

David Ogilvy – Confessions of an Advertising Man¹

Notes made by [Jonathan Richardson at Considered Words](#)

- Book starts by saying his agency was an *immediate* and *meteoric* success.
- Reasons for writing it (and says all worked):
 1. To attract new clients to his agency.
 2. To condition the market to a public offering of shares.
 3. To make himself better known in the business world.
- Feels it's a bit too indiscrete and boastful and too much tell without why.
- Points out how many people contact him to thank him, strangers and agencies.
- Boasts a fair bit about what he's done.
- Best businesses work hard to create a strong culture.
- There's a fine line between pride in work and neurotic obstinacy.
- Can't be too indiscreet nor take too much credit for their success.
- Lord Rutherford – if you can't explain physics to a barmaid then it was bad physics.
- Ogilvy's culture:
 - a. **We sell – or else**
 - b. **You can't bore people into buying your product, only interest them.**
 - c. **We prefer the discipline of knowledge to the anarchy of ignorance. We pursue knowledge the way a pig pursues truffles - a blind pig can find them but it helps to know that they grow in oak forests.**
 - d. **We hire gentlemen with brains**
 - e. **The consumer's not a moron but your wife. Don't insult her intelligence.**
 - f. **Unless your campaign contains a Big Idea it'll pass like a ship in the night.**
 - g. **Only First Class business and that in a First Class way.**
 - h. **Never run an ad you wouldn't want your family to see.**
 - i. **It's about the individual – there are no statutes to committees.**
- Know the ways of communicating – what works in direct marketing (lots of info) doesn't work elsewhere.
- There are four big problems in advertising:
 1. Firms are addiction to price discounts. That won't be long-term loyalty. See http://www.cracked.com/article_19334_the-5-biggest-disasters-in-history-marketing-ideas.html
 2. Ad agencies are full of people who regard advertising as avant-garde art. They've never sold anything in their life but they live for awards.
 3. Firms are now more likely led by megalomaniacs who put profit over creativity.
 4. Firms waste their clients' cash repeating mistakes, ignoring research and sales.
- The most valuable lessons he's learned:
 1. Creating successful advertising is a craft, part inspiration but mostly know-how and hard work. If you have a modicum of talent, and know which techniques work at the cash register, you will go a long way.
 2. The temptation to entertain instead of selling is contagious.
 3. The difference between one advertisement and another, when measured in terms of sales, can be as much as nineteen to one.
 4. It pays to study the product before writing your advertisements.
 5. The key to success is to promise the *consumer a benefit* – like better flavour, whiter wash, more miles per gallon, a better complexion.

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6. The function of most advertising is not to persuade people to try your product, but to persuade them to use it more often than other brands in their repertoire.
 7. What works in one country almost always works in other countries.
 8. Editors of magazines are better communicators than advertising people. Copy their techniques.
 9. Most campaigns are too complicated. They reflect a long list of objectives and try to reconcile the divergent views of too many executives. By attempting to cover too many things, they achieve nothing. Their advertisements look like the minutes of a committee.
 10. Don't let men write advertising for products which are bought by women.
 11. Good campaigns can run for many years without losing their selling power.
- It's artificial to write *we* when confessing *my* sins and describing *my* adventures.

1 – How to manage an advertising agency

- The chef at Ogilvy's restaurant where he first work had a good leadership style – he was the best cook and he knew it. He was worth watching when he did cook. It was inspiring.
- Chef praised seldom but when he did he exalted to the skies. "That's how to do it", ensuring all around saw the skill of Ogilvy's work.
- Give a sense of occasion – even if it is just one (famous) person enjoying your work.
- Incompetence was never tolerated.
- If you plan to live up to promises, do so – if the plat du jour's advertised, sell it.
- Have principles but know when they need to be altered to the situation.
- Chef rove a massive car like a banker, this inspired the others working there. More than just a chef.
- "In the advertising industry to be successful you must, of necessity, accumulate a group of creative people. This probably means a fairly high percentage of high strung, brilliant, eccentric, nonconformists."
- A good executive is a father, and is affectionate.
- Admirable behaviour:
 1. People who work hard.
 2. People with first-class brains couple with intellectual honesty.
 3. Not being nepotistic.
 4. Those who work with gusto and enjoy what they're doing.
 5. Those who aren't toadies or bullies.
 6. Self-confident professionals who respect others.
 7. Those who hire subordinates who can succeed them rather than be insecure and hire those who can't.
 8. Those who build up subordinates, which allows ranks to be filled internally.
 9. Those with gentle manners who treat others as human beings. He hates the quarrelsome and those who engage in paper-warfare.
 10. Well-organised people who deliver on time.
- What he expects from himself:
 1. **Be firm but fair.** To make unpopular decisions without cowardice and to create an atmosphere of stability, and to listen more than he speaks.
 2. **Sustain the momentum of the agency** – its ferment, vitality, thrust.
 3. **Build the agency** by landing new accounts.
 4. To **win the confidence of clients at the highest level.**
 5. To **make sufficient profits.**
 6. **Plan policies** far into the future.
 7. To **recruit those of the highest quality at all levels**, to build the hottest staff in the agency business.
 8. To **get the best out of everyone** in the agency.
- Leaders acting inappropriately out of opportunity destroys the *esprit de corps*.
- There must be delegation but not too much such that leaders withdraw.
- Dr Frank Barron at University of California's Institute of Personality Assessment:

