

CERTIFIED COPYWRITING SPECIALIST (CCS)

STUDY GUIDE



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This study guide has been created for individuals who are studying for the Certified Copywriting Specialist (CCS) Certification Program. Please use this guide to assist in preparation for your examination.

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I. BUSINESS TRAINING:

BusinessTraining.com is the leading online program for specialized niche business certification programs. The team behind BusinessTraining.com is made up of industry experts on niches such as online marketing, project management, public relations and consulting. Their experience combined with our advisory board's expertise in online education and training is what provides our firm with the tools to provide the many training and certification programs see on our website.

BusinessTraining.com is part of the G.T.C. Institute, a global training and certification organization that has provided practical industry-specific certification to over 1,000 clients within the United States, Europe and over 30 other countries.

We provide high value training programs that provide function knowledge on very specific business topics such as public relations, online marketing, project management, international business, and consulting.

Mission: To provide professionals with high impact business training and certifications in niche subject areas that are functional and immediately beneficial.

Business Training.com helps you:

- Quickly gain specialized knowledge within highly valuable business niches
- Enhance your credibility, resume, and total value in the marketplace
- Complete our training programs in 5 months from anywhere in the world

II. CCS DETAILS AND TIMELINE:

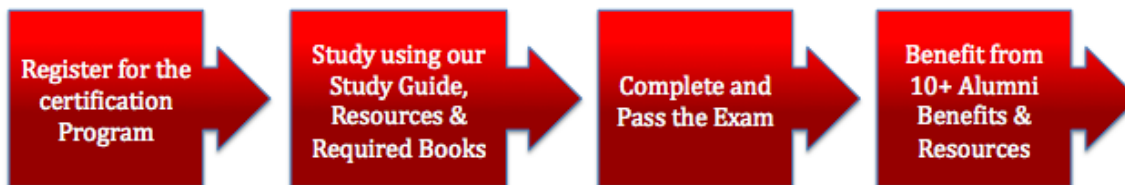
Program Details:

The **Certified Copywriting Specialist (CCS)** certification program is unique in that it is modeled after many online courses offered at Ivy League institutions today, offering more value for a more cost-effective program. The CCS Program is a self-study program that includes educational multimedia resources in video form, a study guide, required readings, and a flexible online examination process, accessible around the world. The online exam is structured so that in order to complete the exam within the 2-hour time frame one must read through all of the assigned materials and conceptually understand the majority of the material to score well enough to pass the exam. Our goal is to offer the most challenging program in the industry while also providing all of the learning tools possible to ensure participants get the most out of the experience.

The Certified Copywriting Specialist (CCS) program is sponsored by the GTC Institute and offered by BusinessTraining.com. This certification program is designed to show and certify that you have gained an in-depth understanding and high level specialized knowledge in persuasive writing.

In addition to the benefits of gained knowledge, growing industry recognition, more knowledgeable career choices, and networking, our organization is also developing additional resources for CCS Participants. This includes video and MP3 recordings on Q&A or strategies and tactics, webinars, access to interviews with internet marketing professionals who have more than 10 years of experience in the industry, among many more benefits.

4 STEP CERTIFICATION PROCESS



Timeline:

The (CCS) program accepts new members on a rolling-admissions basis so you may begin any time. Examinations are provided four times a year on January 15th, April 15th, July 15th, and October 15th. Examinations are completed 100% online from your place of work or home through our SSL secure testing website.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THE CCS:

- To create effective, persuasive copy to create a better business.
- How to utilize persuasive metaphors and why they are the backbone of your sales copy.
- How experts construct sales letters from start to finish by breaking down each part and showing how to do more with less time.
- Why understanding your client's hidden beliefs can provide you with a roadmap to knowing precisely where to tap your persuasive hammer to generate maximum effect.
- How to apply best practices and proven copywriting.
- How to write sale letters that sell in less than an hour that can perform 5-10x better than sales letters that ignore our copywriting best practices.
- Why producing strong copy can leverage your time and make you one of the most valuable assets for your clients or company.
- How to profit from real world case studies and swipe files full of example sales letters, website content, emails, and advertisements.
- Instructions on how to complete a session of copywriting, start to finish, that will produce superior results. (Following a consistent process will assure you analyze and improve each piece from multiple angles.)
- Learn how to adapt our proven sales letter formulas that you will follow step-by-step. This will guide you toward creating powerful sales letters that can be used again and again.
- You'll benefit from our proven tactics as we show you where and how to push your client's secret "Buy" buttons.

