

Ten Words

by
Jeremy Waite



A book about big ideas, small words and short sentences.



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To emphasise the point that anyone can (and should) write a book, I have written, edited, designed and formatted this entire book myself. I created the whole thing in 100 days and posted a photo of the progress each day on Instagram @JeremyWaite from 22nd March 2017. Since I have taken this approach to writing and publishing Ten Words, I must point out that **all the opinions, thoughts and comments expressed in this book are purely my own, and do not in any way represent that of my employer.** I am not trying to champion any particular brand or cause and I have accepted no money or incentives from any of the brands that feature in this book. This approach, I hope, will inspire others to write books of their own, but will also allow you the reader to forgive me any shortcomings in my grammar or the quality of my writing!

Regarding the people and brands that I have chosen to write about, I have tried to be fair and respectful at all times ~ and have carefully verified any facts, figures and statistics I have used. If any person, marketing team or brand owner feels that I have been in any way unfair, or infringed in any way (in full or in part) any of their intellectual property (including logo usage) please email me JeremyWaite@Me.com and I will be happy to rectify any amendments or inaccuracies immediately, and correct them for any further printings. Thanks for reading this small, but important print.

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--- * ---

"If you can't state your position
in less than eight words you don't
have a position,,.

SETH GODIN

--- * ---

"Life is short. Act accordingly,,.

JACK NICHOLSON

--- * ---

"Ten word answers can kill you in
politics. They're the tip of the sword,,.

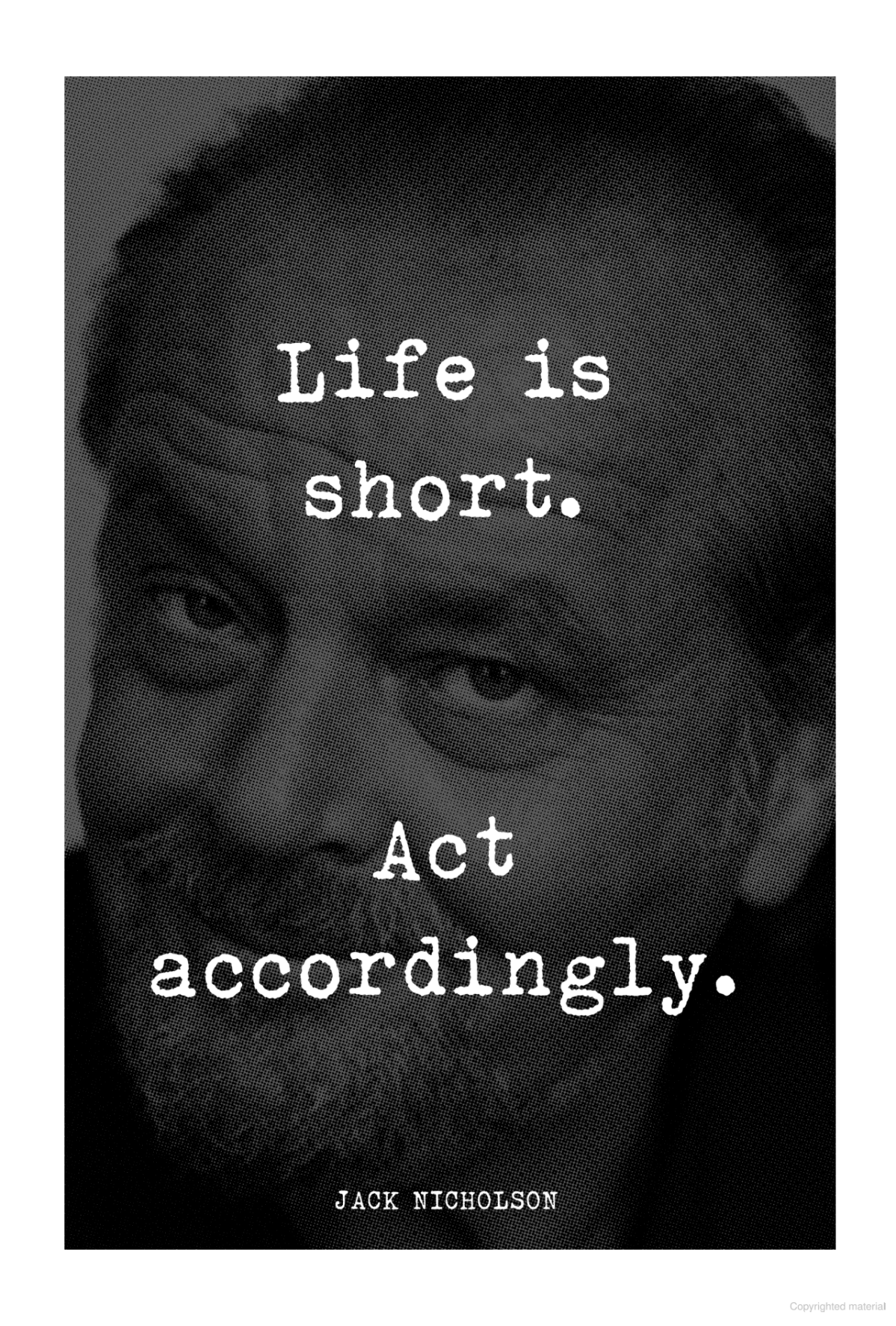
PRESIDENT BARTLET

--- * ---

"We must tell our stories as fast and
as compellingly as possible,,.

PRESIDENT UNDERWOOD

--- * ---



Life is
short.

Act
accordingly.

JACK NICHOLSON

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a computer keyboard, showing the keys in a dark, almost black, environment. The text is overlaid in a white, monospaced font, centered on the keyboard. The text reads: "Since 2008
Twitter has
encouraged me
to tell short
stories in 140
characters...".

Since 2008
Twitter has
encouraged me
to tell short
stories in 140
characters...

... so I'd like
to try and
inspire you
with 140
characters.

140 CHARACTERS



WILL.I.A.M ADAMS



ANGELA AHRENDTS



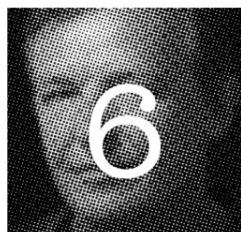
JESSICA ALBA



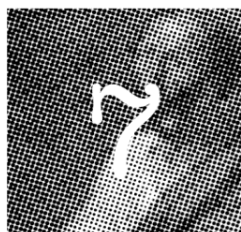
WOODY ALLEN



HANS CHRISTIAN
ANDERSEN



CHRIS ANDERSON



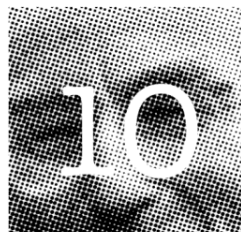
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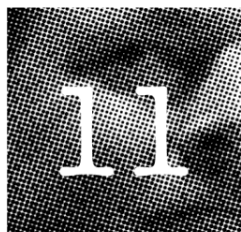
P.T. BARNUM



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PETER BENENSON



MARC BENIOFF



TIM BERNERS-LEE



JEFF BEZOS



MICHAEL BLOOMBERG



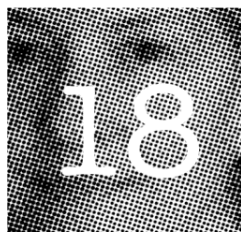
BONO



DAVE BRAILSFORD



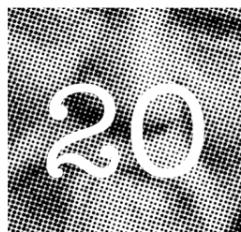
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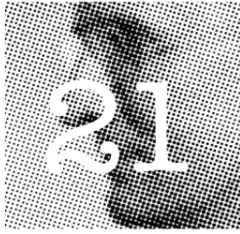
BRENE BROWN



THOMAS BURBERRY



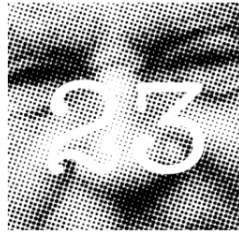
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DALE CARNEGIE



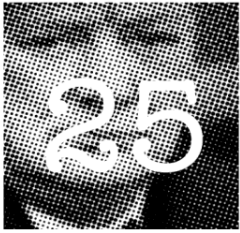
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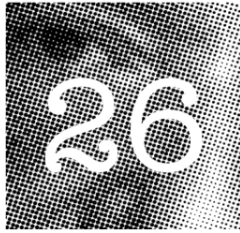
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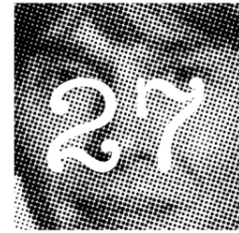
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PAULO COELHO