- Creative people are especially observant, and they value accurate observation (telling themselves the truth) more than others. They often express half-truths but so vividly and see things as others do, and as they do not.
- They are born with greater brain capacity and can hold many ideas at once and compare them.
- They are more vigorous and have an exceptional fund of psychic and physical energy.
- They have more contact with most with the life of the unconscious – fantasy, imagination.
- Ogilvy sometimes calls on potential candidate at home to see what it's like, and whether they can take the pressure.
- Western Europeans work hard but are less conventional and more objective in their approach.
- Advertising is about words and all must be able to write.
- Original thinking isn't even verbal, it's groping on intuition and hunches, inspired by the subconscious.
- Get away, somewhere different. Think about things differently.
- A place will produce great work if led by a formidable individual.

II – How to get clients

- On the day he opened in 1948 he hung this sign:
 - This is a new agency, struggling for its life. For some time we shall be overworked and underpaid.
 - In hiring, the emphasis will be on youth... we are looking for young turks. I have no use for toadies or hacks. I seek gentlemen with brains.
 - Agencies are as big as they deserve to be. We are starting this one on a shoestring but we are going to make it a great agency before 1960.
- Then he made a list of the five clients he wanted most – all blue-chip.
- Quality v quantity – I can give you one good one against all the others.
- John Orr Young, co-founder of Young & Rubicam, said this:
 - If you're lucky enough to find some young men with that special energy and daring which leads them into business for themselves, you will benefit from having that incalculably valuable quality serving you.
- Agencies can lose their initial momentum. He doesn't want that.
- Henry Ford said that dealers should solicit by personal visitation. He did the same to get business from those who didn't want it.
- Make no more than two speeches per year. First gave a list of rules that's still passed around. Second set a challenge with prize.
- He made friends with those whose jobs brought them in contact with major advertisers – the researchers, PR consultants, space salesmen. They saw future business.
- He sent direct mail of research to many who may be appropriate.
- Worked dawn till midnight six days a week.
- Took any account to start with.
- Always said that those who came over had their sales go up, even if it wasn't true. Show dramatic improvements.
- Best time is in a recession as then your growth stands out.
- The first clients are the hardest to get as there's no reputation.
- Won over with show over tell.
- To win Standard Oil he gave 14 different potential campaigns. And once spent \$30k on a speculative presentation that failed. Now they can't afford the time or money but still show what they've done. Introduce company, warts and all.
- He got KLM by preparing nowt and asking for their problems. But be aware that it really does depend on the client which strategy works.
- What always works is to get the client to do most of the talking.
- Learn to know your audience, how to identify them – those paying for fancy equipment smelled Old Etonian, with Turkish cigarettes.

