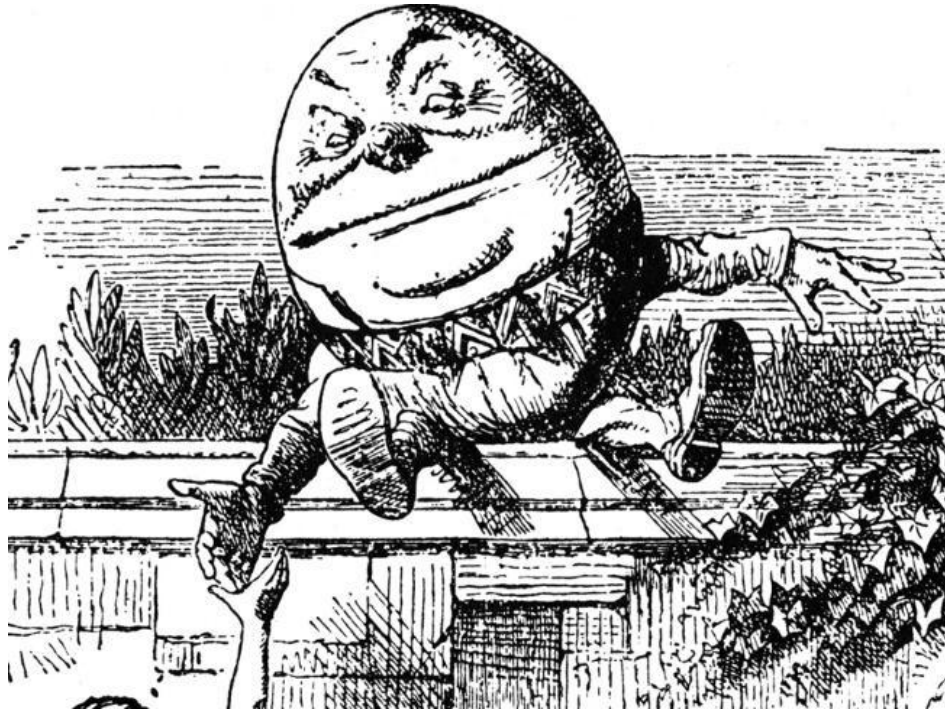


# The Alchemy of Words



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“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean so many different things.”

“The question *is*,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master – you or the words. That’s all.”

## **GENESIS**

*“In the beginning was the word...”*

Somehow, in that enigmatic tangle of circuits and synapses we call the brain, ideas are born. They begin with a feeling, an emotion – a presence. And with each idea comes the need for expression, a means of trapping it in time so we may examine it, and extend it, and make it work.

Our primary – often our only – tool is words.

So we search for words that explain and define.  
Words that cajole, and encourage, and amuse.  
Words so aptly chosen and strung together they send an electric charge through our audience – the same flash of recognition we felt when the idea was first born.

This takes great luck, or great skill.

We rely on skill.

***The mystery of having  
been moved by words.***

We have moved mountains with words – mountains of products, mountains of consumers to those products.

This unique ability requires a blend of talent and skill that defies definition.

Either you are born with the talent or you aren't; it's as simple – and as final – as that.

The skill cannot be taught; it must be earned.

What is the secret?

“You can tear it apart to see what makes it technically tick... you're back with the mystery of having been moved by words. The best craftsmanship always leaves holes and gaps in the works so that something that is not in it can creep, crawl, flash, or thunder in.”

*Dylan Thomas*

What if instead of “Give me liberty or give me death” Patrick Henry had said “Either we get rid of King George or I'm going to stick beans up my nose.” Or if Churchill had offered nothing but “hard work and dedication, in spite of discomfort,” instead of “blood, sweat, and tears.”

## ***Make it creative, but make it work.***

We do not believe, as someone once said, that “genius is an infinite capacity for detail.” We *do* agree with Edison, who defined genius as “ninety-nine percent perspiration, one percent inspiration.”

Lopsided as that ratio looks, it’s still a 50-50 proposition. Without perspiration, inspiration is just a good idea. Without inspiration, perspiration is just sweat.

While you might want “a dynamically innovative mind” designing your new boat, for instance, you probably wouldn’t want one building it. That’s where the guy with a special aptitude for detail comes in – to make sure the thing will work the way it was designed to.

Everything that comes from our “creative fires” is immediately plunged into the cold waters of practicality, to our product’s – and our client’s – great benefit.

## ***Making it creative.***

We were once inspired by awards. Ten years later, with more than 100 local, national, regional, and international awards under our belt, we retired from competition. Winning awards is fine; we simply find it more satisfying to concentrate on winning competitive advantages and customers for our clients.

Bill Davidson has for many years been recognized as advertising's resident creative genius in the Southwest, and one of the top creative minds in the country. His past work is a seminar in the art of blending creativity with practicality.

You may not know Bill yet, but you already know his work. Remember "Today is the first day of the rest of your life?" "Thank heaven for Seven-eleven?" "We'll do whatever it takes?" Those are his.

## ***Making it work.***

The ultimate goal of any marketing program should be to increase net profits by a specified percentage at or by a point in time. This is the only valid reason for the existence of such a program.

While a single phrase, ad, or campaign can seldom be singled out as the most important factor in a marketing program's, or promotion's, or company's success, their contribution can be pinpointed and appraised by measuring their performance against specific objectives established in the planning stage.

## ***Integration: making it make sense.***

Cato said it best. *“Grasp the subject, the words will follow.”*

We begin each project with as thorough an understanding of the product universe as possible under the constraints of deadline and budget. In fact, we develop for each assigned task a mini-marketing plan (sometimes only a single sheet) that defines the project fully enough to insure our effectiveness.

Areas covered in this mini-plan include:

- A definition of terms
- General observations
- Specific goals and objectives
- Budget considerations
- Deadlines



***“If I could only put it into words!”***

Everyone

We hear it all the time. What the frustrated genius wants is the ability to transfer an idea, an emotion, a feeling, a flash of inspiration, from the formless, fleeting thing spinning through his or her brain, or gut, or soul, into words. Comforting black letters on a neat white piece of paper that can be handed to someone, who will then smile, and nod, and feel the same feeling – someone who will understand.

We don't do binomial equations, or Latin. Unless we've undertaken the job of explaining them. We *do* understand words, and people. And we understand the importance of making the idea incarnate.

Because we know that once you've put it into words, you can make it into anything.

## ***Conclusion.***

The next time you need to say something, in whatever form you need to say it – from a complete communications campaign to a single television commercial, radio spot, blog article, tweet, product description, newspaper ad, magazine ad, brochure, website, annual report, audio/visual presentation, business plan, proposal, pilot, film jingle, sales catalog, summation to the jury, outdoor board, letter, bumper sticker, special promotion, speech, direct mail piece, statement stuffer, matchbook cover, or any other communications tool, and you don't know quite what to say or how to say it...

...please don't write. Call us, at 405-206-4767. You'll never be at a loss for words again.