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Bidlack Strategy Sheet

BIDLACK CREATIVE GROUP
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48104   (800) 978-1850   WWW.BIDLACK.COM

STRATEGY SHEET
No. 3

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The Get-Ability Checklist
Making sure your audience gets it, and gets it instantly.

The most important part of communication is being understood. Yet communications designers are frequently so close to their subject that they are unable to see their message through the eyes (and with the mind set) of their intended audience.

Consequently, the "get-ability" of a message — the ability of your audience to instantly understand what it is you're trying to get across — is occasionally muted.

In an effort to fight ambiguity, here is Bidlack's Get-Ability Checklist, a simple device to remind you of the obvious, and to make sure you're seeing the forest for the trees.

BIDLACK GET-ABILITY CHECKLIST

**Apply these questions
to your communications message prior to finalization:**

The Basic Questions

☐ What percentage of your target audience is a complete stranger to you or your idea?

☐ Has a significant percentage of your target audience not heard of you?

☐ Do they care?
(The answer is NO, until you're sure that the answer is yes.)

The *"Would Your Mother"* Question

☐ Would your mother instantly understand what you're trying to communicate?

The Subtitle Question

☐ Does your headline or title cry-out — perhaps to all but you — for an explanatory subtitle? In many cases, over-familiarity leads to missing explanatory elements. *(One of the most common over-familiarity symptoms is the missing subtitle.)*

The "Lulled into a False Sense of Security" Question

☐ Have you produced previous issues or editions of this message several times before? If the answer is yes, you may have lulled yourself into the "It's so obvious, how could someone not get this?" mode. It may be time to show your concept to disinterested strangers for a bit of reality feedback.

The reaction you want
when your audience is exposed to your message:

Try Blam-O's!

"Wow! This is Interesting!"

The reaction you don't want
when your audience is exposed to your message:

Try Blam-O's!

"Huh? No time for this. Gotta watch TV!"

Vague message = limited perception

How to increase the chances of getting the reaction you want
when your audience is exposed to your message:

Check for conspicuousness:

Use creativity, but also incorporate obviousness.

Let imagery help to do the work*

Be open to being redundant

Try Blam-O's!
Chocolate Peanut Butter Cookie Bars!

A person should be able to absorb your main point within a second or two.

Yum!

The image and the words say the same thing, but the image doesn't have to be read.