

Saving Money

■ **When you order** paper for a printing job, tell your printer you'll accept a comparable substitute. *Reason:* Printers often get deals on stock and sometimes can provide a comparable or even a better quality stock at a lower price. *Note:* Make sure you see a sample before you approve the switch.

Source: Janet L. Galliera, 1607 Donna Lane, Downingtown, PA 19335.

■ **If you print** company business cards in more than one color, consider printing a year's supply with just the colored text or logo. Each time you need cards for a new employee, you'll pay for only one plate, one press run and one wash-up.

Source: Wally Kroeker, 402-280 Smith St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 1K2, Canada.

Take This Breath Test

Try this test after you've written a sales letter. Hold it in your hand and walk around the room at a fast pace while reading it aloud.

If you have to fight for breath in the middle of any sentence, the sentence is too long.

(*Editor's note:* Sentence length applies to all writing—not just to sales letters. People don't want to feel as if they're working hard to read and understand your material.)

Source: René Gnam, cited in *The Newsletter on Newsletters*, 44 W. Market St., Rhinebeck, NY 12572.

60-Second Writing Clinic

Sick sentence: "This directory will contain the major foundations which hold the vast majority of foundation wealth and are the only foundations in the state capable of making major grants to non-profit institutions."

Diagnosis: We heard our doctors murmur, "Message malformation."

Cure: Mend the memo by massaging the message.

Result: "This directory will list only those state foundations that can grant large sums to non-profit institutions."

Telephone Techniques

Dealing With Call Screeners

When dealing with secretaries and others who are screening calls, remember that they have been chosen for the position because they're intelligent and use good judgment. Don't try to "sleaze" your way past them.

Here are some suggestions to help you get through to the person you want to talk to:

- **Use a confident tone of voice.** If you were standing in the lobby, the screener would size you up based on your appearance. The screener does the same thing with the way you sound. Don't sound pushy or condescending; sound confident.

- **Make your request and identify yourself fully.** *Example:* "Hello, Pat

Glick, please. My name is Fran Smith with ABC Company."

What you're doing: Your phrasing assumes you're going to be put through. You also show that you're hiding nothing by giving your company name.

- **If the screener doesn't put you through,** be prepared to use persuasive justification. You need to satisfy that person that you have something of value for the boss.

Explain succinctly how what you're offering will be of help to the person you want to talk to—and to the company.

Source: Art Sobczak, writing in *Telephone Selling Report*, 5301 S. 144th St., Omaha, NE 68137.

Writing

Pulling Readers Into Articles

With time at a premium in today's busy society, you must immediately snare readers' attention. How?

Focus on the lead paragraph. The lead should pack enough punch to compel readers to continue reading the rest of your article. Try using these four approaches to pull readers into your articles:

- **Direct Appeal.** Directly address readers as "you" in the lead. *Example:* "With time at a premium in today's busy society, you must immediately snare readers' attention."

- **Question.** Ask readers a question that prompts them to continue reading for the answer. *Example:* "What's the

easiest way to find a job in a recession?"

- **Quotation.** Use a dramatic statement to grab the readers' attention. *Example:* "We must voice our outrage at XYZ Company's senseless destruction of wildlife, and to that end, we will boycott their products." So said Harold Smith, president of the National Wildlife Foundation."

- **Challenge or command.** Dictate actions to readers. *Example:* "Don't miss your chance to save a life tomorrow. Donate your 'gift of life' at XYZ Company's annual blood drive."

Source: Lisa A. Beach, 1630 Riverton Road, Cinnaminson, NJ 08077.

Publisher: Dr. Don Bagin
Executive Editor: Frank Grazian
Managing Editor: Edward H. Moore, APR
Associate Editor: Jack Gillespie
Public Relations Editor: Tony Fulginiti, APR
Special Projects Editor: Pauline McLean
Technology Editor: Scott W. Tilden, ASPR
Business Etiquette Editor: Ann Marie Sabath
Marketing Director: Bruce Bradway

Research Director: Dr. Donald Gallagher
Public Relations Director: Gina Audio
Graphics Director: Aida Walker
Subscription Manager: Carole Rennie
Telemarketing Manager: Joy Moore
Board of Advisers: Robert L. Baker
 David Byrd
 Joyce K. Kotzen
 Wilma Mathews, ABC
 Kathleen A. Scott

Printer: Spectracolor

COMMUNICATION BRIEFINGS is published 12 times a year by Encoders, Inc. Editorial offices and subscriptions: 700 Black Horse Pike, Suite 110, Blackwood, NJ 08012, (609) 232-6380. FAX: (609) 232-8245. Subscription rates: \$59 in U.S., \$69 (U.S. funds) in Canada, \$99 (U.S. funds) in other countries. Write or call for multiple subscription rates. Copyright 1991 by Encoders, Inc. All rights reserved. Photocopying is prohibited. Subscribers may use one or two articles per issue in their publications if source is cited.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to COMMUNICATION BRIEFINGS, 700 Black Horse Pike, Suite 110, Blackwood, NJ 08012. Second Class postage paid at Blackwood, NJ 08012 and at an additional office.