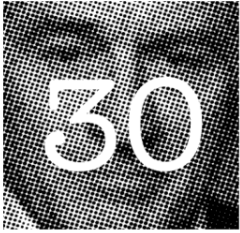
BRIAN COX



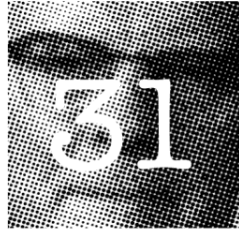
MARIE CURIE



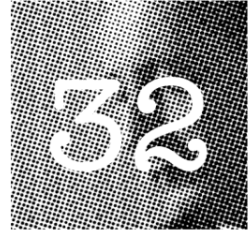
MILES DAVIS



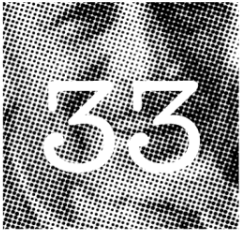
ROBERT De NIRO



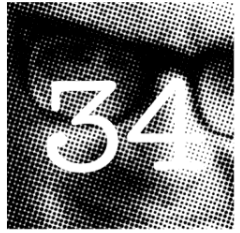
W. EDWARDS DEMING



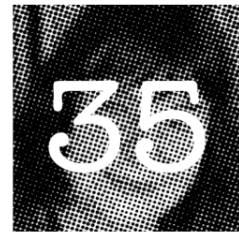
CHRISTIAN DIOR



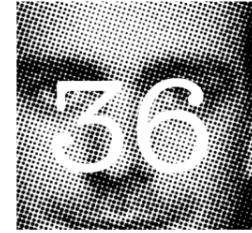
WALT DISNEY



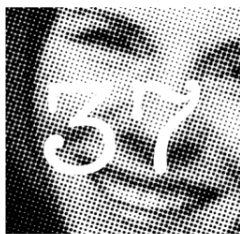
CORY DOCTOROW



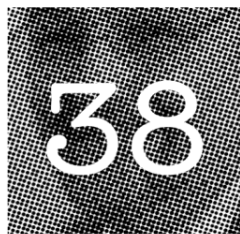
JULIA DONALDSON



JACK DORSEY



NANCY DUARTE



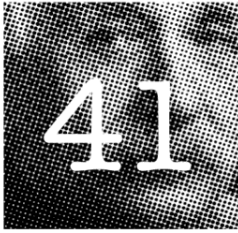
ROBIN DUNBAR



BOB DYLAN



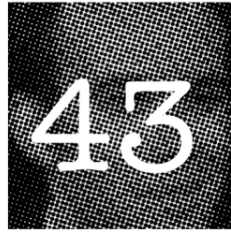
THOMAS EDISON



ALBERT EINSTEIN



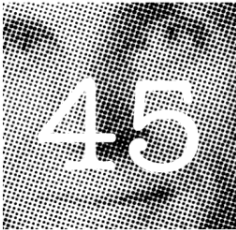
JIMMY FALLON



JON FAVREAU



TIM FERRISS



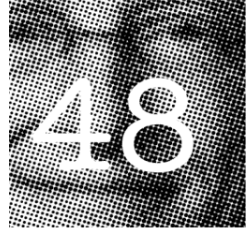
HENRY FORD



TOM FORD



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



BILL GATES



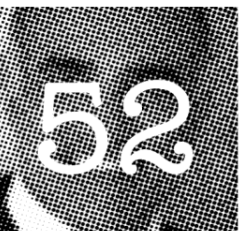
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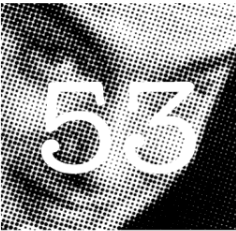
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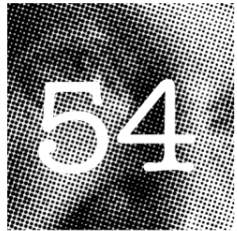
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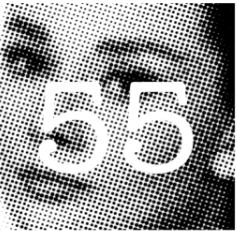
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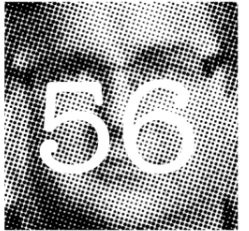
TOM HANKS



TINKER HATFIELD



AUDREY HEPBURN



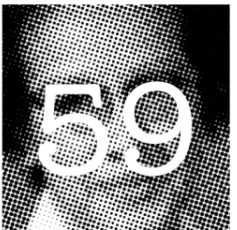
REID HOFFMAN



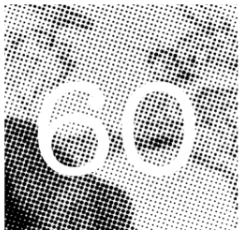
GRACE HOPPER



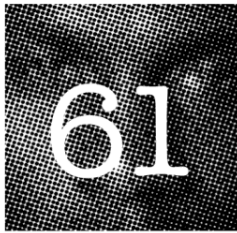
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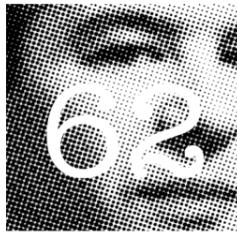
KATHERINE JOHNSON



CHARLES "CHUCK,"
JONES



MICHAEL JORDAN



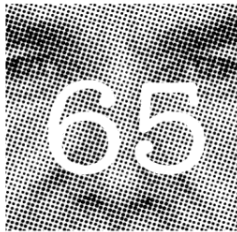
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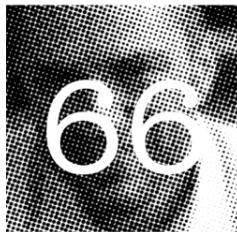
KEVIN KELLY



JOHN F. KENNEDY



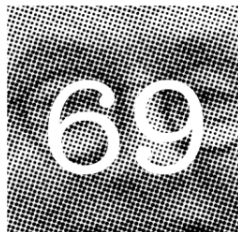
JEFF KOONS



JAN KOUM



HEDY LAMAR



JOHN LASSETER



ESTEE LAUDER



JOHN LENNON



ABRAHAM LINCOLN



ADA LOVELACE



JACK MA



JOHN MACKAY



JOHN C. MAXWELL



LEE ALEXANDER
McQUEEN



TAMARA MELLON



MARILYN MONROE



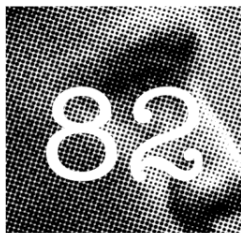
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BLAKE MYCOSKIE



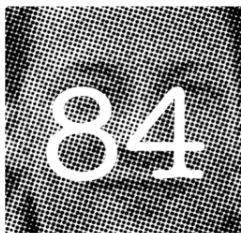
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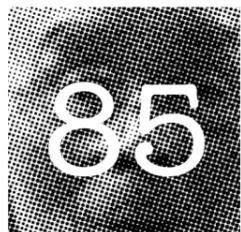
BARACK OBAMA



DAVID OGILVY



JAMIE OLIVER



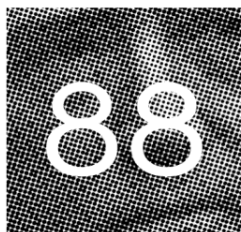
JIRO ONO



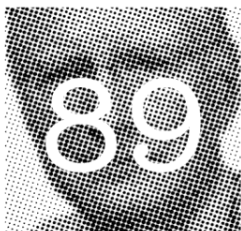
GEORGE ORWELL



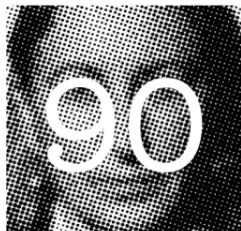
JOEL OSTEEN



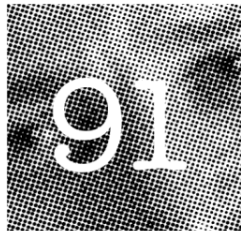
GEORGE S. PATTON



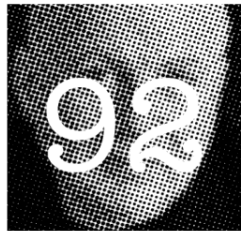
TOM PETERS



MIUCCIA PRADA



TONY ROBBINS



KEVIN ROBERTS



GINNI ROMETTY



J.K. ROWLING



BABE RUTH



SHERYL SANDBERG



CHARLES SCHULTZ



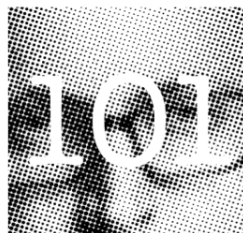
JERRY SEINFELD



RICARDO SEMLER



JASON SILVA



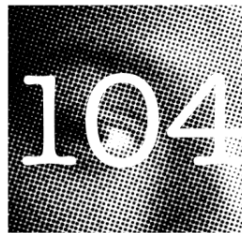
NATE SILVER



RAF SIMONS



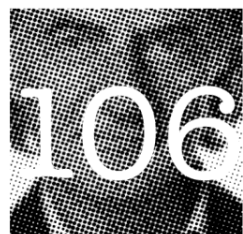
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WILL SMITH



PATTI SMITH



PAUL SMITH



THEODORE SORENSEN



AARON SORKIN



KEVIN SPACEY



EVAN SPIEGEL



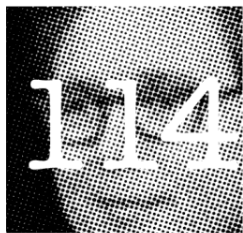
STEVEN SPIELBERG



ANDREW STANTON



JON STEWART



BIZ STONE



LEVI STRAUSS



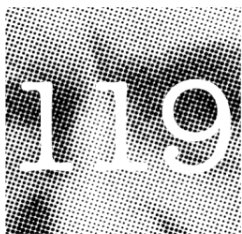
VALENTINA TERESHKOVA



PETER THIEL



ALAN TURING



MARK TWAIN



GARY VAYNERCHUK



CEDRIC VILLANI



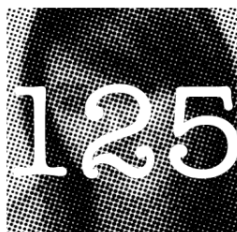
DITA VON TEESE



JEREMY WAITE



JOHNNIE WALKER



YUJA WANG



ANDY WARHOL



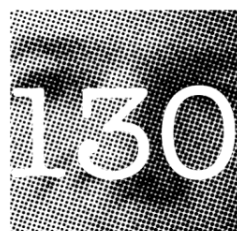
THOMAS J. WATSON Sr



BILL WATTERSON



JOSIAH WEDGWOOD



ERIC WEINSTEIN



ORSON WELLES



MAE WEST



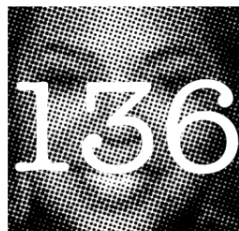
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ROBIN WILLIAMS



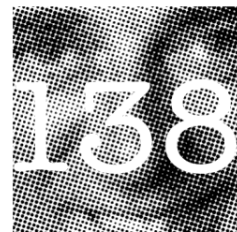
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OPRAH WINFREY