III. REQUIRED READINGS:

1. Victor O. Schwab. How to Write a Good Advertisement: A Short Course in Copywriting. **ISBN-10:** 0-87980-397-7
2. Joe Sugarman. The Adweek Copywriting Handbook: The Ultimate Guide to Writing Powerful Advertising and Marketing Copy from One of America's Top Copywriters. **ISBN-13:** 978-0470051245

IV. CCS EXAM PREPARATION

1. Exam Composition:

There are a total of 100 points available to earn for the exam, 80 of which can be earned from the multiple choice or true/ false questions that are worth 2 points each, and 20 of which can be earned from 2 short answer questions that are worth 10 points each. Please see below for the composition and distribution of the points in-depth.

<u>Topics and Weights</u>	
Copywriting Basics (20)	Multiple Choice Questions
Components of Copywriting (20)	Multiple Choice Questions
Psychology in Copywriting (20)	Multiple Choice Questions
Copywriting Techniques & Tactics (20)	Multiple Choice Questions
Comprehensive & Conceptual Essay Questions	2 Essays

You will have 2 hours to complete the exam. Those who have not made the effort to read the materials will have a hard time completing the exam within the allotted time, but for participants who have read the required readings 2 hours will be sufficient.

2. **TERMS AND CONCEPTS TO KNOW:**

Below, please find the terms and concepts that you should be able to define after having read the required readings.

Please define the terms from the required readings rather than a dictionary. You will be tested on the definitions that authors have provided.

- The 5 Fundamentals of Writing a Good Advertisement
- Getting Attention
- Conversion
- “Hook”
- The Three Forms of “Asking for Action”
- “Do-Something” Copy
- Construction Evidence
- The 5 Ways to “Become a Keener Judge of Advertising Appeals”
- The 8 Milestones to a Sale
- Copy News Value
- Specific Knowledge
- The Perfect Buying Environment
- The Slippery Slide
- The Copy Sequence
- Psychological Triggers
- Selling Cures
- The Emotional Approach
- Seeds of Curiosity
- Traffic (in copywriting)
- Harmony
- Response Device
- Headline
- Justifying the Purchase
- Linking
- Rhythm
- Patterning

3. **SAMPLE QUESTIONS:**

1. *Which of the following is often an overlooked fundamental to writing great advertisements?*
 - a.) Get Attention.
 - b.) Show People an Advantage.
 - c.) Prove it.
 - d.) Persuade People to *Grasp* This Advantage.

2. ***True or False:*** *Proof that is emotionally appealing is more likely to be accepted and believed.*

3. ***True or False:*** *Holding the prospect's attention is NOT an important aspect of copywriting.*

4. _____ *is the term Sugarman uses to describe the powerful copy element when a person or an organization endorses a product in the advertisement.*
 - a.) Product Rant
 - b.) Price Point
 - c.) Quality Pronouncement
 - d.) Testimonial

5. *What does Sugarman say is the only exception to "selling the concept, not the product"?*
 - a.) When the product is sold through informercials where the audience can view it already.
 - b.) When the product is very inexpensive.
 - c.) When the product is so unique or new that the product itself becomes the concept.
 - d.) When you can't think of a good concept.

6. *A company describing itself as "America's largest single source of space-age products" is an example of what psychological trigger?*
 - a.) Establish Authority
 - b.) Sense of Urgency
 - c.) Fear
 - d.) Simplicity

7. *Why are emotion and proof together necessary for a sale to be successful?*
 - a.) Emotion plays a large part in the belief –shaping process; reason (proof) is not enough.
 - b.) Emotion is enough, and proof isn't really necessary.
 - c.) Proof is enough; there is no need for emotional appeal.
 - d.) Emotion cannot do much to back up reason, so the two cannot work together very well.