- Clients need to be generous – SO took Ogilvy's commission so he took Shell.
- He gave a speech to church that praised a potential client. He got him.
- He keeps boasting about successful campaign, his prose reeks of success (even if it may not be true).
- Win by knowing the target audience and what appeals to them, not the critics.
- Get reporters to write about it with a hook/challenge.
- Never want a campaign so big you can't afford to lose it. The day you do that you commit to living with fear. Frightened agencies lose the courage to give candid advice, and once that happens you become a lackey.
- An account for the Edsel refused as it'd be over half of all billings – good thing too as the car bombed.
- The most lucrative accounts are products of low unit cost, universal use and frequent purchase as they generate larger budgets and more opportunities for testing than high-priced durables.
- He seeks accounts that meet ten criteria:
 1. The product must be one he'd be proud to advertise.
 2. Never accept an account unless you can make a conspicuous better job.
 3. Steer clear of products with long-term sales decline. It may be intrinsic weakness in the product or management. Ads can't compensate. It takes self-restraint to turn it down, but do so.
 4. Find out if the prospective client wants the agency to make money – in some cases the client has become a multimillionaire but Ogilvy lost money. The average profit is less than 0.5%.
 5. If the account is unlikely to be profitable, would it give you a chance to create remarkable advertising? Eg, Guinness or Rolls-Royce didn't give much in money but allowed creative excellence. However, while it can put you on the map it can give a lopsided reputation, makes you seem weak in research and marketing. Yet high standard in one department should apply to others. Be known to be good, and don't be afraid to ask for money.
 6. Be sure you can live with your prospective client before accepting the account, it's like doctor-patient. Ask why they've changed agency, if they'd been resigned.
 7. Go for clients for whom advertising is the well of life, as those who disregard it won't stump up for more.
 8. Never take new products unless they are in a hamper of products. It costs more to steer a new product through test markets and 4 out of 5 fail. With low profits, it's too great a risk.
 9. Associations have too many objectives, too many masters, too little money.
 10. If told to hire someone who is 'indispensable' ignore it as it's not always worth it.
- Always be enthusiastic for an account.
- Always be soliciting new accounts as the old ones will move on. But don't take on too many.
- Rejection can inflame passion.
- Sometimes a client will post who they are soliciting – withdraw as it does not pay to be publically defeated. Succeed in public, fail in private.
- Avoid contests of more than four agencies.
- Agency pitches should be made by the head, chairman to chairman, and don't keep changing speakers.
- By drawing attention to flaws it can win confidence. Eg,
 - We have no PR department as that is best handled by the manufacturer or a specialist.
 - Have never done a TV spectacular as they offer too little return.
- Build a waiting list of would-be clients.

III – How to keep clients

- It's hard to convince others not to ditch you when one other does.
- Avoid quarrelsome, unstable executives. Don't hire them.
- Put your best brains to existing as well as new clients.
- Avoid clients with a reputation for firing agencies.
- Keep in contact with clients at all levels. Particularly as you may be misquoted.
- Make the client feel comfortable.
- One way to keep clients is to have an ice box policy – have a campaign ready to go and be tested in case the first fails. It will exasperate your workers.
- Look at problems through the clients' eyes.
- Don't join clients in a cross-promotion, one always feels slighted.
- Always make the client seem like it's your only one, and don't mention their figures to another as it shows discretion.
- Transfer anyone who's been blackballed.
- Always use the clients' products. Not as toadying but good manners, and lets you know how it works.
- Always get on side of new advisers and convince them to stay with you.
- Clients go to you as you're the best available.
- Depending on one person in an organisation is dangerous. Form links at all levels.
- Do not limit client contact to the account managers, but be aware of the limitations.
- Be candid if there is a major flaw.
- Don't only be seen (as head) at a crisis, be there when it's calm for when the storm hits.
- Admit mistakes before being charged with them, don't be a buckpasser.
- Do not be bullied by tyrants or be dictated on campaigns. Bad memories of this.
- Do not appease as part of grand strategy.
- Resign when you lose confidence in the product.
- All clients are pigs... that's just the way it is.
- Clients can become dear friends.
- No committee can write copy, it's about the individual.
- Even heads should pitch sometimes.
- Take a lot of pain in writing the plans for clients.
- Read from the presentation, do not deviate.
- Don't let accounts men boss the creative, even if it satisfies the client. But don't make accounts mere errand boys, let them have some buy-in. Work together.
- It's a sin to bore your fellows.

IV – How to be a good client

- Bad advertising can unsell a product
- He has 15 different rules:
 1. Emancipate your agency from fear. Don't invite other agencies over as it'll spook others. If you do fire them, consider this
 - a. Big agencies have never fired an agency. Why?
 - b. Will a new agency solve the problem or sweep it away. What's at the root?
 - c. Is your product obsolete?
 - d. Did you dictate the advertising?
 - e. Have you been scaring your agency into a funk?
 - f. Is your ad manager a fool?
 - g. How do you feel about a competitor inheriting your secrets?
 - h. Are you aware your campaign may be disrupted for a year or so?
 - i. Have you been candid with the agency head? Did you tell him of your dissatisfaction?
 - j. Are you aware of the job losses you'll cause?
 2. Select the right agency in the first place. Don't do it on speculation, do it with the best brains? Look for an agency without a new-client department as the best don't need them. Get a good ad manager. Invite the agency men over, loosen lips and find out about them.
 3. Brief your agency very thoroughly. Maxwell House taught the coffee business to Ogilvy's agency from crop to pricing.