ANNA WINTOUR



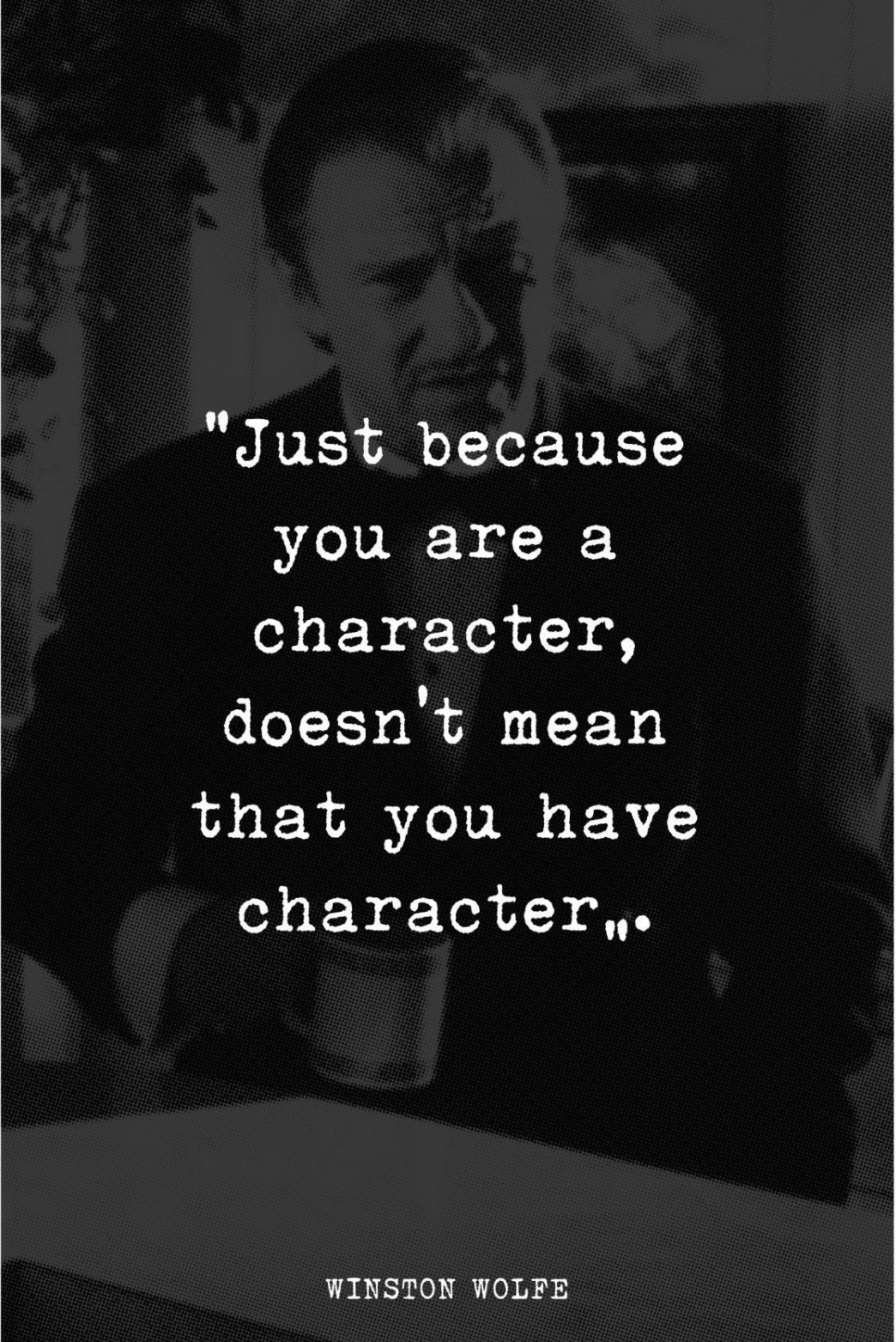
TERRY WOGAN



ZIG ZIGLAR



MARK ZUCKERBERG



"Just because
you are a
character,
doesn't mean
that you have
character.."

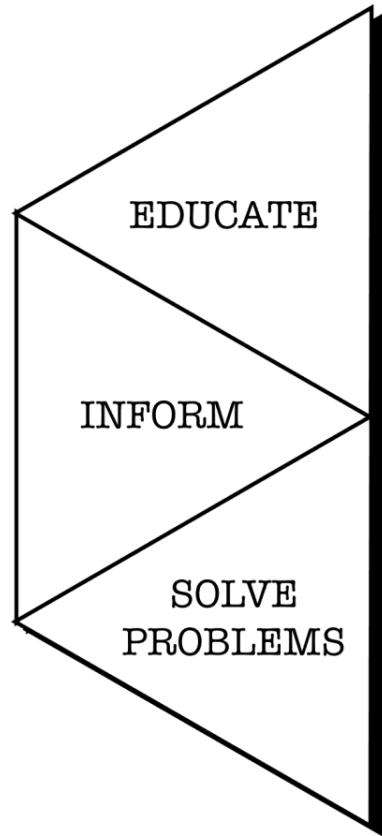
WINSTON WOLFE

Attributes of a Story(teller).

When I first started working with Facebook commercially in 2010 they had just launched their brand platform. I was eager to build engaging brand pages on this new platform, so I started to learn everything I could about why people shared things on social media, what got shared the most and how it worked. The two things that I discovered continue to shape the way that I think about people and content today. The first thing I learned was that the most engaging social content revolves around what Facebook *likes* to call the four *passion pillars*:

1. Music
2. Fashion
3. Film / TV
4. Sport

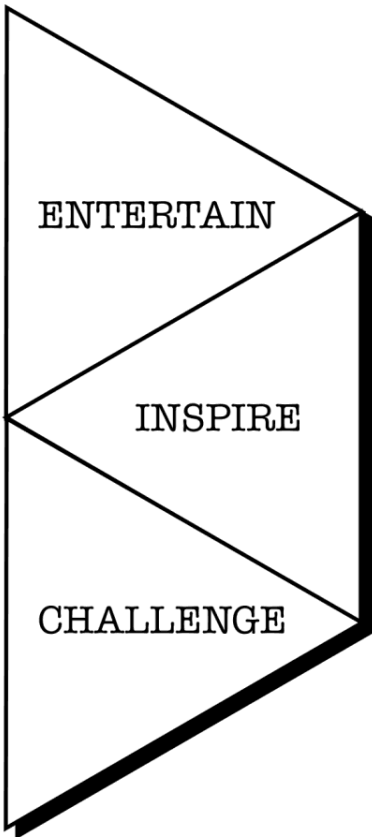
With America's *Tweeter-in-Chief* posting daily sound-bite manifestos we should now probably add politics to that list as well, but for the most part, these are the brand categories that get shared the fastest. As I pondered these pillars, a wonderful thing happened. When I started to examine Facebook's most successful content within those categories. I discovered that in the majority of cases, the most engaging content did one (or more) of just six things. Three of them spoke to the heart (using emotion) and three of them appealed to the head (using logic). Brands are emotional and living entities. So when I understood that people engage with content and make important decisions with their hearts and then justify them with their heads, I knew I was on to something*.



If you work in marketing or have any responsibility for creating, selling or distributing content that you want people to engage with and share, you might find that plotting your own content on a chart laid out like this is a very useful exercise. It's a fascinating process that helps you to see where the gaps in your content strategy are.

For the
HEAD

* (I wrote 100,000 words on this topic in a previous book called "From Survival to Significance" which formed some of the research for *Ten Words*).



For the
HEART

During the process of writing *Ten Words*, I made the connection that the attributes of the most engaging people aren't all that different from the most engaging content. It's not just about their *Ten Words*, it's about how and why they said them. This book includes many people from the world of music, TV, fashion, film and sport and I find it fascinating that the attributes which make us love each of these people can also be defined by one of these six characteristics:

For the Head

EDUCATE – *"The Teachers"*

- Chris Anderson
- Professor Brian Cox
- Cedric Villani

INFORM – *"The Presenters"*

- Nate Silver
- W. Edwards Deming
- Robin Dunbar

SOLVE PROBLEMS – *"The Innovators"*

- Will.I.Am
- Thomas Edison
- Thomas Burberry

For the Heart

ENTERTAIN – *"The Entertainers"*

- Bono
- Kevin Spacey
- Aaron Sorkin

INSPIRE – *"The Leaders"*

- Marc Benioff
- Sir Richard Branson
- Michael Bloomberg

CHALLENGE – *"The Preachers"*

- Joel Osteen
- Simon Sinek
- Tony Robbins

Sorry I wrote you
such a long ~~letter~~
sentence...

Why I Wrote Ten Words.

When I started my career as a marketer over twenty years ago, every business book that I read for inspiration or advice told me that I needed to have an “elevator pitch” – a short but powerful statement that explained in a clear and concise manner exactly what it was that I did. As a marketer, it was also my job to help other people find and write their own elevator pitches. A task much easier said than done. Some of the companies I worked with couldn’t understand why it took me so long to write these short statements for them. I tried to explain how it was much easier to write a long wordy mission statement than it was to craft a good elevator pitch. Some people got it. Many didn’t. And I hardly ever got paid for the actual amount of time it took me to write them. It wasn’t long before I started to resent the lack of respect that some people had for this difficult process, because putting a price on a short sentence is hard. *Really* hard. It’s like searching for a good idea for a new advertising campaign. Sometimes you have to slave away for weeks before you come up with something meaningful. Other times the idea mysteriously pops into your head unannounced at 3am in the morning, when you’re on your way home from a heavy night out.

I always struggled to put a price on that process, because the best statements I came up with often seemed so obvious once I wrote them down. I sometimes felt guilty for charging for fifty hours work to produce

what looked like a simple sentence or two that could have been written on a napkin during an afternoon in the pub. Simplifying complexity is hard work.

Ten years later, I realised my dream of founding a company when I set up a branding consultancy in Manchester in the north of England. Almost immediately I was fortunate to win a round of investment when I stumbled upon a prominent local businessman who liked my ideas. Our first meeting was in the lobby of a gorgeous hotel. I was quite nervous as I’d never been courted by an investor before. He sat me down, ordered us a coffee and tried to lull me into a false sense of security with some small talk before hitting me with the one question he suggested the future of my business (and our relationship) depended upon...

