



# The Guerrilla Review

## Know What You're Talking About

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***"Education is a lifelong experience. Experience is a lifelong education. Expertise is the sum of both."***

Your email inbox is constantly barraged by nice, well-meaning people who desperately desire to be writers, consultants, coaches, speakers, copywriters, wannabe "gurus," and information marketers.

I know: mine is...

...and if you haven't experienced this syndrome, you haven't been on the Internet very long.

Give it time: it WILL happen.

A lot of these people have a talent for writing, consulting, coaching, speaking, and authoring information products, but most of them will not succeed.

Why?

Because they have ***nothing to teach, write, or speak about.***



### **You see it all the time:**

- Marketing consultants who have never held a corporate marketing job or worked at an ad agency or created a single winning marketing campaign.
- Sales trainers who were mediocre to lousy salespeople.
- Business "opportunity" marketers who have NEVER made a nickel in the businesses they write and talk about.
- Financial newsletter editors who haven't made a dime in the market.
- Financial advisors who have lost more of your money than they have made of their own.
- "Internet Marketers" who sell everything under the sun, including ebooks ghost-written by freelancers who researched the topic online, and who have absolutely no experience, expertise or knowledge of what they are talking about.
- Insurance salesmen who become "consultants" because they couldn't sell their way out of a paper bag.
- Real estate agents who suddenly become consultants and "experts" in some other niche in real estate—like wholesaling, FSBO's, REO, "investors," because they almost starved to death as a real estate agent.

### **You've seen them: they all come and go.**

To succeed as a writer, speaker, consultant, coach, you need to know at least three things:

- (1.) The ability to write, speak, consult, or coach, and
- (2.) Something to write, speak, consult, or coach about.
- (3.) Market, promote, and sell yourself.

That seems logical, right? I mean, come on! Even job hunters who write their resumes have to have those qualifications or they'll get laughed out of the interview!

To be fair, you also need to know how to (3.) market, promote, and sell yourself. Sadly, though, a lot of people don't.

Lots of people have (1.) and (3.) but too many lack (2.) — something to write about.



Dr. Joe Vitale, author of several books and newsletters on copy writing and "hypnotic" marketing has a specialized knowledge that will always produce a wealthy stream of income. I doubt, very seriously, he'll ever go broke. I know him personally and I've been to his house, and I've seen a few of the cars he writes about, and I own just about every book he's ever written. So, I can attest to the man's expertise: he ***knows what he's talking about***.

The best way to gain this knowledge is to "take action" and actually practice your craft, or—at least—work on developing your chosen skill or specialized field.

Before Joe became successful as a writer and author, he had spent several years in Houston, Texas... homeless! He painfully admits this in some of his speaking engagements and some of his articles. But he always knew that he wanted to become a successful (and wealthy) writer and author.

So, what did he do? He wrote, he published, and he eventually got back up on his feet and became wealthy.

**In short: he took action on his dreams.**

Some wannabe gurus will NEVER become wealthy because they're just "full of it." (*You know what I mean: I don't need to elaborate.*) They will never be anything of consequence, because they will never take action.

Does that sound familiar? Do you know some people like that?

They'll never become the "master" of anything because they won't spend the time (and work) to develop the expertise in their field of endeavor. They would rather go after the "quick buck" and hire a ghost writer to do the work for them, which by the way, the ghost writer knows little to nothing about either.

They are the proverbial "Jack-of-All-Trades" but a "Master of None."

They will read about a certain field, maybe even study it a little bit, but they will never actually participate in it and learn it... at least, not enough to become proficient.

What is strange about all this is that they will work a day job, max out their credit cards by paying someone else to do the work for them that they need to be doing, all the while going broke! And then they try to **convince** you that they're rich.

They will always be a "ne'er-do-well" and will eventually go back to that day job they love to hate. Very few of them will ever make anything of themselves, and if they do, well... God bless 'em! Because the odds are against them.

It's just basic human psychology...

**You see it all the time:** Just talk to them on the phone, or face to face for a while, and it will soon become clear (to you) that they're so "full of it" they can't even see it! Their vision is so myopic (clouded) by the BS behind their eyeballs, it affects their vision.

"*Book learnin*," as my grandfather used to say, is important, but "book learning" will only take you so far. There's just no substitute for real-world experience.

**And, there's the "rub" with a lot of people:** especially teenagers. If they don't have experience, they can't get a job. If they can't get a job, they won't get the experience.

**It's a "catch-22" situation for them.**

But, I digress...