4. Do not compete with your agency in the creative area. Don't be a back-seat driver. Don't change copy.
5. Coddle the goose who lays your golden eggs. It's taken years of effort make a product, give the same resources to its launch.
6. Don't strain your advertising through too many levels. It leaks secrets and ties up people, and creates creative politics, whereby creative pander to some whims, makes him a politician. The best brands come from a partnership.
7. Ensure your agency turns a profit. Sooner or later they will look for a profitable replacement.
8. Don't haggle with the agency, don't let pettifoggers do so. Don't do things tightly. And don't expect the agency to pay for all the dry holes it drills. To be generous encourages creativity.
9. Be candid and encourage candour. Don't beat about the bush, or insult others.
10. Set high standards. But make it plain you expect big hits, and don't be stingy with credits. Don't give up campaigns just because you're bored of it.
11. Test everything. Always test market a product.
12. Hurry. Move.
13. Don't waste time on problem babies. Don't worry about products in trouble when you could be looking at making the successful more successful. Put money on success.
14. Tolerate genius. Conan Doyle – mediocrity knows nothing higher than itself. There are few men of genius in advertising so keep them.
15. Don't underspend. Concentrate as needed.

V – How to build great campaigns

- Make rules based on research and enforce them and share them.
- Rules do not dull, like sonnets have rules.
- The best identification of a great advertisement is not only the public sold by it but the public and advertising world remember it for a long time as an admirable piece of work. It also sells without drawing to itself – so not "what a clever advert" but "I never knew that, I must try this product".
- An ad agency conceals the artifice:
 - When Aeschines spoke, they said "how well he speaks". But when Demosthenes spoke, they said "Let us march against Philip". Be for Demosthenes.
- Study those who live or die by the industry (eg, direct mail depends on advertising to work).
- Always have original research to push you further. Pick the brains of experts too.
- Recipes for cooking our great campaigns:
 1. **What you say is more important than how you say it.** As Dr Johnson said, "Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement". When he sold the contents of Anchor Brewery he said "We are not here to sell boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice". Tests of why consumers like a brand (eg, cleans deep into pores is top result, just above prevents dryness and way above ageing prevention, so they called it Deep Cleanser). Test ads with different promises.
 2. **Unless your campaign is built around a great idea, it will fail.**
 3. **Give the facts.** Very few ads contain enough facts to sell a product, we think consumers don't care, yet in Sears catalogue that's all they have, some ads (Rolls-Royce) all that was used was facts rather than adjectives. *The consumer is not a moron, she's your wife. You insult her intelligence if you assume that a mere slogan and a few vapid adjectives will persuade her to buy anything. She wants all the information you can give her.* The more info you can give the more you can sell. But collecting facts is hard work.
 4. **You cannot bore people into buying.** People glance at ads rather than reads them. We're bombarded with ads so your voice must be unique and be heard

above the crowd. You can't save souls in an empty church. Sir Hugh Rigby, surgeon to King George V: "There isn't much to choose between surgeons in manual dexterity. What distinguishes the great surgeon is that he *knows* more than other surgeons." So knowledge is greater than mere practicality.

5. **Be well-mannered, but don't clown.** People don't buy from bad-mannered salesmen or adverts. Charm the consumer into buying. But don't be cute or comic – people don't buy from clowns, as buying is a serious business.
 6. **Make your advertising contemporary.** Use young people to sell to the young as they understand the market better.
 7. **Committees can criticise ads, but they cannot write them.** An individual writes best but needs to redraft.
 8. **If you're lucky enough to write a good advertisement repeat until it stops pulling.** Don't bin them because the sponsor becomes bored of them. Yet millions may not have seen them.
 9. **Never write an ad you wouldn't want your family to read.** Don't lie to your wife, so don't tell them to mine. Good products can be sold by honest advertising, so if you don't think the product's good then you've no business to be in advertising.
 10. **The image of the brand.** Every ad should be thought of as a contribution to the complex school which is the *brand image*. Think about the longer-term image, where you want it to be and stick to it. But it requires a judgment. Most ads are created ad hoc, and this means a lack of coherence over time as staff change. Yet golden rewards await the advertiser who has the brains to create a coherent image for a long period. Old brands also stick in the mind. Think also of what could happen – a bargain basement brand is great in a recession, not in boom days for those on the up. The greater similarity there is between brands, the less part reason plays in brand selection. Beers, whiskies and cigarettes are largely the same. The personality is what will get people, and it can be scuppered with too much promotion rather than advertising. Bev Murphy, of Neilsens: "Sales are a function of product-value and advertising. Promotions cannot produce more than a temporary kink in the sales curve".
 11. **Don't be a copy-cat.** Rudyard Kipling on Sir Anthony Gloster: "They copied all they could follow, but they couldn't copy my mind/And I left 'em sweating and stealing, a year and a half behind." Imitation is sincere flattery and the mark of an inferior person.
- Ogilvy is a successful agency as it has a consistent corporate point of view on what constitutes good advertising. My previous agency has none and consequently is rudderless.