V. BOOK SUMMARIES

HOW TO WRITE A GOOD ADVERTISEMENT: A SHORT COURSE IN COPYWRITING

By Victor O. Schwab

Unless indicated, it is important to answer all of the questions at the end of each chapter. Please utilize the “quizzes” there to assist you in your reading. The readings presented after the quizzes are not required.

CHAPTER 1: - Get Attention & Make Your Layout Get Attention.

The first section of Chapter 1 lays out nicely what the five fundamentals in the writing of good advertisement, which make up some of the succeeding chapters. Essentially, this chapter reiterates the notion that advertising is uninvited and often times unwarranted. How, then, do we get past that point of us being an intruder, invading someone’s space?

The main obstacle is the headline. How do we capture interest? What is the sole purpose of a headline? What kinds of rewards do good headlines promise? Please read over the *100 Good Headlines and Why They Were so Profitable* to get an idea of what some great headlines were in the past. Though the book has a few years on it, the premise of why the headlines were so popular can still play a role in the headlines we write today. Pay attention to the reason the headlines were successful instead of the headlines themselves, as they were created for the 1960’s target.

To ensure you understand why these were so popular, try looking at some advertisements from a magazine you read today. Is it targeted to you? If it is, how? If it’s not, why not? How does the title of the advertisement work, or not work? Does it make you want to read more, or does the image alone do that? Why does a layout affect the way that an advertisement is successful or not?

Then, to ensure you have a good grasp on the concepts of the chapter, be sure to answer the questions at the end of the chapter found on page 39. In particular, questions 1-4, 6, 7, 9, and 10 are important to know answers to. The remaining questions are superfluous, as is the last section of the “So What” Department. You can read through those there, but again they were created for the 1960’s market.

CHAPTER 2:

“ADVERTISING BEGINS AND ENDS WITH COPY – BEGINS WITH GOOD COPY, ENDS WITH BAD.” – WALTER WEIR

- *Show People an Advantage.* “This brings us to the writing of the body-copy matter itself.” This section shares the importance of answering the question for customers, “What will your product DO for me?” Your copy needs to hold the attention of the customer, and ultimately get them to act. Your headline and layout have already (hopefully) captured the interest of your customers, but your copy needs to keep that interest, and get them to do something. Share the advantages of the produce with your prospective and current

customers, not its physical attributes. This section is of great importance; be sure to note how psychological factors play a role in decision making.

- *How Shall We Select Our Copy Appeal?* Choosing an appeal for copy is much more than just choosing one. What else needs to be kept in mind when making this choice?

- *Importance of Your First Paragraph.* This first paragraph is vital. Why?

CHAPTER 3:

-*Prove it.* Why do people need facts? Why are these so important? How do emotion and reason work together? Why are the two necessary to create a sale?

This chapter goes over the importance of facts, how they work in line with and perhaps enhance emotion, and how we can use the two to effectively share a story and get people to act. What are some ways fact can be shared in an advertisement? Please answer the questions at the end of the chapter to ensure a good understanding of this reading.

The story at the end of this chapter is an entertaining read, but not required.

CHAPTER 4:

- *Persuade People to Grasp This Advantage.* Calls to action are vital to the success of copy, whether it be in advertising, marketing, or PR. Before calling to action, or “asking for action”, you have to first sum up your story, putting the benefits of the product into a story that includes the buyer. “... it is a final setting of the stage preparatory to asking for some specific action on the part of the reader. It gathers up various threads of claims and proof; weaves them into a strong close. It reiterates. It reminds. It sums up.” Why is this piece crucial to the success of a sale? Though it seems like an integral part of this whole process, do you think it gets left out of the thought/writing process for advertisement copywriters? Why?

CHAPTER 5:

- *Ask for Action.* Many advertisements are ‘actionless’. (To see a great example, open up a magazine, as you are suggested to do in the Quiz on Chapter 5.) What does “actionless” mean? Why is it a problem? Pay special attention to the problem with “sometimes”, and why “delay is the enemy of a sale”. These are crucial key-points to writing effective copy that asks for (even demands) an action be taken. Also be sure to note the difference between a pre- and post-consumer. Why might studies before an advertisement is run provide false or misleading results?