“So Jeremy, what’s your elevator pitch?”

I remember bumbling a few words that were almost coherent, which explained to him how I wanted to build a “*relationship marketing agency*” that inspired brands with big ideas, small words and short sentences. I cringe thinking back to how naively I pitched my business, but miraculously it worked, and we were soon building an agency called *Juicy* with offices in Manchester, Bradford and London.

That was 2005.

Today, many things *have* changed, but some things have not changed at all. Advisors, banks, business authors and investors are *still* telling entrepreneurs and business leaders that they need an elevator pitch in order to pitch their purpose and their products.

But today, there's a problem.

Traditional elevator pitches don't work anymore.

The concept of an elevator pitch is good in principle. Conventional wisdom states that you basically have thirty seconds to describe what you do, why you do it, and why anyone should care. Nothing wrong with that in theory. The only problem today is that people don't have thirty seconds to listen to your pitch anymore. They sometimes don't even have twenty. In fact if you believe the research from some of today's top behavioural scientists and anthropologists, you'll find that the average person's attention span is now slightly less than that of a goldfish. That's somewhere between five and eight seconds. And based upon the speed at which the average person talks, that's roughly *ten words*.

Political speechwriter Jeremy Steffens has written many elevator pitches as a communications director to congressmen in the U.S. House of Representatives. Like any good marketer, Jeremy's brief was to write

speeches for his clients, with the purpose of distilling their big ideas and manifestos into short media-friendly sound bites. He once told me that the biggest challenge in today's political landscape is that ten minute speeches, no matter how well written they are, or how articulately they are delivered, are usually always reduced to ten second video clips or ten word headlines. JFK and Barack Obama understood this more than their opponents when they were running for president. Their communications teams broke down their key manifestos into sound bites that were the length of the average person's attention span at the time, but more of that later in the book. Some marketers believe that this isn't true, that the way we tell stories hasn't changed for centuries and we shouldn't submit to popular demand by being forced to craft shorter messages that suit a generation that likes to tell stories in swipes. The first part of that statement is true, but to those who are still convinced that thirty second elevator pitches and wordy mission statements *still* work, I offer you some advice from one of the world's best short story tellers,

"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so". Mark Twain

So, as I see it, we basically have ten words to describe *what* we do, *why* we do it and *why* anyone should care.

If this *is* true, our challenge therefore lies in not just reducing the amount of words we use in order to appeal to dwindling attention spans, but in delivering the same power found in a longer statement in a much shorter sentence, without diluting its impact. Being able to give a thirty second elevator pitch is quite a luxury these days and not actually that hard to deliver if you have practiced and rehearsed it. But conveying that same amount of purpose and emotion in *less than* ten seconds, or ten words, is *very* hard. The world has evolved, and as my friend and mentor Brian Solis likes to say,

“It’s no longer about survival of the fittest. It’s about survival of the fastest”.

That’s why I wrote this little book. I wanted to showcase some brilliant ten word statements, manifestos and philosophies from some of the people who have inspired me the most. People who I have either spoken about in some of my keynotes or who I have been lucky enough to work with. But the one thing I wanted to make sure I didn’t do was just create an interesting book of quotes that would no doubt look good on Instagram but probably end up as toilet reading! For *Ten Words* to be useful, I wanted to make sure that I showcased not just their ten word quotes (the world has enough books of quotations already – I think I own most of them), but I wanted to highlight some of the thinking behind their quotes. By giving some background, and

directing you to a place where you can dig deeper to find out more, it is my hope that their words might also encourage you to find ways of telling your own story as fast and as compellingly as possible. I have been careful to lay out each page as simply as possible, whilst also being mindful that business people have attention spans of around seventy five seconds (according to my friend at Google) when flicking through business books. This is why each page tells a short 250 word story, inspired by each ten word quote, which takes around seventy five seconds to read. That seems deep enough to provide some context, but short enough to communicate each of these big ideas and statements into bite sized chunks.

Ten word statements sound easy. That’s the beauty of them. But they’re incredibly difficult to put together. Over the last few years I’ve worked at Adobe, Salesforce, Facebook and IBM with some of the largest brands in the world, and if there is one thing that all the brands I have worked with have in common (with no exceptions), it’s that they all struggle to communicate their big ideas in small words and short sentences. One of my favourite writers and thinkers, the mathematician and theologian Blaise Pascal put it best when he said,

“Sorry I wrote you such a long letter, I didn’t have time to write a shorter one”.

I've been thinking about this whole concept of ten words – big ideas, small words and short sentences ever since I started my career. I have spent more hours than any sensible person should, getting lost in book shops searching for books about quotes, pitches, vintage advertising, storyboarding or generally any book that talks about simplifying complicated things. On the occasions that I have discovered such treasure I snapped it up, building a small library in the process. Some of the best books I have collected on these topics over the last twenty years are over one hundred years old. But of the many beautiful books that I have bought (which much to my wife's dismay are real books rather than digital versions), none of them have quite hit on the simplicity of ten words. It's a cliché that many reluctant authors mention, but this really was a case of "*if no one else has written this book maybe I should...*"

We all have interesting stories to tell, and while this all seemed very fascinating to me, I wasn't sure if it would be interesting to anyone else, and for that reason I was initially very reluctant to write it down, let alone piece everything together to form a book. But I'm glad I did. Ten Words has changed the way that I think about many things, both personally and professionally and has inspired me to look beyond those Instagram-friendly ten words quotes, for a deeper meaning. Maybe *Ten Words* will also challenge you in some small way, who knows? I hope so. Anyway, thanks for picking it up. There are many things that you could be doing right now, but I'm honored that you chose to read this. Here's hoping that you'll enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Carpe Diem!


Jeremy



<25 Words

Research conducted by the UK digital government department discovered that sentences longer than 25 words aren't accessible. According to their official guidelines, whenever you are communicating a message to the general public if you have sentences longer than 25 words, you must try to break them up or condense them. If you can't, make sure they're in plain English because when you write more, people understand less. GOV.UK went on to explain how people distrust jargon and that being clear and direct helps - as do shorter sentences. Writing guru Ann Wylie describes research showing that when average sentence length is 14 words, readers understand more than 90% of what they're reading. At 43 words, comprehension drops to less than 10%. Studies also show that sentences of around **Ten Words** are considered easy to read, while those of 21 words are fairly difficult. At 25 words, sentences become difficult, and 29 words or longer, very difficult.

Long sentences aren't just difficult for people who struggle with reading or have a cognitive disability like dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. They're also a problem for highly literate people with extensive vocabularies. This is partly because people tend to scan, no read. In fact, most people only read around 25% of what's on a page. This means it's important to get information across quickly. Long, complicated sentences also force readers to slow down and work harder to understand what they're reading. This isn't something people want to do, even if they're familiar with the subject or language you're using. It's easy to assume this isn't the case for highly literate readers or people considered experts. Yet the more educated a person is, and the more specialist their knowledge, the more they want it in plain English. These people often have the least time and most to read. Which means they just want to understand your point and move on, quickly.



"Since when did
marketing
become the
'**Make It Pretty**'
department?,"

(Why can't it be the '**Make It Better**' department?)

What Inspired Ten Words?

Early in 2017 a number of very curious things happened which left me in no doubt that I was supposed to put all these thoughts together and write *Ten Words* myself. Every so often the stars seem to align and everything seems to slot into place. It doesn't happen very often, but when it does it's very inconvenient, and that's pretty much what happened to me. I had no plans to write a book, in fact I didn't even have any time to write a book. I'd recently become the father of two gorgeous twins (Petra and Mathilda) and had started a new job at IBM, but despite feeling like I already didn't have enough hours in each day, six seemingly random events in one week conspired against me, forcing me to think that I needed to find the time to put Ten Words onto paper. In order of appearance, these are the six happy coincidences which occurred to me between Friday, January 20th 2017 and 27th January. Serendipity at its finest.

1. I studied a research paper on neuroscience from Microsoft about the evolution of attention spans. Over the last fifty years, our attention span for media soundbites had dropped from just over thirty seconds to below ten seconds.
2. I analysed President Trump's inauguration speech and noticed many ten word answers. I also discovered that Trump's 1,433 word inauguration speech delivered in just over 16 minutes was equivalent to roughly ten words being delivered every 8 seconds.
3. I read a Seth Godin book which spoke about 8-10 word mission statements.
4. I found an old quote by Jack Nicholson about telling short stories in an old notebook which read, "*Life is short. Act accordingly*".
5. That week I was watching season four of the *West Wing* and unbeknown to me, the episode I was on, Episode 6 called "*Game On*" was an entire episode devoted to the phrase "*ten word answers*" which are used in political debates.
6. I wrote a personal business plan trying to describe my job simply to other IBMers. Many of my sentences were between nine and eleven words long.

Fascinated by all these coincidences I turned to the web to search for "*ten words*" and soon discovered a wonderful Twitter account called [@TenWordsPoem](#). Never before had I seen such dramatic, sad, inspiring, thought provoking and often heart wrenching stories told in exactly ten words. I haven't approached the author for more context or background surrounding their tweets because I like the mystery that surrounds them. Poems, as with mission statements and elevator pitches, become more difficult to write the shorter they become. But as I am attempting to prove in this book, short sentences are far more memorable because they carry more emotional weight.

Here's a small selection of the tweets I saw when I read a few posts from @TenWordsPoem:

- *"I wonder what weight this fragile thread of connection carries".*
- *"The most selfish thing I'll ever do is love you".*
- *"I'm cursed with a heart that never ceases to love".*
- *"You're like the rain. An old friend with bad timing".*
- *"He spoke to her and then the world fell apart".*
- *"Your light will encapsulate entire cities once you let it".*
- *"The stars were never meant to find you a home".*
- *"What if no one else likes my sort of crazy?"*
- *"Trust me, I'm OK. I just wish I was dead".*
- *"I fell asleep chasing dreams and woke up an optimist".*

... and finally, my favourite,

"You can change the world just by sharing your story".