VI – How to write potent copy

1 – Headlines

- This is the telegram which decides the reader whether to read the copy. On average, five times as many people read the headline as the body copy – writing the headline is 80c of your dollar.
- If you don't sell in your deadline, you've wasted 80% of your client's money so the biggest sin is to run an ad without a headline.
- A change of headline can make a difference of ten to one in sales and as such he writes 16 headlines for one advert with these guidelines:
 1. **The headline is the ticket on the meat.** Set it to flag the readers who are prospects for the kind of product you are advertising. If you're selling a remedy for bladder weakness, include "bladder weakness" in your headline. If you want mothers to read, include "mothers" in your headline. Likewise, don't put in words that may exclude readers – ie, don't frighten men away if it would appeal to them.
 2. **Every headline should appeal to the reader's self-interest.** Eg, how women over 35 can look younger.
 3. **Always try to inject newness into the headline.** The consumer is always on the lookout for new products, or new ways to use an old product, or new

improvements to an old product. The two most powerful words are "new" and "free".

4. **There are other powerful words** – know them. How to, suddenly, now, announcing, introducing, important, bargain etc. Don't ignore these clichés. Likewise, headlines can be strengthened by including *emotional* words such as love, darling, fear, friend, baby. One of the most provocative headlines was "Darling, I'm having the most extraordinary experiences... I'm head over heels in Dove".
5. **Five times as many people read the headlines as read the body copy.** So it's important that these glancers should at least be told what brand is being advertised and as such it should be in the headline.
6. **Include your selling promise in the headline.** This requires long headlines but a test showed that headlines of 10 words or longer containing news and information, consistently sold more merchandise than short headlines. Headlines of 6-12 words pull more coupon returns than short headlines, but there's no significant difference between the readership of 12-word headlines and those of 3-word headlines. His favourite had 18 words: "At sixty miles an hour, the loudest noise in the new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock".
7. **People are more likely to read your body copy if your headline arouses their curiosity.** So you should end your headline with a lure to read on.
8. **Some copywriters write tricky headlines with puns, literary allusions and obscurities. This is a sin.** The average headline is competing with 350 others and research shows that readers travel so fast through this jungle that they don't stop to decipher the meaning of obscure headlines. Your headline must telegraph what you want to say, and it must telegraph it in plain language. Don't play games with the reader. It must not be some kind of middle-class joke.
9. **Research shows that it is dangerous to use negatives in headlines.** Eg, some readers will read "our salt contains arsenic" instead of "our salt contains no arsenic" as they should.
10. **Avoid blind headlines.** That is those which mean nothing unless you read the body copy as most people don't.

2 – Body copy

- When you sit to write copy, pretend that you are talking to the woman on your write at a dinner party. She has asked you "I'm thinking of buying a new car. Which would you recommend?" Write your copy as if you were answering that question:
 1. **Don't beat about the bush – go straight to the point.** Avoid analogies of "just as, so too" as Gallup shows that these are usually misunderstood.
 2. **Avoid superlatives, generalisations and platitudes.** Be specific, be factual. Be enthusiastic, friendly and memorable. Don't be a bore, tell the truth, but make the truth fascinating.
 - How long should the copy be? Depends. The more you tell, the more you sell. And people do read long copy. Research shows that readership falls off rapidly up to 50 words of copy, but little between 50 and 500.
 - Every ad should be a *complete* sales pitch, don't expect a reader to consume a series of ads for the same product. Shoot the works in every ad, on the assumption that it is the only chance the reader will have to sell – it's now or never.
 - Research how many people you have managed to get to read an article.
 3. **Always include testimonials in copy.** The reader finds it easier to believe the endorsement of a fellow consumer than an anonymous copywriter. The problem is to be believed. Celebrity testimonials also work wonders.
 4. **Another gambit is to offer helpful advice or service.** It hooks about 75% more readers than copy which deals entirely with the product. One ad was about how best to remove stains and was well read and remembered.
 5. **Don't be pompous or writerly.** Fine writing and a unique literary style can distract from the subject.

