

How to Write a Root Cause Explanation So Clear Even Skeptics Trust It (and the Half-Asleep Still Get It)



1. What Is a Root Cause Explanation (And Why It Matters)

The root cause explanation is one of the most critical parts of a high-converting advertorial. It comes right after the emotional story when the reader is already hooked and asking, “Why hasn’t anything worked?”

This isn’t where you educate. It’s where you **reframe**. Your job is to make sense of their lived experience by showing why surface-level fixes failed and revealing a deeper ROOT cause they either never heard of, never fully understood, or never realized was the real issue. Once it clicks, your product becomes the only solution that actually fits.

This is also where you **externalize the problem**. If they blame themselves, they freeze. So give them a villain: a broken system, a misinformation loop, or a hidden mechanism like cortisol or inflammation. That shift from “I’m the problem” to “Now I know what’s really wrong” builds relief, urgency, and belief.

If the background story builds emotion, the root cause builds clarity. Together, they form the bridge from stuck to sold. Once the root cause clicks, half the sale is already done.

2. What Makes a Good Root Cause Explanation

The root cause section helps the reader understand why nothing has worked without making them feel dumb, broken, or blamed.

It doesn’t sound like a **science lecture**. It sounds like someone finally explaining the real reason in a way that clicks.

A good root cause section does a few important things:

- **It makes everything finally make sense.**
The symptoms, the failed solutions, the frustration it all connects.
- **It gives the reader something to point to.**
They can say, “That’s what’s really been going on,” instead of guessing or blaming themselves.
- **It takes the pressure off.**
You’re not telling them they did something wrong. You’re showing them the real problem was hidden or never fully explained.
- **It introduces a villain.**
Something or someone that kept them stuck: a broken system, bad advice, or a deeper issue no one told them about. Once they can blame *that*, they stop blaming themselves.
- **It’s easy to understand.**
No big words. No long paragraphs. Just plain, clear language. Bonus points if you use a Analogy that helps it land instantly.

When this part is done right, the reader feels a mix of relief, clarity, and curiosity. That’s when they’re finally ready to see the solution.

3. Key Psychological Principles That Make This Work

A good root cause explanation doesn't work because it's "smart."

It works because it's **easy to understand** and **easy to believe** even for someone tired, distracted, or emotionally drained.

Here are the four key psychological levers that make your root cause explanation land:

1. System 1 First

People buy with emotion (System 1), not logic (System 2).

So your root cause should feel instantly true *before* they even stop to think.

Don't give them something to figure out.

Give them something they can *feel in their gut*.

- Use emotion, metaphor, and clarity.
- Let the logic ride *underneath* the story just enough to make it click.

2. Processing Fluency

If it's hard to understand, they bounce.

The brain sees "easy to read" as "must be true."

So you need:

- Short lines
- No jargon
- Visual flow
- Simple, clear language

Make it so smooth that even a tired, half-scrolling reader can say,

"Oh. That makes sense."

3. The Villain

If they blame themselves, they freeze.

You need to give them something *outside* of themselves to blame.

That could be:

- A broken system (pharma, industry, internet advice)
- A misinformation loop ("You were told it was just stress...")
- A hidden mechanism (hormones, inflammation, cortisol)

Once there's a clear villain, they stop feeling ashamed and start feeling ready to act.

"It's not me. It's that."

That shift builds trust and motivation.

4. KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid)

No fluff. No lectures. No big words.

This part should read like a **trusted expert finally saying it in plain language**—not like a research paper, and not like a casual guess.

It should feel like:

"A real doctor finally explained it in a way I could actually understand."

Simple = clear.

Clear = believable.

Believable = actionable.

If someone is tired, dumb, stressed, or brain rote scrolling, on their phone can get it, *you did it right.*

That's when belief locks in and action follows.

Pro Tip: Use Analogies to Make It Click

Analogies are one of the most powerful tools you have.

They turn invisible problems into something visual.

They remove mental effort. And they make your explanation feel *obvious*.

Whenever possible, use analogies your audience is already familiar with. You can find great ones by searching Reddit, YouTube comments, or real conversations in your niche.

✓ Example:

For sciatica, the most common analogy is the **jelly donut** where the disc is the donut, and the jelly slips out and presses on a nerve. People *instantly* get it.

If there's no popular analogy, make one up.
Just make sure it's visual, simple, and emotionally accurate.

If they can picture it, they'll believe it.
And if they believe it, they're ready to hear the solution.

The screenshot shows a Reddit post in the **r/Sciatica** subreddit. The post is titled **The Sciatica Jelly Donut concept**. The author is **WalterBagehot**, and the post was made 5 years ago. The post content discusses the author's personal experience with sciatica and how they found the "jelly donut" analogy helpful. It includes a diagram and explanation of the concept, and expresses gratitude to Jared Beckstand and Ken McGill for their work. The post has 13 upvotes and 8 comments.

← r/Sciatica • 5 yr. ago
WalterBagehot

The Sciatica Jelly Donut concept

I'm 70 M having sciatica about 14 weeks now. I started recovering 8 weeks ago after reading the book, *Back Mechanic*, which was a game-changer for me. I'm now making good progress, and getting a little better each day. Per *Back Mechanic*, I take no medications, and do no stretching or yoga.

However, before discovering Back Mechanic, I was fortunate to come across this [sciatica jelly-donut video](#) which has certainly been instrumental in my recovery. (Note: I don't do the press-up exercise in the video. It is the diagram and explanation in the video that I utilize.)

In almost all my everyday activities, I often picture in my mind the image in the video where my bending forward squeezes the two vertebrae together in their **fronts**, thus causing the jelly to squirt out in the **opposite direction**, backwards, toward the sciatic nerve.

The vertebrae squeeze the disc, almost like a bellows, squirting the jelly backwards.

I bend forward, and the jelly squirts backwards, toward the sciatic nerve. This is what I conceive in my mind.

Understanding this concept, and having that image in my mind, has played a crucial role in my ability to recover. If I had never seen that video, I'm not sure whether the book *Back Mechanic* would have helped me as much as it did.

In any event, I am recovering, and I'm grateful to both Jared Beckstand for his video, and to Ken McGill for his book.

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