The entire twitter feed of @TenWordsPoem was full of stories and powerful emotions made up of small words. I read hundreds of them, captivated by the depth of emotions that came across in these short sentences. This is what marketing is supposed to be about. Communicating words and messages that reach into your heart, and make you feel something when you hear them, (and hopefully) inspire you to do something, buy something or share something with the people you care about. I was eager not to over-think this whole thing as I usually do, but it became apparent to me that this was a book which I needed to write as much as any audience needed to read it. It would have been easy to ignore these seemingly unconnected events and write them off as curious coincidences, but the more I thought about it, the more surreal the connection between these events seemed to me. All a bit too much of a co-incidence? Maybe. Maybe not. But what did I have to lose? I started to jot some ideas down as I looked to explore whether this had the potential to be a book instead of just a really long blog post!

No sooner had I received this epiphany and started to join the dots between these events, than I remembered a moment which shaped my career, and changed the way that I thought about marketing. It was a moment just like any other where I found myself in a boardroom discussing mission statements and campaign slogans, but unlike any meeting I had been involved in before, this meeting took a very different turn which nobody in the room expected. It was a couple of years ago and I was with a CEO who was assessing the value of his marketing team (or lack of).

He had two teams. They had both produced good work by any standard. One had increased profits by 4%, the other had increased loyalty by 6% and reduced 'customer churn' by 7%. One focused on success, the other focused on influence. Both teams were successful by any marketing metric, but the CEO wasn't happy. He didn't feel like he was *making a difference*. He explained to those gathered in the room how he joined the company in order to inspire people and "*move the industry forward*". From his perspective, increasing profits, shareholder dividends and customer retention was not moving the company (or the industry forward), it was just doing good business. And then from nowhere, without any invitation or prior warning, a junior marketing executive stood up and walked over to a whiteboard which was sitting in the corner of the boardroom. This wasn't the kind of boardroom where you did that kind of thing. Especially not if you are a junior marketing assistant. It wasn't always a friendly environment and speaking out of turn could often have very career limiting implications. Still, this marketing manager only a few years out of university strolled across the room and without saying a word, he wrote down the figures from both teams of the whiteboard.

The marker didn't have much ink left and the squeak of him writing in silence, without anyone knowing what he was doing, was both awkward, bizarre and a bit surreal. The other executives looked at each other with raised eyebrows. On one side of the board he wrote the ROI (return on investment) figure taken from the profitable campaign that was being reviewed. On the other side he wrote the NPS (net promoter) score which showed an increase in customer lifetime value (a result of higher customer satisfaction from improving customer service during the campaign). The company had made \$9M as a direct result of this marketing campaign. It was a campaign that would likely win some industry awards where team members would toast each others marketing prowess over some bottles of bubbles in a posh hotel somewhere. As it was, they were in a boardroom being challenged by their chief executive to find a third way. And that was when our junior marketing hero dropped his bombshell...

"\$9M is a success. \$8M would still be a success. But giving \$1M to start a foundation that serves under-privileged kids would be significant. That kind of thinking would change the industry".*

Crossing out the \$9M figure, he changed it to \$8M and added a third column with \$1M at the top. Over the next 3 minutes, he explained how \$8M profit was still a strong number and the team would still be rock stars and all get their bonus. But what if they did something different? How incredible might it be if the profits from the campaign created the opportunity to fund a new foundation, such as educating teenage girls in Western Africa about health and fitness?

* (Not exactly ten words, but this encapsulates everything I want *Ten Words* to stand for. BIG ideas, delivered with small words in short sentences).

The idea for this initiative was not a new one, but nobody had found a way to pay for it, or a way to justify the expense. Our friend explained how this wasn't an expense, it was an *investment* from the marketing team. My jaw dropped. This twenty something executive had just, in one moment, raised \$1M for a cause close to his heart and one relevant to the company, and aligned it to the vision of the CEO and the values of the business. The CEO smiled. He asked the senior marketers in the room if this was their idea. It wasn't. He asked why wasn't it. Needless to say the junior exec got a significant promotion, went on to build a team of his own and continues to be a meaningful marketer to this day. The beauty of this story is not just that marketers can make a real difference, but the fact that such a great idea came from the most junior person in the room. It was in that moment when I realised that all marketers can (and should) be held to a higher purpose. Of course they should be expected to write clever copy and deliver campaigns which are commercial successes. Of course marketers should build profitable or loyal relationships, but when they do their jobs well, as our friend very much did in this instance, marketers can build meaningful relationships as well. A very clever marketer once said, "*Since when did marketing become the 'make it pretty' department?*" I heard it was attributed to a CMO at Hewlett-Packard but couldn't find any proof. It doesn't matter, it's a great quote. But wouldn't it be better if marketing was the '*make it better*' department? That's a business unit I can proudly stand behind, and that's the kind of thinking I wanted to showcase in this book. Words that don't just sound pretty, but words which make a difference.

So, what you will find over the next few pages is not just an eclectic mix of influential people, but many marketers and storytellers who changed their industry in some way, inspiring those around them to think differently. The book includes scientists, astronauts, politicians, film directors, actors, comedians and fashion designers. Some of the people you will meet on these pages, like Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs, Peter Thiel, Josiah Wedgwood, John Mackey, Vivienne Westwood and Henry Ford, all have *ten word* sentences to give their lives purpose, stand for something or change their industry in some way. Others became famous for ten word quotes and may have never intentionally thought to communicate their visions and big ideas in small words and short sentences. Either way, I hope that the collection of stories which I have curated in ten words, challenge you to think differently about your life and your career. Each of their stories can be read in less than two minutes (the average attention span of a busy executive) so hopefully, no matter how busy you are, you will find the time to dip in and out of this book and find yourself being inspired by some wonderful people. It is my hope that their stories don't just inspire you to do something cool and profitable, but they encourage you to do something meaningful as well.

THE REVOLUTION WILL BE LED BY A 12-YEAR-OLD GIRL

IF YOU WANT TO END POVERTY AND HELP THE DEVELOPING WORLD, THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO IS INVEST TIME, ENERGY, AND FUNDING INTO ADOLESCENT GIRLS. IT'S CALLED THE GIRL EFFECT, BECAUSE GIRLS ARE UNIQUELY CAPABLE OF INVESTING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND MAKING THE WORLD BETTER. BUT HERE ARE 10 THINGS THAT STAND IN THEIR WAY:

1 LET'S SEE SOME ID
Without a birth certificate or an ID, a girl in the developing world doesn't know and can't prove her age, protect herself from child marriage, open a bank account, vote, or eventually get a job. That makes it hard to save the world.

2 ILLITERACY DOES NOT LOOK GOOD ON A RESUME...
70% of the world's out-of-school children are girls. Girls deserve better. They deserve quality education and the safe environments and support that allow them to get to school on time and stay there through adolescence.

4 THE FACE OF HIV IS INCREASINGLY YOUNG AND FEMALE
When girls are educated about HIV, they stand a better chance of protecting themselves. But education is not enough. Girls need to be empowered and supported to make their own choices.

3 ...AND PREGNANCY DOESN'T LOOK GOOD ON A LITTLE GIRL
Child marriages are the norm in many cultures where girls' bodies aren't considered their own property. Pregnancy is the leading cause of death for girls 15-18 years old. Girls have a right to be able to protect their health and their bodies.

5 A NICE PLACE TO WORK WOULD BE NICE
If girls have the skills for safe and decent work, if they understand their rights, if they are financially literate and considered for nontraditional jobs at an appropriate age, if they get their fair share of training and internships, they will be armed and ready for economic independence.

6 THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL, BUT IT'S GOING TO YOUR BROTHER
LESTIAN TWO CENTS of every international aid dollar is directed to girls. And yet when a girl has resources, she will reinvest them in her community, a much lighter share than a boy would. If the goal is health, wealth, and stability for all, a girl is the best investment.

7 ADOLESCENT GIRLS AREN'T JUST "FUTURE WOMEN"
They're girls. They deserve their own category. They need to be a distinct group when we talk about aid, education, sports, civic participation, health, and economics. Yes, they are future mothers. But they actually live in the present.

8 LAWS WERE MADE TO BE ENFORCED
Girls need advocates to write, speak up, lobby, and work to enforce good laws and change discriminatory policies.

9 SHE SHOULD BE A STATISTIC
We won't know how to help girls until we know what's going on with them. Hey, all you governments and NGOs and social scientists: You're accountable! We need an annual girl report card for every country so we can keep track of which girls are thriving and which girls are not.

