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THE SENTENCE THAT SELLS



A small book for making the offer obvious before you touch the funnel.

BY MK PARRISH

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START WITH THE SENTENCE

Most people try to fix the funnel too late.

They buy a better template. They rewrite the headline. They move the button. They add testimonials, take them away, add them back, and call it iteration.

The page still does not move because the page is not the problem yet.

The sentence is.

The sentence is the plain-language argument underneath the offer: who it is for, what changes, why now, and why this way. If that sentence is vague, the page has to perform a miracle. It has to make unclear thinking feel clear. It has to make a half-built promise feel trustworthy. It has to persuade the buyer to do work the seller has not done.

That is too much to ask from a font.

The work starts smaller and sharper:

“

I help [specific person] get [specific outcome] without [specific cost of doing it the old way].

Do not make it beautiful first. Make it true.

If you sell a service, the sentence is not "I help brands tell better stories." Better than what? For whom? To what end?

If you sell a book, the sentence is not "A guide to transformation."

Transformation is a fog machine. What is the reader walking away able to name, choose, write, build, or stop doing?

If you sell software, the sentence is not "An AI-powered platform for modern teams." That is not a promise. That is a category costume.

Your first job is not to sound impressive. Your first job is to remove the buyer's need to translate.

THE FOUR JOBS

A selling sentence has four jobs.

It names the buyer.

Not "founders." Which founders? Funded? Solo? Service-based? Technical? Tired of explaining the same thing on sales calls? Running a team that has outgrown founder-led everything?

It names the outcome.

Not "clarity." What happens when clarity arrives? The homepage converts. The sales call shortens. The team can explain the offer without improvising. The buyer knows where to click.

It names the friction.

Not "without stress." Stress is too broad. Name the real cost: without hiring six disconnected vendors, without sounding like everyone else in the category, without rebuilding the whole business to fix one page.

It names the edge.

Why this way? Why you? Why should the buyer believe this is not just another generic fix?

The edge does not have to be loud. It can be method, taste, speed, lived experience, proof, seniority, or restraint. The point is that the offer should have a reason to exist in this exact shape.

When those four jobs are done, the sentence starts carrying weight:

“

I help service founders turn vague websites into buyer-ready offer paths without hiring separate strategists, copywriters, designers, and developers.

That sentence is not poetry. Good. It is scaffolding. The page can hang a real argument from it.

THE TRANSLATION TEST

A useful sentence passes the translation test.

Give it to someone smart who is not inside your business and ask:

1. Who is this for?
2. What do they get?
3. Why would they want it now?
4. What makes it different from the obvious alternative?
5. What would you click next?

If they cannot answer without asking you to explain, the sentence is not ready.

This is where people get defensive. They say, "But my work is nuanced." Of course it is. Nuance is not the enemy. Fog is.

You do not need to flatten the whole business into one bumper sticker. You need one clean doorway.

The doorway can lead to nuance. It should not require nuance to enter.

THE BUYER IS NOT READING LIKE YOU

You read your page like the author.

The buyer reads it like someone trying to avoid a bad decision.

They are scanning for risk. They are looking for the catch. They are asking if this is for them or for someone more obvious, more funded, more advanced, more beginner, more ready, more whatever.

That means every vague phrase becomes a tiny exit.

"Strategic support" makes them ask support for what.

"Elevated storytelling" makes them ask whether this will make money.

"End-to-end solutions" makes them wonder what ends are included.

"For ambitious leaders" makes them wonder if you know any actual leaders.

The sentence that sells respects the buyer's attention. It does not demand belief before it offers specificity.

BUILD THE PAGE FROM THE SENTENCE

Once the sentence is true, the page gets easier.

The hero says the promise.

The subhead explains the cost of staying where they are.

The proof shows you have solved this specific kind of problem before.

The offer section names what is included because the buyer is already oriented.

The call to action becomes a natural next step instead of a button begging for motion.

If your page has ten sections but no central sentence, cut before you add.

You do not need more content. You need a stronger spine.

THE REWRITE DRILL

Use this when the offer feels too slippery.

Write the current sentence.

Then write the version you would say to a tired buyer on a sales call.

Then write the version you would put in a text to a friend who asked what you actually do.

Then write the version your best client would say after the work worked.

Compare them.

The usable sentence is usually hiding in the least decorated version.

KEEP IT ALIVE

The sentence is not a shrine. It is a working tool.

Change it when the buyer changes. Change it when the offer sharpens. Change it when the proof teaches you that the real outcome is different from the one you thought you were selling.

But do not skip it.

Every serious offer deserves one sentence that can stand up in daylight.

Before the page. Before the funnel. Before the campaign.

One clean sentence.

Then build.

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