CHAPTER 6: This is a longer chapter, but it should really give you an idea of what to consider when deciding the copy length. Today, a lot of copywriting can be done online, so be sure to keep that in mind when reading this. Often times, we are not constrained by the length of a page, but rather keeping the interest of our readers.

Note in the first 3 pages of this chapter that Schwab states that today, there is a “pronounced trend toward longer copy.” What do you think is the case for today’s today, 2010? Also, try to reiterate this point: “Unreadable copy goes unread.” How, then, do we

create copy that is readable? What makes copy “readable”? *How DO we decide the best copy length?* & what is *The Subhead*?

CHAPTER 7: Please read the following section of this chapter, as the others are not required:

- *Seven Other Factors Which Influence the Effectiveness of an Advertisement* (pg. 147). This section gives a great overview of what to keep in mind when create an advertisement. This can also apply to online copy and what to do when considering aesthetics. Be sure to note these 7 factors as they can greatly contribute to the success of an ad/piece of copy. (The only item that may not be applicable to online copy is, of course, the second to last: *The Effect of Weather*. Unless you are operating a brick and mortar company that relies heavily on foot-traffic, this factor may not be of much importance to you.)

CHAPTER 8: *NOT REQUIRED.*

CHAPTER 9:

- *Do Copy Appeals Have a Sex?* This chapter is a bit outdated, but still gives way to the thinking that there are differences in advertising to either sex. What do you think about advertising to the sexes today? Is any of this still true today, or have the roles changed enough that little of this is true anymore?

CHAPTER 10:

- *Facts of Fancies: Which Shall You Feature?* The end story is also a good read, but not required. The section quiz could be useful, though question 3’s answer is unknown. Main points to note in this chapter include knowing when facts or more imagery would be best used, and why.

CHAPTERS 11-14 are not required readings. They are good supplemental readings, but you will not be tested on the information therein, unless it is found in other preceding chapters.

**THE ADWEEK COPYWRITING HANDBOOK: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WRITING
POWERFUL ADVERTISING AND MARKETING COPY FROM ONE OF AMERICA'S TOP
COPYWRITERS** by Joseph Sugarman

Joe Sugarman, a widely-known veteran of copywriting, has done us all a favor by writing The Adweek Copywriting Handbook. In this book, Sugarman teaches the reader his process for producing great copy, from understanding your product to keeping your prospect's attention with effective writing. To illustrate each lesson, Sugarman weaves in compelling and often funny anecdotes drawn from his vast experience in the industry.

We found the book so useful that we finished it in one day. This may not be the case for all of you, but it really is a good read. Only a few chapters are not required (which will be noted for each non-essential chapter in the following review) but if you have the time, it is still worth looking through them even though you will not be tested on the material. With that, please find the chapter-by-chapter review of the Sugarman text below. This should be a good guide while you make your way through the text, but be sure to make your own notes and to carefully read all assigned chapters.

CHAPTER ONE

Joe Sugarman is a very interesting person, as you read the book you will become more familiar with his diverse background. In this chapter, he argues that his interest in many different subjects and his varied experiences help him in his copywriting. Furthermore, Sugarman asserts that a copywriter *must* be experienced. So, as you are trying to become a great copywriter you might ask yourself, as rock-legend Jimi Hendrix did, "Are you experienced?"

Also, read through his section on lateral thinking. This method is one of many that you can use to push through a tough piece of copy. I use a variation of this technique pretty often when I am struggling to come up with an idea for a marketing campaign.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter deals with a highly important aspect of producing great copywriting. In addition to general knowledge, a copywriter should have specific knowledge of the product he or she is selling. This chapter explains how you should become an expert on what you are advertising and the type of audience you are appealing to.

CHAPTER THREE (NOT REQUIRED)

This chapter is not required, because it is simply suggesting that all copywriters who became great copywriters did so with practice. This is fundamental lesson, but you do not need to know much more than "practice makes perfect."

CHAPTER FOUR

Pay close attention to this chapter because it lists the ten graphic elements in an advertisement and explains the purpose of each. Read and understand his fundamental lesson (the second axiom) as it will be essential to your understanding of Sugarman's process.

CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter expands on the importance of the first sentence and how critical it is to have a compelling lead to your copy. Answer the question, “according to Sugarman, what is the purpose of the first sentence?”

CHAPTER SIX

Creating the best buying environment may sound like a veteran salesman's trick, but it is more than that. It is a tool for copywriters who want to put their prospect in the best possible mood and environment for purchasing the product or service. This chapter helps you understand how to do this through print.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Resonating with the reader is an essential talent for copywriters. The best salesmen and marketing gurus know exactly how to resonate with the reader. Chapter seven includes some helpful tips on accomplishing this feat.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The “Slippery Slide” concept is a great one. I recommend that you read through this chapter at least once. The slide is a powerful visual that should always be in your mind as you are copywriting. You want the reader to be compelled to continue to the next line, and the next, and the next until he or she has finished the ad and (hopefully) wants to buy.

CHAPTER NINE (NOT REQUIRED)

The idea of assumed constraints is helpful in building the confidence needed to work through a difficult concept, but it is not required reading.

CHAPTER TEN

Sugarman demonstrates how a writer can lead a reader through a passage by planting “seeds of curiosity”. This is an essential aspect of what makes for interesting and compelling copy, so think critically on how you can make your writing more interesting to reader.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Carefully read through the three emotion principles and think about what advertisements that you have seen which implement one or all of these principles. Understanding the emotional aspect of copywriting is a big step toward connecting with your audience.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Sugarman tells us: sell the concept, not the product. There is one important exception to Sugarman's rule, but generally this is a pretty sound theory that will serve you well.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN (NOT REQUIRED)

This non-essential chapter explains the incubation process by which we process information and ideas even when we are not working. In short, take a break every once in a while.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Copy should be as long as you want, so long as it is compelling and keeps the reader's attention. Make the ad as long as it needs to be and still be interesting, and don't compromise. Of course, there are spatial constraints; if you absolutely have to cut down the advertisement, do it in the editing process after you have written your concept in full.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Chapter fifteen builds on the fundamental concepts introduced in chapters seven and eleven. In reading this chapter, you should understand that all copywriting is a personal communication, from you to the reader.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

A logical sequence is important in producing copy that not only makes sense sequentially but reflects an understanding of the reader. By this latter point, I mean that you have spent time contemplating your audience and anticipating the many questions that will arise in his or her mind throughout the advertisement. Your writing should be responding, in a logical sequence, to every concern as they arise.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN (NOT REQUIRED)

The editing process is a very fundamental aspect of copywriting and by not requiring this chapter I do not mean to imply otherwise. However, the ideas in chapter seventeen are relatively rudimentary and only need to be read by someone who is completely unfamiliar with the process.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

This chapter is perhaps the most important in the book, although that's a hard distinction to make given the great contents of almost every chapter. But chapter eighteen lists all of the powerful copy elements and explains each concept. Read these elements closely and understand each one. You will not be required to list every single concept at once but you may have to answer definition questions for many of these elements.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The psychological trigger concept is one that Joe Sugarman is known for promoting. He has previously written a book entirely on triggers, so it's a pretty important concept and you should therefore read through this chapter carefully.

CHAPTER TWENTY

“Selling a Cure, Not Prevention” is a good concept to understand and use in your copywriting. It is also something to consider when you are faced with the prospect of copywriting for a preventative product—it may not even be worth the effort.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE (NOT REQUIRED)

Rating your writing level for an advertisement is an interesting idea, but not required.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

This chapter is important in that it is the distillation of the entire process he proposes in the book. So, be familiar with this chapter and if you do not understand any of the seven steps, then double back and find where it is explained in the book.

CHAPTERS TWENTY-THREE THROUGH THIRTY-FIVE

These chapters are all examples of advertisements. These chapters are required reading but your test will not have any questions like “who wrote 'A Fluke of Nature'?” With that said, you should look through each of these advertisements and understand what makes each one great—and what aspects you would improve or alter. These advertisements explore the ideas in the book and give you good frames of reference for all that you have learned so far in [The Adweek Copywriting Handbook](#).