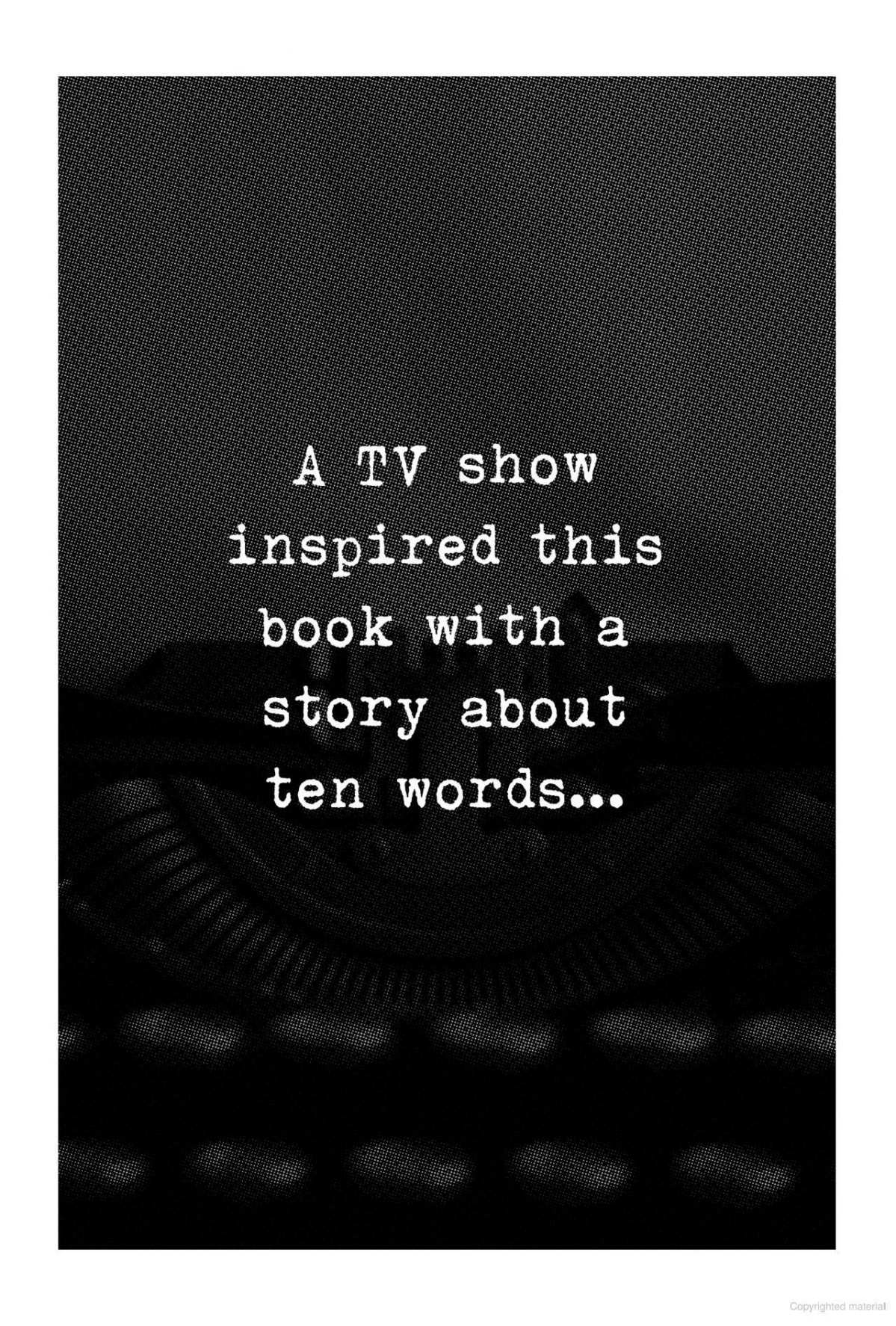
10 EVERYONE GETS ON BOARD OR WE'RE ALL OVERBOARD
Boys, girls, moms, dads. If we don't all rally to support girls, nothing is going to change. Not for them, and not for us. Change starts with you. So get going.



girlieffect.org

Great example of a campaign driven by the marketing team at Nike who helped to re-allocate profits towards this meaningful project.

What's next?



A TV show
inspired this
book with a
story about
ten words...

--- The West Wing ---

“Game On” ~ Episode 6 Season 4
[Show ID: 73] Presidential Debate
Written by *Aaron Sorkin*
Directed by *Alex Graves*
First aired 30th October 2002

CUT TO: INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

MODERATOR ~ “Governor Ritchie, many economists have stated that the tax cut, which is centre piece of your economic agenda, could actually harm the economy. Is now really the time to cut taxes?”

RITCHIE ~ ”You bet it is. We need to cut taxes for one reason -- the American people know how to spend their money better than the federal government does”.

MODERATOR ~ “Mr. President, your rebutal”.

BARTLET “There it is”.

CUT TO: INT. SPIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

REPORTER MARK ~ “What the hell?”

C.J. ~ “He's got it”.

BARTLET [on TV] “That's the ten-word answer my staff's been looking for for two weeks.

There it is.

Ten-word answers can kill you in political campaigns.

They're the tip of the sword.

Here's my question: "What are the next ten words of your answer?" Your taxes are too high? So are mine.

Give me the next ten words. How are we going to do it? Give me ten after that, I'll drop out of the race right now.

Every once in a while... every once in a while, there's a day with an absolute right and an absolute wrong, but those days almost always include body counts. Other than that, there aren't very many unnuanced moments in leading a country that's way too big for ten words.

I'm the President of the United States, not the President of the people who agree with me. And by the way, if the left has a problem with that, they should vote for somebody else".

----- * -----

* As soon as I watched this episode, I knew that I had to write Ten Words. Despite the fact that this show aired 15 years ago, the message in this scene sums up perfectly the many things that are wrong with our governments, business leaders, politicians, journalists and marketers. Especially marketers. Whether it is a campaign headline, a manifesto pledge or an advertising slogan, putting anything into ten words is difficult. But finding the next ten words to back up your position, or the ten words after that to explain what you stand for - *that's* the real challenge.



The West Wing, Episode 6 Season 4 - "**Game On**" (Ten Words).





THE WEST WING

CREATED BY AARON SOBKIN

Some of the
companies I
most admire,
built their
brands upon
ten words.

For example...

The
world's leading
charity only
needs ten words
to explain its
purpose.

To create lasting
solutions to
poverty, hunger
and social
injustice.

(10 WORDS)

OXFAM

Oxfam is one of the world's leading providers of aid in humanitarian emergencies. In 2014–15, it supported more than 8 million people in crisis. Whenever and wherever there is a widespread threat to people's life and security, Oxfam will respond where it believes it can make a positive difference.



THE WORLD'S
**85 RICHEST
PEOPLE**
OWN THE SAME WEALTH
AS THE 3.5 BILLION
POOREST PEOPLE.



TOGETHER, WE CAN END
EXTREME INEQUALITY.
TOGETHER, WE CAN
EVEN IT UP.

JOIN US AT
WWW.OXFAM.ORG.UK/EVEN

**EVEN
IT UP**



The
world's fastest
growing tech
company is
'driven' by ten
words.

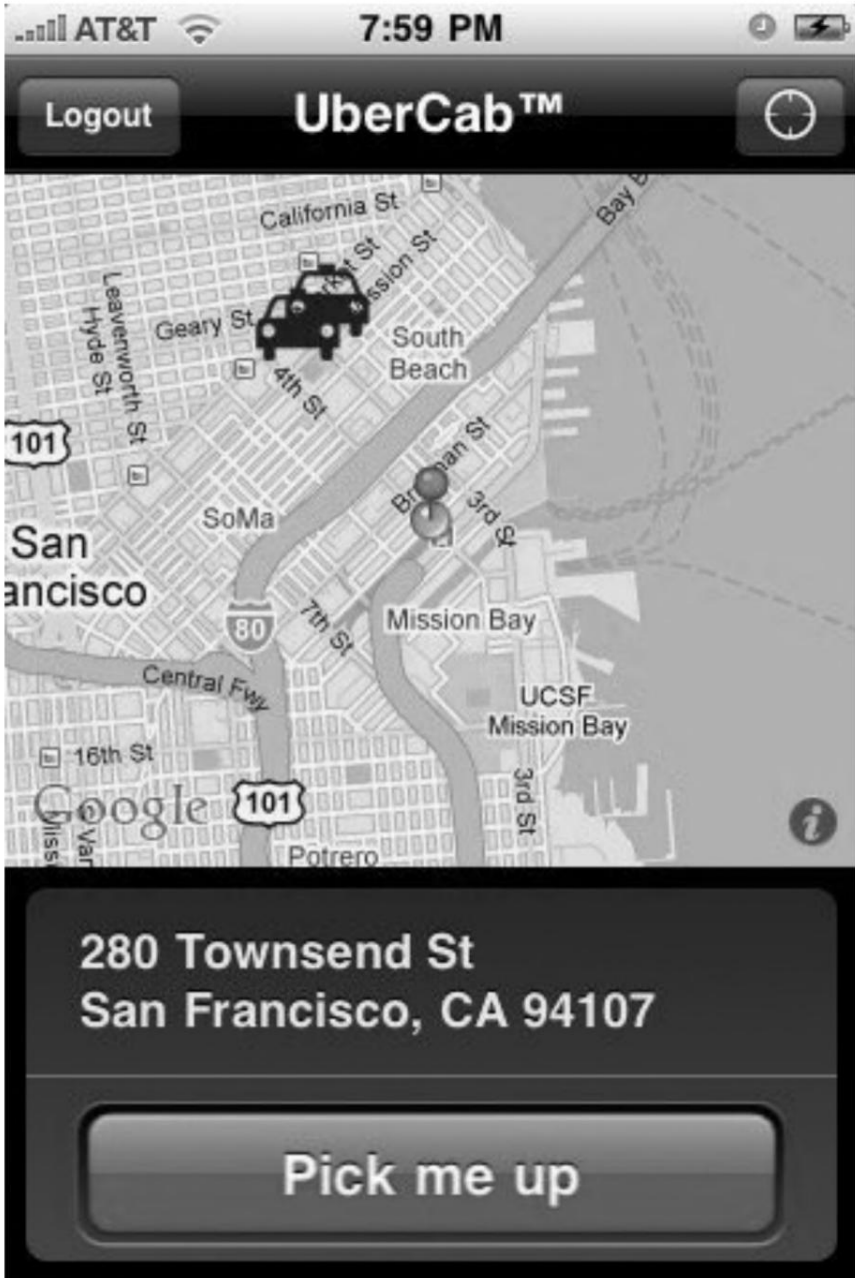
Provide
transportation
as reliable as
running water.
Everywhere.
For everyone.

(10 WORDS)

UBER

Founded on a Parisien street corner in 2008, Uber soon became the world's fastest growing tech company. With its aggressive growth strategy and a co-founder (ex-CEO Travis Kalanick) who who embraced litigation as part of it's business model, Uber openly admits to wanting to "destroy" the competition rather than compete with them. Their ethics (or lack of) have caught up with them recently, but there is still no doubt that they pioneered a new way of doing business.





This is the first screenshot from Uber co-founder Travis Kalanick's cellphone, when Uber only had two cars on the road. Today there are over one million. When Travis first launched under the name UberCab for 100 of his closest friends, they each had to text him for a code in order to request one of his S-Class Mercedes.

The world's
most valuable
brand was
built upon
ten words.

A computer
revolution is
starting.

