Crossroads close paints both futures vividly and specifically (Chapter 20)
- ▶ [] FAQs address top objections with gentle CTA nudges (Chapter 22)

Craft

- ▶ [] Written for the ear — conversational, contractions, short sentences (Chapter 32)
- ▶ [] Reading level appropriate for audience (Chapter 32)
- ▶ [] Proof stacked throughout — not clumped in one section (Chapter 30)
- ▶ [] All 5 Copy Blocks score 4+ (Chapter 31)
- ▶ [] Emotional triggers activated — not just logical arguments (Chapter 31)

- ▶ [] Future pacing uses specific, sensory moments (Chapter 16)
- ▶ [] Price anchored against alternatives AND cost of inaction (Chapter 17)
- ▶ [] Guarantee is named, specific, and contact info is prominent (Chapter 19)
- ▶ [] Bonuses sold through fascinations, not just listed (Chapter 18)
- ▶ [] Dimensionalization: abstract numbers made tangible (Chapter 12)
- ▶ [] No section dominates except the close

Final Quality

- ▶ [] Read the entire script out loud — every stumble is a rewrite opportunity
 - ▶ [] The Kindergarten Simple Pitch still holds — the whole story makes sense in 2 paragraphs
 - ▶ [] Someone unfamiliar with the product can follow the logic from hook to CTA
 - ▶ [] The viewer never thinks "wait, is this an ad?" until the product reveal
 - ▶ [] Every section earns the next section — no friction on the slippery slide
-

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Annotated VSL Swipe Index

A brief guide to the top-performing VSL swipes referenced throughout this book, with what makes each one work and which techniques it demonstrates.

Resurge (Supplements) — Peter Kell's gold standard close structure.

Demonstrates: product introduction → uniqueness → usage/expectation → safety → value anchoring → mission → 3-tier pricing → guarantee →

scarcity. Study the close sequence specifically — it's the most reusable template in this book.

Beverly Hills MD Pinch Test (Supplements/Skincare) — The meta-pattern in its purest form. Demonstrates: fascination hook, "two people same situation" inciting incident, systematic variable elimination, DHT/collagen mechanism (UMP/UMS masterclass), unknowing solution, product buildup. Ran 5+ years. Study the flow architecture.

MetaBoost Connect / Svelte (Supplements) — 9-figure offer, beat control by 15%. Demonstrates: simple lead that shouldn't work but does ("If you're a woman over 40..."), relentless repetition of core mechanism phrase ("five tasty superfoods"), contrarian mechanism (add foods vs. cut foods). Study the lead simplicity and repetition technique.

Nooro (Device) — 16-minute medium VSL. Demonstrates: the system malfunction framework in its most concise form (calves as "second heart"), significant product buildup even in short format (555 words, 1/6 of script), compressed crossroads close (single sentence). Study the mechanism simplicity and buildup proportion.

Venus Factor (Info Product) — ClickBank long-form. Demonstrates: fascinations with depth (each followed by "why it matters"), expert endorsements in the close, qualification gate ("if you're looking for magic pills, this isn't for you"), multi-layer price anchoring (\$500 → \$97 → \$47), community bonus as continuity mechanism, UGC testimonial "social proof bomb" replacing FAQs. Study the close and bonus strategy.

Porter Stansberry "End of America" (Finance) — Legendary \$100M+ control. Demonstrates: fear + authority lead, massive scale claims dimensionalized, financial mechanism at its most compelling. Study the emotional intensity and dimensionalization.

Agora "Secret Trust Fund" (Finance) — Jim Rickards promo, 1,000+ subscribers/day. Demonstrates: transubstantiation (mining stocks wrapped as trust fund), entitlement promise tier, host-as-skeptic technique, front-loaded objection handling, historical precedent (Homestead Act), repetition (\$150 trillion mentioned 15+ times, "trust fund" 28 times). Study the transubstantiation technique and promise tier selection.

V-Shred (Health/Fitness) — Close to \$200M/year. Demonstrates: ADHD super hook ad format, multiple speakers, constant pattern interrupts, quiz-to-VSL funnel flow. Study the hook density and multi-speaker technique.

Mindvalley Close (Info Product/Subscription) — Peter Kell's annotated info-product close. Demonstrates: congratulations + identity reinforcement, future pacing the initial purchase, attention lock ("stay on this page"), level-up question framing, social proof + origin story of upsell, 3-component value stacking, price anchor via beta cohort. Study the upsell close architecture.

Appendix B: The Master VSL Templates

This book draws on and synthesizes the following templates, which provide structural starting points for different product types and formats:

Long-form templates:

- ▶ Master VSL for Digital Products (2026) — universal structure with UMP/UMS split, multi-CTA close, distributed fascinations
- ▶ Master VSL for Biz Ops (2026) — adapted for income proof leads, mentor discovery arc, enemy narrative, Magic Method framing
- ▶ Master VSL for Supplements — Resurge close formula, ingredient proof stacking, safety/credibility section
- ▶ Master VSL V3 (PIG System) — Chris Haddad's P.I.G. Method applied to VSL structure

Short-form templates:

- ▶ 3 Short VSL Structures (RMBC II) — Problem→Mechanism→Solution, Biz-Op Contrarian, Personal Discovery→Solution
 - ▶ 5-Minute VSL (Jon Benson) — ultra-short format from the VSL inventor
 - ▶ Short VSL Blueprint — condensed format
 - ▶ Short VSL Formula (Rob Palmer) — custom short-form structure
-