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

The final required chapter for this book is “Writing for Different Media.” This chapter is great because it explains the role of new media but also gives a good explanation of how to write using many different mediums.

VI. CERTIFIED COPYWRITING SPECIALIST (CCS) STRATEGIC PLAN:

The **Certified Copywriting Specialist (CCS)** Program requires participants to complete a Strategic Copywriting Plan in order to graduate from the program. This plan is worth 100 points and accounts for 50% of the total grade within the program.

As such, non-submission of this strategic plan will result in an automatic failing grade for the CCS program. You will receive details for the Strategic Business Plan after registration. If you have any questions, please email us at **CCS@BusinessTraining.com**.

STRATEGIC PROJECT – CERTIFIED COPYWRITING SPECIALIST

You have just been hired to help a company with their sales copywriting. The company is planning an event on public relations and wants to attract professionals in the public relations industry. The firm has had an internal team draft a one page advertisement for the event that will be printed in a major public relations magazine. The company has asked you to improve the draft.

Using the copywriting knowledge and skills that you have learned through this program, please make five different changes to the advertisement and explain how each correction makes the advertisement more effective (at least one paragraph each). Your suggestions should be primarily based on the required reading for the course.

To Do – Please find a change to make in each of the following areas:

1. Benefits vs. Features
2. Headline
3. “Psychological Triggers”
4. First Paragraph Importance
5. “Proving it”
6. “Asking for Action”

Public Relations Training Seminar



“A Once-in-a-Lifetime Opportunity”

Our company is hosting a full day public relations seminar and workshop from 8:45AM-5PM on January 1st, 2010 at the midtown Yale Club in New York City off of Vanderbilt Avenue. Visit this website for directions:

<http://www.yaleclubnyc.org/default.aspx?p=DynamicModule&pageid=271983&ssid=142200&vnf=1>

What is public relations? The non-advertising form of communication relaying company information to the community, news and media with the goal promoting a person, product, or idea.

Why Should I Attend: This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity so you don't want to miss this INCREDIBLE offer! There will be an unbelievable panel of public relations gurus who will talk about this exciting industry! Drinks and h'ordeuvres will be served to all guests who attend this public relations seminar. You can also advance your public relations career by meeting with all of the best people in the industry.

Who is Hosting This Event? The public relations seminar at Yale Club will be hosted by the Public Relations Industry Trade Association (PRITA), an organization that sponsors public relations events.

How Expensive is This Amazing Seminar? We normally charge \$10,000 to attend a conference with such a great panel, but for you we will only charge \$999. We accept checks and all major credit cards. If you're ready to pay \$999 (\$10,000 value) then simply visit our website's payment page or mail your \$999 check to:

**Money for Events Corporation
12345 SW Amazon Drive
Seattle, WA, USA**

VII. FAQ (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS):

Have more questions or need more information? Please see our **FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)** section on the BusinessTraining.com website here:
<http://BusinessTraining.com/FAQ.html>.

You can also get in touch with the BusinessTraining.com team over email at Team@BusinessTraining.com, or by phone at 503.664.0678, and through our ClickAndChat tool, accessible from our homepage: <http://BusinessTraining.com>.

Lastly, be sure to use your login and password to access the student area on BusinessTraining.com's homepage. Click on the Student Login link from the homepage and you will be taken to your member area. Download the the Study Guide linked to there to find the book reviews. These book reviews will assist you as you read through the required texts.

Thanks for joining BusinessTraining.com! Please let us know if you have any questions.

-The BusinessTraining.com Team & G.T.C. Institute

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SAMPLE QUESTION ANSWERS:

1. *d.* The rest represent parts that are often considered, but the last is one that, more often than not, copywriters fail to consider. It is a very important component, however, because it helps to push the reader over the edge before you ask/tell them their next steps.
2. *True.* Schwab, pg 67.
3. *False.* Adweek Copywriting Handbook. Pg. 82.
4. *d.* Adweek Copywriting Handbook. Pg. 126.
5. *c.* Adweek Copywriting Handbook. Pg. 71.
6. *a.* Adweek Copywriting Handbook. Pg. 141.
7. *a.* Schwab, Chapter 3.