We can't get
left behind.

(10 WORDS)

APPLE \$AAPL

Interbrand ranking:	1
Market Capitalisation:	\$693 Bn
Founded:	1975



The world's most valuable brand was founded in Steve Jobs parents garage in 1975 with \$1,350 from the sale of Jobs' VW and Wozniak's Hewlett-Packard calculator. The fear of missing out on a "revolution" and the opportunity to challenge IBM with Steve Jobs' marketing skills and Woz's engineering talent was all the motivation they needed.

When Steve Jobs returned to Apple in 1997 he needed a short sentence which inspired employees and re-ignited the brand, since it was just three months away from bankruptcy. After about thirty drafts, he came up with a fourteen word statement.

But he was Steve Jobs.

You're not.

You're only allowed ten...

We must
provide
relevant and
compelling
solutions that
customers can
only get from
Apple.

(14 WORDS)

Standing in front of the marketing team for the first time since returning to Apple, Jobs was frustrated that the marketing team of the world's most emotional company wasn't emotional anymore. "*The products suck. There is no sex in them anymore**" he said. Jobs then scribbled fourteen words on the whiteboard making sure that everyone in the room was in no doubt as to what Apple's new mission was going to be.

*(10 WORDS)



STEVE JOBS is the most influential CEO of all time. Returning to the company that he was fired from in 1997, Apple's cash reserves placed the company less than 3 months away from bankruptcy. It had too many products. Jobs canned most of them and set up a new engineering team to work on "*Project Purple*". That team invented the iPhone and within 14 years, Steve had turned Apple into the world's most valuable brand valuing the company at over \$750 Billion.





How I Wrote Ten Words.

If the West Wing inspired *why* I wrote this book, it was another show from my favourite screenwriter Aaron Sorkin that inspired *how* I wrote it. During an episode of The Newsroom, there is a scene which reaches a climax when the two main characters (Will McAvoy and Charlie Skinner), both journalists of the highest integrity, are discussing how they used to do the news differently. Desperate to cast off the restrictions that the network was placing on them in a race to increase ratings, Charlie turns to Will and says, *"In the old days we did the news well. You know how? We just decided to"*.

Ever since I first heard that line it has stayed with me, almost like a mantra in the back of my mind that reminds me to get things done and not procrastinate. Not everything needs an elaborate plan, an agent, an education, a certain qualification or somebody to give you permission. Sometimes you just need to decide to do something. That's pretty much what happened with this book. I had the inspiration from all the random events I described earlier, and I also had the motivation as I had just finished reading *The First 90 Days* by Michael Watkins, which spoke about how productive leaders (especially new presidents and prime ministers) make 90-100 day plans to get things done. The first one hundred days are more important than any other time in office as they lay the foundations for all the important things which need to get done.

During this time I was following my friend Julia Jackson @SouthernMonkey who posts a numbered photograph based upon a theme each day on Instagram. So, I not only made a 100 day plan to write a book, but inspired by her, I decided to post one photo on Instagram each day of my progress, in order to keep me honest and help motivate me to get it finished. Throughout those one hundred days I doubted myself many times, mostly whether or not anyone else would find this stuff interesting, but the process of writing *Ten Words* soon became so cathartic, that I soon stopped worrying what anybody else might think. You can see how I wrote *Ten Words* by looking back at the photographs I posted during those one hundred days (during March 12th and June 22nd) with a brief commentary on Instagram @JeremyWaite. It took a bit of discipline and juggling a job, a wife and my twins, but I still managed to write *Ten Words* in one hundred days. Those one hundred days were basically ten days of planning, ten days of research, seventy days of writing and ten days of editing. I did it as much to prove to myself that it could be done, as to challenge others that they could do the same. It's amazing what you can do when you put your mind to something that you *"just decided to"*.

***"Do what you can,
with what you have,
where you are"***.

Theodore Roosevelt

#TENWORDS

WILL.I.AM ADAMS

“Look at the world.
See the problem.
And solve it”.



Will.I.Am is passionate about teaching under-privileged kids to code. He had very few possessions and no computer growing up but didn't consider himself “poor”. He only realised he might be poor when he volunteered to help with a food drive, and discovered his friends delivering the food that they collected to his own house that evening.

READ: *Will.I.Am: The Unauthorized Biography*

WATCH: His keynote at Dreamforce 2015

FOLLOW: @IAmWill | @codeorg

There is a fine line between genius and madness. In Will.I.Am's case, it's often hard to tell the difference. One minute he is talking about a new technology he's discovered, the next he is rapping with words you've never heard before! I first met the Black Eyed Pea's megastar at a marketing conference in Atlanta. Listening to him speak with journalists, I could sense his frustration, because it seemed like as soon as he opened his mouth his mind was already racing towards an entirely different subject. He can appear rude to those who don't understand him, but he is just thinking about things a bit faster than the rest of us. He told a small group of us, *“I've got all this stuff in my head at the same time as I'm doing stuff and I don't know how to stop or slow down”*.

Will.I.Am lives in LA in the most technologically advanced bunker you can imagine. He calls it *“The Future”* because he enjoys saying *“Welcome to The Future”* when you arrive! It is here that he works on projects ranging from smart watches and voice recognition software, to streaming songs from the surface of Mars and designing for Lexus. Each of these projects is linked by his desire to *“invent the future”*. He has had his fair share of successes *and* failures but he refuses to spend time reminiscing. Instead he stays optimistic by relying on a one sentence philosophy, *“Let's stop worrying about the past and go invent the future...”*

WILL.I.AM ADAMS

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Tips for maximizing your interview time with will.i.am:

-Your access to The Future is for you alone (one person only). We regret that relatives, friends, interns and such cannot participate with you.

-Assume he will know exactly who you are and what you write about - no need to go into details about your outlet or personal background. He will also know that you will have seen a product demo prior to the interview. A member of the PR team will introduce you. Say hello, sit down and get started!

-Questions should be one sentence, straightforward questions. Refrain from editorializing about the subject/theme prior to asking a question that will clutter the conversation. Do not ask him to react to what other outlets have written about him in the past. If he asks you to repeat or restate a question, this indicates that you need to ask crisper, more direct questions.

-Have your list of questions in hand and keep an eye on it as the interview progresses. He will often answer multiple questions in one reply. Once you have captured the information, avoid asking questions that will require repeating the same information already shared.

-Start off with 1 - 2 warm up questions, and then get to the heart of what you really want to ask. Because he can sometimes give very lengthy responses, don't hold your most important questions until the end of your time allocation. Due to a tight rotation schedule, we will ask that journalists stick to time blocks as assigned for the day.

-If you need to get short answers to certain questions, bundle them in a "lightning round" toward the end of the interview, and be clear that one word, or very short answers are what you need. Fact Checking Basics:

Will.I.Am's mind operates with such speed that in order for journalists to keep up, his PR team encourage anyone preparing to interview him to use single words answers and very short sentences.

ANGELA AHRENDTS

“We live by what we believe,
not what we see”.



“I don’t want to be a great chief executive without being a great mum and a great wife”.

Angela Ahrendts is the senior vice president of Apple Retail tasked with increasing Apple’s footprint as the world’s most profitable retail brand, blessed with one of the world’s highest NPS (customer satisfaction) scores.

READ: [Angela Ahrendts’ posts on LinkedIn](#)

WATCH: [Angela Ahrendts - TEDx Hollywood \(2013\)](#)

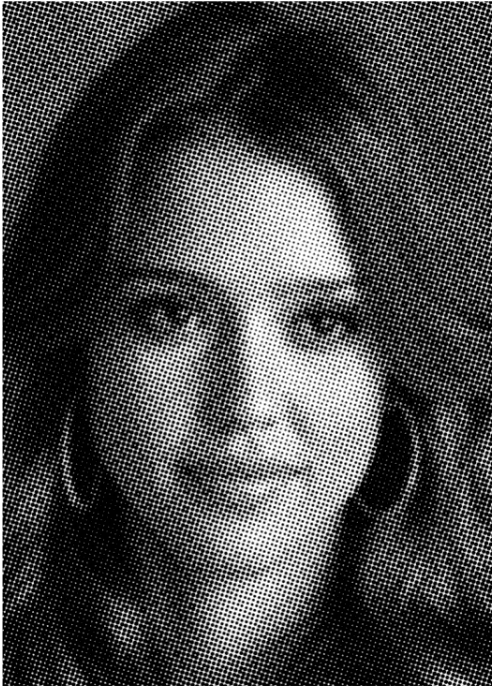
FOLLOW: [@AngelaAhrendts](#)

When Angela Ahrendts was the CEO of Burberry, its brand value was declining and sales were hovering at around \$2 billion. By the time she left for her dream job to lead retail operations at Apple, Burberry’s value rose to over \$7 billion. Not too shabby. Shareholders rewarded her with a salary of around \$26 million. Today she is the only female senior executive at Apple, earning even more than the CEO at just over \$70 million per year. It’s easy to be impressed by those numbers but Angela’s salary is just representative of her meteoric rise as one of the world’s most successful executives. She is often asked what she attributes her success to, and she always replies with the same sentiment, *“Trust your instincts and emotions. Let them guide you in every situation; they will not fail you”.*

Unlike many executives who rely on logic and data-driven arguments to run their business, Angela runs hers with her heart. Inspired by words from the great American poet Maya Angelou, Angela often recites her favourite quote, *“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel”.* It is this sentiment that Angela is embedding into the heart of Apple’s retail division where she also likes to remind employees constantly of Simon Sinek’s quote, *“The goal in business is not to sell to people who need what you have, but to work with people who believe what you believe”.*

JESSICA ALBA

“If you look confident enough you can pull off anything”.



Jessica Alba believes that she should constantly challenge herself and learn new things, which is why she tells people that “Every five years I feel like I’m a completely different person”.