I once heard a public speaker at a Toastmasters meeting tell a group of aspiring speakers to "*read books on their topics for an hour a day, every day, for a full year.*"

"*If you do, you'll be an expert on your topic and you will be qualified to teach it to others,*" he said.

To which I interrupted him and blurted out, "**No you won't!**" I know that I was probably rude for doing that, but somebody needed to burst this guy's bulbous ego. It was inflated larger than the bloodshot nose of an alcoholic politician, and equally delusional.

You would have thought I threw something putrid into the corporate punch bowl!

You might have "theoretical" knowledge of your topic. But you will lack the confidence and depth of knowledge to deliver a convincing speech if you don't have the experience (and expertise) to back it up.

**People aren't stupid: they can tell when you're "blowing smoke."**

You only get experience as a public speaker by getting up and making some public speaking deliveries. You only get the experience by learning the nuances of speaking, and by using changes in the tone of your voice, using facial expressions to make a point, etc. You only get that from actual experience. You don't get it by "thinking it" into existence. It just doesn't work that way.

You can sit around on your tuchus all day long in the lotus position and “ohm” yourself silly, and come out grinning like a rat eating a bag of Cheetos. But when your delusion sets in, and you don't make any money, and bills are piling up, you're going to be as mad as a hungry vampire in a mannequin warehouse!

**Same thing with writing, public speaking... or consulting.**

To become a proficient writer, you have to spend a lot of time writing, writing, and writing some more. Then you have to proof-read what you've written. Then you have to edit what you've just finished proof-reading. Then you have to check, check, and re-check... and then check again!

I've been writing since elementary school, and really became more involved with it while in high school. But as I continued to write over the last 40 or 45 years, I've turned out a lot of crap, dull, and dry pieces.

The first book I wrote was a dud. It sold three copies.

***Wow! I'm really on my way to the New York Times Best Sellers! Ha-ha!***

Over the course of the last 10 years alone, I've probably written seven or eight thousand articles, reports and ebooks. Some of them have been good, but a lot of them have been total disasters. It not only took me a while to learn the *craft of writing* but it also took me a while to learn about my subject matter.

But, over the years, I have also learned how to become better. It's sort of like exercise: you've got to flex your muscles with weight resistance to make them stronger, and you have to do the same thing with writing... or anything else you want to be an "expert" in.

Another danger of "learning by reading" instead of "learning by doing" is that you may give the wrong advice.

A very wise old priest told me years ago that "*the learning comes in the 'doing.'*" He was right.

If you have no real-world experience and haven't tried the methods you teach, you have no way of knowing whether they will work or not. And in some cases, you can be taken to court over it and sued, or worse, suffer civil and/or criminal penalties!

### **Something to think about...**

I can't talk intelligently about the finer nuances of rocket science or brain surgery.

Why?

Because I've never study either one of them, nor do I have any "working knowledge" about them.

As a matter of fact, I've been out of the programming field for so long, that I haven't kept up with the advances in programming languages, and I couldn't call myself proficient any more.

Could I re-learn it? Yes. Why? Because I still have the "more than basic" knowledge about logic, algorithms, complex math and computers. But it would take me a while.

Besides, programming was just a way for me to "pay the bills" while I pursued my passion: *writing*.

Writing, speaking in public, and consulting about a topic you know "like the back of your hand" is also easier—and a lot more fun—than trying to bull-shoot your way through it. When you're a bona fide expert, your reports, articles, books and ebooks will show it. Any other information products you put together will always ring true to your customers. The way you "come across" in your writing will be genuine, realistic, and believable.

Like I said: people aren't stupid. And they can smell bullcrap ***a LONG WAY OFF!***

In addition, your customers, prospects and fans will recognize and praise your genuine knowledge and expertise, giving a big boost to your self-esteem. If they smell BS, I can guarantee you that they will pillory you on the forums and blogs all over the world! (Trust me on this one: it's already happened to far too many people besides me.)

Being a true expert will put you ahead of your competitors, who know the topic only through second-hand research or minimal real-world experience. Being a real expert in your field of knowledge will, indeed, give you that "edge" —both in the quality of your products and services and the effectiveness of your marketing.

In short: it all starts with knowing what you're talking about. Try to "blow smoke" up someone's backside, and they'll know it. Where there's smoke, there's fire. Where there's the stench of feces, there's a "pile of it" close by.

Don't let that pile of crap be you, your writing, your consulting, or your public speaking.





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