6. **Avoid bombast.** When a company boasts of its integrity, or a woman about her virtue, avoid the former and cultivate the latter.
7. **Unless you have some special reason to be solemn and pretentious, write your copy in the common tongue which your customers use in everyday conversation.** Research which words are used and which are not heard of – for example, 43% of housewives had no idea what obsolete meant. Once he used ineffable without knowing its use. But don't underestimate the educational level of the population. Look at Rudolph Flesch's *Art of Plain Talk* as it'll persuade them to use short words, short sentences, short paragraphs and highly *personal* copy. Aldous Huxley said that "any trace of literariness in an ad is fatal to its success. Advertisement writers may not be lyrical, or obscure, or in any way esoteric. They must be universally intelligible. A good ad then has this in common with drama and oratory, that it must be immediately comprehensible and directly moving."
8. **Resist the temptation to write the kind of copy which wins awards.** Ads which are for awards detract from the campaign, which usually get results if they don't draw attention to themselves. Juries never look at the results of such ads as they are called on to judge.
9. **Good copywriters have always resisted the temptation to entertain.** Their achievement lies in the number of new products they help succeed.

VII – How to illustrate advertisements and posters

- Most copywriters think in terms of words and devote little time to illustrations. Yet these images often occupy more space than the copy. It should telegraph that same promise as the product.
- The *subject* is more important than the *technique*.
- Artsy photographs don't sell. What does work is a topic that *arouse curiosity*. What's going on here, and requires a read to find out. This is the *story appeal*.
- Think of the 'eyepatch man' for Hathaway shirts. As the campaign developed the model turned to situations Ogilvy would have liked to have been in – conducting an orchestra, driving a tractor, fencing, buying a Renoir.
- Think of the campaign for Puerto Rico – a photo of an empty room with the cello – where was Casals, why was the room empty? It raised questions in the reader.
- Photographs sell more than drawings as they deliver more appetite appeal and are better remembered, they pull more coupons. When he took over the Come to Britain campaign and replace drawings with photos, readership tripled as did tourist expenditure.
- Only use abstract paintings to conceal what was being advertised as an image should telegraph what's being said.
- Before and after pictures sell well – it shows, it makes a good point.
- Test if in doubt by running in parallel.
- In general, people care more about film stars with whom they can identify in some way, they care about those of their own sex. Calvin Hall says that the male:female ratio in male dreams is 1.7:1. This appears also in Hopi dreams so is universal.
- When you use then an ad with a woman in it you exclude men. A pic of a man excludes women.
- The best way to attract an audience is with a baby, twice as many readers as pictures of a family. A baby was the main focus, a family member no special attention.
- Men don't like the same kind of girls whom girls like.
- Ads are more memorable in colour
- Don't use historical subjects.
- Don't show close-ups of the human face, it repels readers.
- Keep illustrations simple, with the focus on one person. Crowd scenes don't pull.
- Avoid cheesy images.
- Show the clients' face if in doubt.
- Don't show images of the factory.
- Intangibles such as "balance", "movement" and "design" don't sell, or at least increase them.
- Always be aware of how it'll appear in the final piece, think of the layout.

- Ads don't need to look like ads, if you make them look like editorial pages people will read more.
- Magazine editors have found that people read the explanatory captions under photographs more than they read the article text. The same is true of ads. Looking at ads in Life magazine, on average twice as many people read captions as the body. Thus captions offer twice the audience you get for body copy. It follows that you should never use a photograph without putting a caption under it, and each caption should be a miniature ad, complete with brand name and promise.
- If copy is less than 170 words it should be the caption, but if you need longer copy think:
 1. Display a subheadline
 2. Start with an initial capital letter to increase readership by about 13%.
 3. Keep the opening paragraph down to a maximum of 11 words. A long first paragraph frightens readers away.
 4. After two to three inches of copy, insert your first cross-head to keep readers marching on.
 5. Set columns the same width as that in newspapers.
 6. Don't write in small type
 7. Serif type is easier to read than san-serif in print
 8. Work out whether to square paragraphs or not. Windows increase readership.
 9. Set up key paragraphs in boldface or italic.
 10. Insert illustrations from time to time.
 11. Help readers into paragraphs with arrowheads, bullets etc.
 12. Number unrelated items rather than try squeeze them into paragraphs.
 13. Never set copy in reverse (black on white).
 14. If you use leading paragraphs, you increase readership by 12%.
 - Yet the more typographical changes you make in a headline the fewer people will read it. So keep the same size, type and weight. And don't use capitals as it's harder to read.
 - Don't deface an illustration with a headlines it reduces attention value by an average of 19%. Take a run from editors.
 - Make layouts promote good taste, a first-class ticket for socially mobile societies.
 - Abstract and symbolic designs do not communicate quickly enough.
 - Strong, pure colours communicate the quickest, as does large type.