READ: *The Honest Life* by Jessica Alba

WATCH: Her keynote at Dreamforce 2015

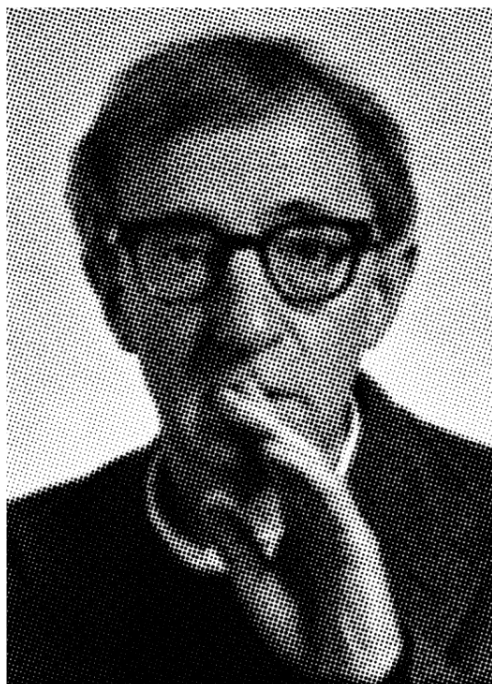
FOLLOW: @JessicaAlba

Jessica Alba co-founded The Honest Company in 2011, an eco-friendly cosmetics company that doesn’t use any unnecessary or potentially harmful chemicals. After becoming a mum in 2008, she struggled to find alternative products for her daughter who suffered allergic reactions to all the products that other mums recommended. Noticing a small gap in the market Jessica decided to do something about it. She was initially advised to start small by focusing on one product but she was determined to launch her company with 17!

Honest now boasts an impressive valuation of almost \$2Bn, but it took a strong will to get her there, often ignoring the advice of people who she loved and respected. Everyone advised her to stick to the tried and tested celebrity formula of being the face of a new perfume or producing a signature clothing line. Instead, Jessica fixed her focus on creating a subscription based e-commerce business. Everyone around her said it was a bad idea. In the world of entertainment where celebrities are represented in 5 second sound-bites, Jessica wanted to create something more long-lasting. Nobody took her seriously but it just gave her the fire to move forward and prove everyone wrong. It took her a few years to eventually find her perfect business partners but throughout that time, and some very tough meetings, she relied on this ten word mantra to stay focused on her mission.

WOODY ALLEN

“Talent is luck.
The important thing
in life is courage”.



Ever the wordsmith, Woody was recently asked to explain his 80% quote. “The figure seems high to me today,” Woody said, “but I knew it was more than 60 and the extra syllable in 70 ruins the rhythm of the quote, so I think we should let it stand at 80”.

READ: The script for “*Hannah and Her Sisters*”.

WATCH: Woody Allen: a Documentary

FOLLOW: @WoodyAllen (Although he never tweets).

Woody Allen (king of the one liner) boasts credits as an actor, a director, a comedian, a musician and a writer. He is one of the most talented people in show business but he is always the first one to say that talent is not enough. Lots of people have talent, but very few “show up” and are courageous enough to make something happen. It is this idea of “showing up” which Woody is famous for. During an interview he was once giving to aspiring playwrights, he shared the now iconic quote “80% of success is turning up”. It’s a line I have used at conferences many times myself, suggesting that regardless of the speakers or the quality of the content, good things often happen just by putting smart people in a room together.

Woody has made a career out of showing up. Over six decades he has been nominated for an Oscar® a total of 23 times: 15 as a screenwriter, 7 as a director, and once as an actor. Many film critics attribute his success to the fact that he is not commercially driven. “If my films don’t show a profit, I know I’m doing something right”, he once said. Oscar® winners such as Diane Keaton claim he is the world’s finest “actor’s director” due to his ability to direct the most powerful scenes using the minimum amount of words. In a world where lengthy directions and long monologues are the norm, Woody has achieved great success simply by showing up, with a good script, a big idea, and a few one liners.

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

“Life itself is the most wonderful kind of fairy tale”.



“Life is like a beautiful melody, only the lyrics are messed up”.

Hans Christian Anderson wrote the words which send millions of children to sleep every night. He wrote many plays, novels, travel books and poems, but he is best known for the 212 fairy tales he wrote. His tales including *The Little Mermaid* and *The Ugly Duckling* have been translated into over 150 languages.

READ: One of his fairy tales to someone you love

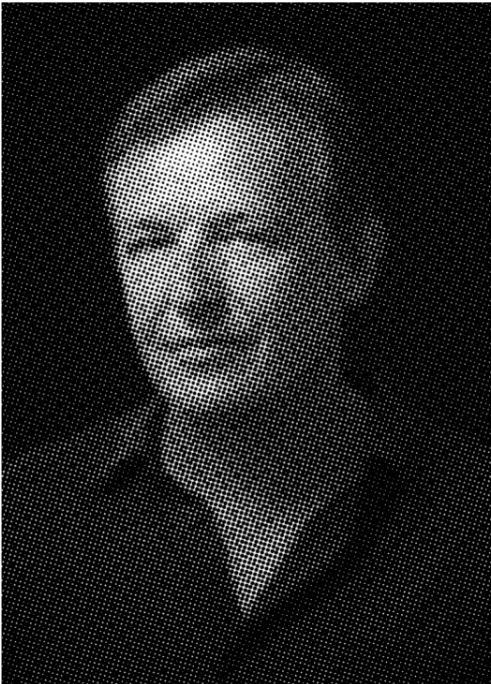
WATCH: *The Little Mermaid*

FOLLOW: #HansChristianAndersen

Hans Christian Andersen is one of the finest tellers of short stories the world has ever seen. When he was younger, his first passion was to become an actor since everyone told him that he had such a beautiful singing voice, so it wasn't until he was 29 that he penned his first fairy tale. His early ambitions molded a great portion of his work. One of the things I love the most about Hans is that he wrote mostly about subjects he knew about. Andersen's own life for example, has been likened to that of the Ugly Duckling, who is born humbly amongst the ducks yet blossoms into a swan. Born the son of a poor cobbler, Hans became rich from his writing and famous throughout the world, although he suffered a great deal on his journey to wealth and happiness. It was those darker experiences that shaped many of his fairy tales which, when read in their original versions, are far more sophisticated than just mere children's fables. His personal struggles with his peers and idols during his formative years are recorded as a commentary on human nature and the society to which he was subjected. Sometimes this manifests itself as optimism, where goodness and beauty triumph, other times it is pessimism where the end is inevitable. In either instance, Andersen identifies with the downtrodden and oppressed. The fact that he is remembered as the storyteller who has made the world smile by drawing on his own tumultuous experiences is testament to his status as a literary master craftsman.

CHRIS ANDERSON

“People don’t come to a talk to be sold to”.



Chris Anderson has revolutionised the traditional conference format by taking over a small Technology, Education and Design conference in 2002 and turning it into the TED organisation which has now delivered over 8,000 events and 60,000 talks (tickets to TED global sell out a year in advance). Twitter co-founder Evan Williams even turned down \$1M for one of his projects once just because it meant he wouldn't have been able to give a TED talk.

READ: *TED Talks* by Chris Anderson

WATCH: TED.com

FOLLOW: @TEDchris | @TEDtalks

Each year 25,000 people apply to give an official TED talk but only a few hundred are chosen, such is Chris's commitment to only have the best speakers presenting at his \$5,000 a seat conference. Giving a TED talk is such a big deal that people such as Ev Williams from Twitter have turned away millions of dollars from selling an idea, in favour of speaking about it at TED. I love Chris because he is a champion of big ideas, small words and short sentences, insisting that every TED talk lasts no longer than 18 minutes. And to make sure that all TED talks are both short *and* great, Chris asks speakers to learn the “*The Ten TED Commandments*” and promise not to break any of them!

1. Thou shalt not simply trot out thy usual shtick.
2. Thou shalt dream a great dream, or show forth a wondrous new thing, or share something thou hast never shared before.
3. Thou shalt reveal thy curiosity and thy passion.
4. Thou shalt tell a story.
5. Thou shalt freely comment on the utterances of other speakers for the sake of blessed connection and exquisite controversy.
6. Thou shalt not flaunt thine ego. Be thou vulnerable. Speak of thy failure as well as thy success.
7. Thou shalt not sell from the stage: neither thy company, thy goods, thy writings, nor thy desperate need for funding; lest thou be cast aside into outer darkness.
8. Thou shalt remember all the while: laughter is good.
9. Thou shalt not read thy speech.
10. Thou shalt not steal the time of them that follow thee.

ARISTOTLE

“To avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing and be nothing”.



Commenting on Aristotle's rules for storytelling, Aaron Sorkin said that, “*Rules are what makes art beautiful*”, but knowing that all rules are also made to be broken, it's worth considering Steven Spielberg's perspective, “*People have forgotten how to tell a story. Stories don't have a middle or an end anymore. They usually have a beginning that never stops beginning*”.

READ: *Poetics* by Aristotle

WATCH: *Masterclass.com* with Aaron Sorkin

FOLLOW: @Aristotle

I have always been *aware* of Aristotle, but it was only when I did a screenwriting course with Aaron Sorkin that I discovered exactly how important Aristotle was to storytellers. Sorkin described Aristotle to me as “*the Greek God of Storytelling*” and directed me towards Aristotle's *Poetics*, arguably the most important piece of writing on storytelling ever published. In *Poetics*, Aristotle explains the necessity for every good plot to consist of three acts, but contrary to popular belief, these three acts are not simply a beginning a middle and an end. The three act structure refers to Aristotle's rules for storytelling:

- Act I: **Resolution** (*Introduction*)
- Act II: **Confrontation** (*Rising action*)
- Act III: **Resolution** (*Falling action*)

Deeper inspection of Aristotle's rules reveal that all good stories also have three scientific elements, affectionately known as the three keys of persuasion: *Pathos* (emotional stories), *Logos* (logical analysis) and *Ethos* (credible evidence). What I love about this philosophy is that it appeals to the head *and* the heart. It is also a model as relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago. When I worked with Facebook one of the first things I learned was that all good content should do three things: Inspire and Entertain (*Pathos*), Educate and Inform (*Logos*) and Challenge or Solve Problems (*Ethos*). I think Aristotle would have “*liked*” Facebook!