

Memory Hooks

MBX Education Minute

In life you get one chance at a first impression. Therefore, carefully chosen words maximize your opportunity. Memory Hooks are a way to linger in a client's mind in a way that is quite powerful. Consider, for example, these well-known slogans.

Alka Seltzer: Plop, plop, fizz, fizz, oh what a relief it is!

Allstate Insurance: You're in good hands with Allstate

American Express: Don't leave home without it

AT&T: Reach out and touch someone

Amtrak: See America at see level

Avis Rental Car: We're number two. We try harder

Brylcreem: A little dab'll do ya

Clairol: Does she or doesn't she?

Disneyland: "The happiest place on Earth."

Mastercard: "There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's MasterCard."

Maxwell House coffee: "Good to the last drop."

New York Times: All the news that's fit to print.

7-Up: "The Uncola."

Texaco: You can trust your car to the man who wears the star

United Airlines: Fly the friendly skies of United

UPS: Moving at the speed of business. See what Brown can do for you.

United States Army: Be all that you can be. Some of our best men are women

Wheaties: Cereal Breakfast of Champions

Yellow Pages: "Let your fingers do the walking."

However, there are words that will be better left unused in your "hooks." These are words of limitation and negativity. They spoil the mood of a good memory hook. Think of them as Knots in the rope you want to throw to your client.

These words are Not, Don't, Can't, Won't, Wouldn't, Couldn't, and Shouldn't. Keep them out of your memory hook, and you will become more compelling.

Favorable language includes these possibility words: Do, Can, and Will. To illustrate the importance of positive language, think about what would have happened if Nike said, "Just Don't Stop" or "Just Don't Quit." Remove the "Knot" and you're left with "Just Stop," or "Just Quit." Not a very desirable idea.

Create a memory hook to make your product or your company memorable. Use it every chance you get. Put it on your business card. And by all means, end your infomercial with it.

Who can forget Lori's hook? "Breathe better, move better, live better." Merced Medical Supply.

Powerful.