VIII – How to make good TV commercials

- The purpose of an ad is not to *entertain* the viewer but to *sell* him. Yet there is a correlation between viewers liking an ad and a product.
- This does not mean that your ad should be ill-mannered.
- Pictures sell as much, or more, as words do.
- The average consumer is faced with 10,000 ads per year – *what is this for websites?*
- Product demonstrations sell unbelievably well. Those that set up a problem then have the product solve it sell four times as well.
- Ads with a strong element of news also sell particularly well.
- Yet if there is no news you can make up news. Or you can give *emotion and mood*.
- Give your ad a touch of singularity, a burr that will stick in the viewer's mind.
- Don't sing a message as selling is a serious business. One study showed the spoken version sold three times as much as the sung version.

IX – How to make good campaigns for food products, tourist destinations and proprietary medicines

- Most of the above notes are to do with general products, yet some areas require a specialisation.

Food

- How can you make food appetising on screen? Can any words persuade people to try your product? How important are promises of nutrition?
- Print:
 1. Build you ad around appetite appeal
 2. The larger your food illustration the more appetite appeal
 3. Don't show people in food ads. They take up space that's best devoted to food.
 4. Use colour, it's more appetising than black and white.
 5. Use photos over artwork.
 6. One photo is better than two or more. If you have to use several, make one dominant.
 7. Give a recipe when you can
 8. Don't bury the recipe in the body, make it stand loud and clear
 9. Illustrate your recipe in your main photo
 10. Don't print your recipe over a screen, make it clear to read
 11. Get news into your ads when you can, such as a new product or improvement
 12. Make your headline specific rather than general
 13. Include your brand name in your headline
 14. Locate your headline and copy below your illustration
 15. Display your package prominently but don't allow it to dominate your appetite.
 16. Be serious. Don't use humour or fantasy or try to be clever. Feeding others is a serious business.

Television

1. Show how to prepare your product
2. Use the problem-solution gambit without being far-fetched.
3. Whenever possible give news and play it loud and clear
4. Show your product early in the commercial
5. Don't use sound for its own sake, only where relevant (eg the sizzle).
6. Commercials are for selling. Don't let entertainment dominate.

Tourist destinations

1. Destination ads is bound to affect the image of the country concerned – so alter it favourably. Crummy ads go with crummy countries.
 2. Tourists do not travel thousands of miles to see things they can see next door. Advertise what is unique.
 3. Establish an image the reader will never forget as the gestation between the exposure to an ad and purchase may be long.
 4. Your ads appear in media which are read by people who can afford to travel long distances so don't insult their intelligence, write as an adult, not in cliché.
 5. The biggest barrier to travel is cost. Help your reader rationalise the cost of his journey by selling its cultural and status overtones.
 6. Patterns of travel are subject to fashion. Your ad should put your country as somewhere 'everyone' is going to. Bandwagons work wonders in tourism.
 7. People dream about far away places so your ad should convert their dreams into action – potential into real. Tantalising photos with specific information has brought the best results.
 8. Beware of esoteric subjects. They may interest the nationals of the sponsor country but the tourists are out to collect clichés.
- Travel ads showing the new are great for politicians, not for tourists. When we look abroad we don't care.
 - Find out the stereotypes and then work to show the opposite (eg, friendliness of 'stuffy' Brits).

Proprietary medicines

- This is a specialist art:

1. A good medicine shows the compelling difference
2. It contains news
3. It is serious
4. It has authority
5. It does not just extol the product's merits but explains the disease, that the reader has learned something about the condition.
6. Does not strain credulity.