Appendix C: Quick-Reference Tables

Lead Types by Awareness Level

Awareness	Kell Lead Type	Agora Lead Type	Brown Lead Type	Directness
Most Aware	Proof	Offer	Offer / Invitation	Most direct
Product Aware	Value, Proof	Promise	Promise	Direct
Solution Aware	Value, Fear	Problem-Solution	Problem-Solution / Secret System	Moderate
Problem Aware	Fear, Story, Nightmare Comparison	Secret, Proclamation	Intrigue / Proclamation	Indirect
Unaware	Story, Dream Comparison, Important Question	Story	Story	Most indirect

10 Hook Types (Haddad)

#	Hook Type	Best For	Key Emotion
1	Magic Mechanism	Any product with a "done-for-you" element	Ease/hope
2	Secret Terror Under Your Nose	Health, safety, finance	Fear
3	"I Knew It!"	Identity/worldview markets	Validation
4	Outrage Society	Political, health, finance	Anger/tribal

5	Ancient Secrets Revealed	Health, self-improvement	Wonder
6	New Science	Health, tech, performance	Excitement
7	Yoda of the Niche	Skills, coaching, mentorship	Aspiration
8	Cautionary Tale	(Anti-pattern — fame alone fails)	—
9	Unknown Fascinating Guru	Skills, insider knowledge	Curiosity
10	"I'm Just Like You But Worse"	Biz-op, weight loss, transformation	Identification

10 Authority Figure Archetypes (Kell)

#	Archetype	Best For	Psychological Trigger
1	Expert Who Quit Mainstream	Health, finance	Whistleblower credibility
2	Famous TV Expert	Any (with media assets)	Pre-built authority
3	Accessible Researcher	Beauty, wellness	Relatability
4	Regular Guy Meets Yoda	Biz-op, transformation	Pure identification

5	Reluctant Hero (Unrelated Field)	Novel mechanisms	Curiosity + no-sales-frame
6	Injured Kid → Genius	Self-improvement, skills	Origin-story empathy
7	Expert Stumped by Loved One	Health, relationships	Paradox + personal stakes
8	Surgeon Stumped by Patient	Premium health/skincare	Maximum curiosity
9	Celebrity with Transformation	Any (MUST pair with expert)	Attention + familiarity
10	Straight-Up Qualified Pro	Any (safest option)	Clean authority

Section Proportions (Word Count Budget)

Section	% of Long-Form VSL
Hook / Microlead	~3-5%
Lead body	~5-10%
Background story	~10%
Inciting incident + Dead ends	~5-8%
UMP (Root Cause)	~10-15%
UMS (Solution Mechanism)	~10-15%
Product buildup & reveal	~10%

Close (all elements)	~25-35%
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5 Copy Blocks Scoring Rubric

Score	Meaning
5	Exceptional — this block alone could carry the VSL
4	Strong — no obvious gaps, supports conversion well
3	Adequate — present but not compelling, room for improvement
2	Weak — noticeably thin, likely dragging conversion down
1	Missing or broken — immediate fix required

Target: all blocks at 4+. Any block at 3 or below is your highest-leverage edit.



Appendix D: AI-Accelerated VSL Workflow

A step-by-step process for using AI at each stage of VSL creation. These principles are tool-agnostic — they apply regardless of which AI systems you use.

Stage 1: Research

- ▶ Run awareness level assessment across 3+ AI systems
- ▶ Run competitor analysis across 3+ systems

- ▶ Run psychographic deep research
- ▶ Synthesize all outputs into one Unified Research Document

Stage 2: Mechanism Development

- ▶ Feed Unified Research Document into multiple AI systems for mechanism ideation
- ▶ Shortlist 3-5 candidates based on believability, novelty, differentiation, proof availability
- ▶ Run evaluation/ranking across multiple systems for consensus
- ▶ Expand the winner into full UMP/UMS copy in a dedicated AI workspace

Stage 3: Hook Generation

- ▶ Upload transcripts of successful ads as examples
- ▶ Request hook-driven statements and questions across multiple systems
- ▶ Curate the best hooks into a database
- ▶ Second-pass generation: feed curated hooks back, request fragments (not complete fascinations)
- ▶ Select and stack 2-3 hook types for the lead

Stage 4: Brief Creation

- ▶ Upload Unified Research Document + expanded mechanism into AI workspace
- ▶ Generate a structured brief following the 25-field template
- ▶ Review and modify — ensure all strategic decisions are crystallized
- ▶ The brief is the handoff document — if a copywriter can't execute from it, it's incomplete

Stage 5: Draft Writing

- ▶ Start with Kindergarten Simple Pitch
- ▶ Request detailed outline aligned with chosen flow

- Write section by section: mechanism first, story second, close third, lead LAST
- Generate 5-10 lead variations for testing
- Generate 30-50 fascinations, curate the best 15-20 for distribution throughout

Stage 6: Editing

- Run 5 Copy Blocks audit (score each 1-5)
- Fix weakest block first
- Read entire script aloud — every stumble is a rewrite
- Check word count proportions (close should be 25-35%)
- Run "I-itis" check at every section transition
- Lower reading level throughout

Stage 7: Optimization

- Test 5-10 lead variations (track cost per 2-minute viewer)
- Test CTA timing (target first CTA at ~30% of video)
- Test close elements individually (bonuses, guarantee language, scarcity type)
- Monitor Vidalytics or equivalent data: unmute rate, engagement at 2 min, conversion by device
- For returning visitors: shorter video, seeking bar, immediate CTA
- Iterate constantly — controls are earned, not written

End of Part VII

End of Book



Need Expert Help?

You are just 'one VSL away' from having a highly-successful and profitable business. So it makes sense to get help from a professional writer.

That way, you get the best outcome with the least effort. If you're ready to take your marketing campaigns to the moon, it's time to get in touch with the world's most experienced direct-response copywriter.

Get the benefit of decades of copywriting experience, combined with the power of advanced AI marketing — and stay one step ahead of the competition.

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*Best wishes for all your VSL campaigns.
I hope we can work together soon!*



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