

Headline Swipe File

Easy Fill-in Templates



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The Secret Headline Formula Everyone Knows (Except You)

You know how the best headline writers always seem to find that perfect shareable headline? It's like they have **some secret formula** for writing perfect headlines.

I'll let you in on a little secret. *They do.*

We've been learning how to write captivating headlines ever since public print media took off some centuries ago. As it turns out, people respond to some headline structures more than others. That's why you can see common structures and elements underneath the popular headlines of today.

When you strip these to their core, you're left with fill-in-the-blank templates you can use to create your own super-shareable headlines. In this guidebook, you'll find eight awesome templates you can fill in and use yourself.

The Building Blocks of a Successful Headline

In this swipe file, the key elements of headline templates are broken down into different colour coded blocks.

The Topic

It's useful to specify what the headline is concerning to make it easy for the reader to get interested or move on.

Insert your own topic into the template's blue block.

The Highly Desirable Outcome

Your reader wants to know what they'll get from your article. You need to be explicitly clear about what they're trading their time for.

Fill the green space with your own highly desirable outcome.

The Unpleasant Outcome

If your headline promises information on how to avoid an unpleasant outcome, your reader has one more reason to click it.

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Insert the unpleasant outcome into the red block.

The Obstacle

As with the unpleasant outcome, if your headline addresses an obstacle common to your readers, they'll be eager to find out more.

Fill the orange space with your obstacle.

The Authority

What famous (or infamous) people can you name relating to your topic? In your reader's eye, they will bring authority and credibility to your headline.

Place these in the yellow space.

Let's look at the templates!



1. The How-To Headline

How to [Desirable Outcome] (Even If [Obstacle])

How to [Desirable Outcome] (Without [Obstacle])

How to [Desirable Outcome] (While You [Desirable Outcome])

We're naturally drawn to articles that tell us how to do something in a practical way. This classic headline template almost never fails. Rather than just a vague thought-exercise, it promises a practical way of achieving something.

Basic Example:

How to Grow Your Mailing List

How to Train Your Dog

How to Lose Weight

Adding Shock Value:

Add shock value by turning the irresistible result into a more tangible, more specific benefit. Make the common obstacles something really frustrating to your audience, and similarly make the pleasant action something very desirable.

How to Grow Your Mailing List (Even If You Have No Website)

Surprisingly Effective Ways to Train Your Dog (Without Raising Your Voice)

How to Rapidly Lose Weight (While Gorging Yourself on Delicious Chocolate)



2. The Ultimate Guide Headline

The Ultimate Guide to [Topic]

This headline is a simple structure, but packs a lot of punch. You're writing an ultimate guide, after all. Your readers will be thrilled to find everything they need in one article.

Basic Example:

The Ultimate Guide to [Affiliate Marketing](#)

The Ultimate Guide to [Green Smoothies](#)

The Ultimate Guide to [HDR Photography](#)

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Adding Shock Value:

This template doesn't need any added shock value. The "ultimate" is shocking in itself.

There's a catch though - this headline will only work if your guide is truly detailed and informative. If you're able to dazzle your readers with a vast guide of incredibly valuable information, the shock value and shareability is in the content.

Warning: If your content is good, but not really ultimate guide material, skip this headline. If everything you write is an ultimate guide, **feel free to use it every time.**



3. The List Headline

X Things That [Obstacle]

X Ways to [Desirable Outcome]

These X Things Are [Unpleasant Result]

X [Topic] Mistakes

A “list headline” takes many forms, but always comes with a number. The power of the headline is giving the reader an exact amount of content they’re getting. It can be a huge list, which allures the reader with its huge amount of information, or it can be a list of five, which is an easily approachable bite-size bit of content.

Basic Examples:

5 Things That Are Making You Unhappy

101 Ways to Save Money

These 7 Things Are Unhealthy For Your Teeth

5 List Building Mistakes

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Adding Shock Value:

Add shock value with a more specific topic, more colourful word choices, and more drastic results.

5 Everyday Things That Are Destroying Your Happiness

101 Surprising Ways to Save Money and Get Rich

Warning! These 7 Things Are Rotting Your Teeth

5 Fatal List Building Mistakes You Don't Know You're Making



4. The Headline That Others Know (And You Should Too)

Do [Desirable Outcome] Like [Famous Example]

What [Famous Example] Can Teach Us about [Topic]

What Everybody Ought to Know About [Topic]

Let Me Show You The Secrets Of [Famous Example]

This headline appeals to your innate sense of curiosity. It's almost like a challenge to try and see what everyone else knows and what you're missing.