X – How to rise to the top of the tree

- First, you must be ambitious, but not with naked aggression such that others will destroy you.
- Keep up your studies even if entering fresh from Harvard Business School. Don't be arrogant. Realise it'll take time.
- Read all about the accounts you're given, the research papers and marketing plans ever written on what you've been given. *In other words, be a professional.*
- Spend Saturdays visiting petrol stations (if a petrol account) and talking to motorists, visit the labs, you'll know more about petrol than your boss within a year.
- Most are too lazy for this.
- Managers promote those who work the most, understand that some will work long hours.
- Pay by results.
- Single individuals do pull wonders, it's not down to committees.
- Most work will be routine but doing it well leads to progress. Be aware when there will be a good occasion.
- One worker pulled every stat he could and put it in a paper - he was on the board within a year.
- Most young grads from business school want to be account execs as they are told it is better to manage and administer than do specialist works. Yet those at the top were all specialists once.
- It's hard then to make a mark as an account man than a specialist.
- Be prepared for the following:
 1. You will be blackballed. Don't be downhearted. May or may not be your fault, deal with it.
 2. Don't be a mere channel of communication, like a waiter. Become a marketer.
 3. However hard you work, however knowledgeable you'll be, you will be unable to be at the highest levels until you are 35. Be patient
 4. You will never be a senior account exec unless you make good presentations. You must be able to sell plans to committees. Your presentation must be well written and well presented. Learn to write them by studying the masters.
 5. Do not make the mistake of regarding clients as boobs. Make friends with them, act as if you were on their team. Buy shares in their company. But don't get tangled in their politics. As the Vicar of Bray said: "whatsoever king shall reign, I will be the vicar of Bray sir!"
 6. In day-to-day negotiations, fight for the kings, queens and bishops, but discard the pawns. Gracefully surrender on trivial issues so it'll be harder to fight you on the rare fights over major ones.
 7. Don't discuss your client's business in a lift, keep their business secret.
 8. When you want to plant an idea in a copywriter or research director, do it privately and tactfully. The poacher is not popular.
 9. If you are brave about admitting mistake to clients and colleagues you'll earn their respect. Objectivity and intellectual honest are second to none as a career strategy.
 10. Learn to write lucid memos. The senior people to whom you address have a lot on their plate, more than you. The longer they are the less likely they are to be read by those who have the power to act on them.
- Ad men are paid more than most and there are reasons.
- First, demand for able ad men is greater than the supply. Second, the fringe benefits are not that great. Third, there is less security of tenure.

- How does an ad man use his holidays? Fitter away? No, you need a change of scene, forget advertising, but read books.
- Take a speed-reading course.
- Broaden your horizons on travel.
- Everyone should have a hobby – yours should be advertising. Pick a subject that your agency knows little about and make yourself an authority on it.
- Write at least one good article a year and publish it in the Harvard Business Review.
- Put your shoulder to the wheel, but make it the right wheel.

XI – Should advertising be abolished?

- Lots of criticism, but FDR said that advertising has helped raise the standard of living in the past few years, it spreads the knowledge of a higher standard of living.
- Churchill too said that it encouraged people to aim for better and for better production.
- Even Soviets said it had a purpose for new products.
- It's easier to advertise a new product than to take on another.
- Advertising does not raise prices as it lets people demand more and so have economies of scale. It also increases stock turnover.
- It lets people know of something they want and would hear about anyway.
- Advertising can lead to monopolies, as only big brands can afford to compete and get discounts.
- You can't polish a turd – an ad can sell a poor product only once.
- A new product must have a USP or be superior to others.
- Advertising should be seen as a guarantee of quality, a firm which spends so much on it should show they have a good product.
- Firms must live up to ads – KLM said it was punctual and reliable and staff were told this.
- John Burns, founder of Labour, said the tragedy of the working class was the poverty of their desires.
- It can change an image of somewhere.
- Be prepared to change a campaign. Eg, Keep NY Clean had raised the clean streets from 56% to 85% so it must be a hardcore group who ignored it. As such they brought in a tough campaign with fines and gave acts on summonses.

A collection of Ogilvyisms

- Hard work never killed a man. Men die of boredom, psychological conflict, and disease.
- It's important to admit your mistakes before you're charged with them.
- Big ideas are usually simple ideas
- Get rid of sad dogs who spread doom.
- In the best establishments, promises are always kept, regardless of what it may cost in agony and overtime.
- Change is in our lifeblood.
- Tell the truth, but make the truth fascinating.
- People do not buy from ill-mannered liars.
- Tolerate genius.
- Don't use high language with people.
- No manufacturer ever complained that his ads were selling too much.
- We prefer the discipline of knowledge to the anarchy of ignorance.
- I admire those with gentle manners who treat other people as human beings.