

Headline Formula Cheat Sheet

Your headline only has one job: get people to stop, sit up, pay attention, and keep reading.

How do you do this?

- + Keep it short and sweet (10–12 words max, generally)
- + Be specific
- + Make it about your visitor/reader
- + Steal from your voice of customer
- + Match headline to customer journey

So what?

ALL of your content should also pass a “so what” test—especially your headline/sub-headline pair.

It’s not enough to just make a statement and expect people to take it on faith. Ask yourself “so what” and then answer how/why your headline matters to the person reading your page, blog post, email, etc.

Formula Trends:

- The Scarcity + Urgency Formula
- The Data Formula
- The How-To Formula
- The Report Formula
- The Question Formula
- The Endorsement Formula
- The “X” Lessons/Simple Steps Formula

Awareness

Your target may or may not be aware of their need. You need to agitate pain and introduce your product/solution.

- [X]% of [Group] [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]. Here's Why.
- The Only Way to [Desirable Outcome] Without [Problem/Pain Point]
- [X] Lessons I Learned From [Person/Unusual Experience]
- [Eliminate Pain] by/with [Unexpected Method]
- I Spent [Time/Money] Trying to [Desirable Outcome]. [Quitting Statement]. Here's Why.
- 9 Out of 10 [Group Members] Can't/Don't _____. Are You One of Them?
- What Everybody Ought to Know About [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- Is [Trending Topic] a Scam? Find Out if You're Putting Your [Resource] at Risk.
- You are [Comparative] Than You Think
- Make Your First [\$] in Just [Short Time]
- Would You [Do Unimaginable Thing]? I just did.
- Is This the World's First [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]?
- They All Did [Negative/Unpleasant Task] When [Unexpected Thing], but Then [Ideal Result]
- Who Else Wants [Desirable Outcome]?
- How to Permanently Stop [Painful/Embarrassing Thing] When You've Tried Everything Else
- Is It Worth [Low Price] To [Desirable Outcome]?
- Here's How [Group] is [Desirable Outcome] (and Here's How You Can Too)
- Do [Desirable Thing] Like [Celebrity/Influencer] Without [Objection/Anxiety]
- What [influencer/industry] needs to [verb]
- Is it Wrong to [Desirable Outcome]?
- Do You Have the Courage to [Desirable Outcome]?
- [Bad Thing] Happened. Here's How You [Desirable Outcome].
- I Stopped Doing [Common Thing]. You Should Too. Here's Why.
- The [Superlative] Thing to Happen to [Industry] Since [Industry Milestone]
- How to [Do Something Hard] in [Short Time] or [Promise]
- To the [Role] Who Refuses to Settle for Less Than [Desirable Outcome]
- Break All the Rules and [Desirable Outcome]
- How to Survive Your First [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- How I Learned That [Unexpected Thing] is the Best Medicine
- How Your [Current Solution] is Ripping You Off (and What You Can Do About It Right Now)
- I Found a [Adjective That Addresses Pain Point] Way to [Get Desirable Outcome]
- See Why We Have a [Adverb] [Adjective] [Social Problem] in Just [Short Time]
- [Influencer/Celebrity] [Emotional Reaction] to [Commonly Understood Thing]
- [Smaller Business/Group] Tried/Wanted to [Verb] [Larger Competitor]. [Result].

- [X] Little Known Ways to _____
- [Person does _____]. [Another person's reaction]. Result: Priceless.
- The Secret Ways [Group] Gets [Desirable Outcome]
- The Secret of [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- Why Haven't [Target Audience] Been Told These Facts?
- [X] Little Known Factors That Could [Verb] Your [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- [X] of [Group] are Right/Wrong/Confused About [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- Recently Downsized/Fired [Role] Reveals the Dirty Little Secrets to [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]

Evaluation

Your target is aware of their need as is actively seeking solutions. They need to know why your product/solution is the best choice for them.

- How to Make [\$] With [Product/Service], Step-by-step
- [X] Simple Steps for Making [\$] With [Product/Service]
- Can Your [Current Solution] [Desirable Outcome]?
- Can Your [Current Solution] Pass _____ Test?
- Get Rid of [Problem/Pain Point] Once and For All
- [Product] is a [Product Category] That [Unique Feature/Benefit]
- [Known Competitor] [Does Undesirable/Unimpressive Thing]. [Your Brand] [Does Desirable/Impressive Thing]
- Get the [Unexpected Adjective] Power of [Product Category] Without [Objection/Anxiety]
- Are You Still Wasting Money on _____ (Without Anything to Show For It)?
- We Promise You This: [Desirable Result] Or [Unexpected Benefit]
- Tired of [Objection/Anxiety] but Want [Desirable Outcome]? Meet [Product].
- The Complete Library of [X] Free [Desirable Resources]
- Behind the Scenes of a _____
- Let [Product/Service] Work On Your [Noun] for Just [Short Time]
- [Product/Service] is a [Product Category] That [Desirable Outcome] Without [Objection/Anxiety]
- People Regularly Pay Me [\$] To Learn How To [Desired Outcome] But You Can Have it FREE
- Here is a Method That's Helping [Group] [Desirable Outcome]
- [Desirable Outcome] by/with [Unexpected Method]
- Have/Build/Get/Create a [Desirable Thing] You Can Be Proud Of

Purchase

Your target has done their research. They like your product/solution but they're not quite ready buy. You need to convince them to take action.

- Only [X] Hours/Days/Weeks Left to [Unexpected Benefit]
- Last Chance to [Unexpected Benefit]
- Get [Valuable Thing] if You [Desired Action] in the Next [X] Hours/Days/Weeks
- Only [X] [Limited Resource] Left
- [Objection/Anxiety]. But it Works.
- The Only [Product Category] that Doesn't [Objection/Anxiety]
- Now You Can [Desirable Outcome] Without [Objection/Anxiety]
- Now You Can [Desirable Outcome] and [Unexpected Benefit]
- How to [Desirable Outcome] and [Unexpected Benefit]
- Here's the [Adjective That Addresses Pain Point] Way to [Desirable Outcome]
- Overcome the [Unexpected Culprit] That Keeps You [Unpleasant Thing]

Retention

Your target has made a purchase. Now they'll forget about you... unless you can show them the benefit of coming back for more.

- Free [Desirable Thing]
- Enter to Win [Desirable Thing]
- I Don't Regret _____. But Here's What I'd Do Differently.
- [Notable Person] Shows You How to Do [Thing They're Known For]
- New [Keyword + Benefit]
- The Ultimate Guide to [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- Here's How [Influencer/Important Group] Does [Good/Bad/Desirable Thing]
- What [Influencer/Group] Can Teach You About [Unexpected Thing]

Sources:

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