Basic Examples:

Write A Book Like A Published Author

What An Action Movie Star Can Teach Us about Social Media

What Everybody Ought to Know About Vegetable Protein

Let Me Show You The Secrets Of Real Estate Brokers

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Adding Shock Value:

The world class example or powerful group of people create shock by themselves. But you can amplify the effect by being more specific with your references. Make a reference to a popular famous person or sensational topic and it's sure to share.

Write Bestseller **Novels** Like **Michael Crichton**

What **Chuck Norris** Can Teach Us about **Facebook Ads**

The Shocking Truth Everybody Needs to Know About **The Paleo Diet**

Let Me Show You The Fabled Secrets Of **The Illuminati**



5. The Headline We Shouldn't Talk About

Little Known Ways to [Desirable Outcome]

The Secret of [Desirable Outcome]

The Secret of Avoiding [Unpleasant Result]

Wanna hear a secret? Yes, you do. We all do. Secrets are the classic way to spark curiosity. Hint of an irresistible result in your headline with some secret or little known way and it's almost a must-click.

Basic Examples:

Little Known Ways to Meet Men/Women

The Secret of Podcasting

The Secret to Avoiding Bad Breath

Adding Shock Value:

In many ways, this headline is like the how to-headline. Add shock value by turning the irresistible result into a more tangible, more specific benefit. Make the common obstacle something really frustrating or unpleasant to your audience.

The Unspoken Ways to Meet Amazing Men/Women They Don't Want You to Know
The Hush-hush Method for Successful Podcasting
The Mysterious Trick to Avoiding Frog Breath



6. The Lazy Man's Headline

The Lazy Man's Way to [Desirable Outcome]

The Lazy Dad's Way to [Desirable Outcome]

The Lazy Blogger's Way to [Desirable Outcome]

No one likes to think of themselves as lazy, but achieving something with little time or effort, or like a lazy man would, sounds like an attractive proposition.

Basic Examples:

The Lazy Man's Way to Riches

The Lazy Dad's Way to Quickly Getting Dinner on the Table

The Lazy Blogger's Way to Write Great Post Titles

Adding Shock Value:

The lazy headline is a shocker by itself. Adding radical results or colourful language will shake the credibility of this headline. Just keep it a simple result that can be achieved in a lazy way and it'll succeed!

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7. The Headline For Rule-Breakers

Break All The Rules And [Desirable Outcome]

See How Easily You Can [Desirable Outcome]

Steal This [Secret Knowledge] to Achieve [Desirable Outcome]

X Things Your [Trusted Person] Won't Tell You

This headline speaks to our inner rebel. Breaking the rules, or reading about something forbidden is always a great way to catch someone's attention.

Basic Examples:

Break All The Rules And Double Your Traffic

See How Easily You Can Lose 10 Pounds

Steal Our Facebook Targeting Hack to Jumpstart Your Online Business

13 Things Your Doctor Won't Tell You

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Adding Shock Value:

Again, this headline type is shocking in itself. Keep rule-breaking headlines simple to maintain credibility and avoid clickbait-sensation.



8. The Time Constraint Headline

How to [Desirable Outcome] in [Small Amount of Time]

X Ways to [Desirable Outcome] in [Small Amount of Time]

Discover How You can [Desirable Outcome] in [Small Amount of Time]

[Desirable Outcome] in [Small Amount of Time] or [Desirable Outcome]

Like in the list-headline, you're letting the reader know what they can achieve in a certain timeframe.

Basic Examples:

How to Make 10,000\$ in 30 Days

X Ways to Get a Six Pack in 4 Weeks

Discover How You can Build a Sales Funnel in 60 Minutes

Install Windows in 30 minutes or Your Money Back

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Adding Shock Value:

Add shock value by turning the irresistible result into a more tangible, more specific benefit. Make the time frame exact. Make the benefit specific. Turn the benefit shockingly good, but only if you can keep your promise!

Lazy Man's Way to Make 9,836\$ in 28 Days

X Tricks to Turn Your Abs Into Steel in 25 Days

Secret Tricks to Build a Massively Successful Sales Funnel in 60 Minutes

Install Linux in 31 minutes or We'll Pay For Your Computer

Your Turn to Create a Magnificent Headline

Are your fingers itching to get writing yet? Here's what you need to do next:

1. Think about your content. What is your **topic**? What is a **highly desirable** or an **unpleasant outcome** for your reader? What **obstacles** or **authority figures** are common for your reader?
2. Choose a template.
3. Fill in the blanks.
4. Rinse and repeat.

You should end up with four or five decent headlines. Next you need to let the audience decide which headline is BEST. You can test the headlines yourself or let [the Thrive Headline Optimizer take care of it for you!](#)

All you need to do is insert your headlines into the Headline Optimizer, and it'll do the rest. Just a few clicks **and you've got the headline with the most viral sharing potential!**

Do it now!

Grab your own copy of Thrive Headline Optimizer here:



Thanks for reading!

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