

# Ship 30 for 30

I want to write about making money in an independent way in your 20s with having no prior background in the thing so that you can set yourself up to be completely geographically free.

Don't worry about credibility and authority. Just let the reader know where the information is coming from.

## The 4A Framework

Write about any idea in 4 different ways:

- Actionable (here's how)
- Analytical (here are the numbers)
- Aspirational (yes, you can)
- Anthropological (here's why)

Ways to make a general topic more niche:

1. Name the audience: "How to make more money as a...." or "How to make more money in...."
2. Name the outcome: "How to make more money so you can..."
3. Name the process: "How to make more money as a.... without...." or "How to make more money as a.... ghostwriting for...."

## Writing Headlines for high CTR

Answer directly:

- WHO
- WHAT
- WHY

5 pieces of every headline

1. How Many?
  - a. 6 ways, 7 reasons, 8 brutal truths
2. What
  - a. the actual thing

3. Who?
  - a. not all but good to have like "college students"
4. Feel
  - a. Another crucial piece in your headline is how you want the reader to FEEL about the topic. For example, "I Just Ate An Entire Barrel Of Ice Cream" doesn't really tell the reader how you want them to FEEL. Should they be happy for you? Sad? Should they feel your shame? Or should they feel your love and self-acceptance? Notice how dramatically different this headline becomes when we tell the reader how to FEEL: "I Just Ate An Entire Barrel Of Ice Cream. Here's What I Learned About Loving Myself Through My Mistakes."
5. Outcome/ the PROMISE
  - a. Your headline is a proposal to readers trying to "hook" their attention and convince them this thing you've written is worth their time. So, what do they get in return? "7 Ways To Cook Healthy Lunches" is a good headline. But "7 Ways To Cook Healthy Lunches, Lose Weight, And Give Up Fast Food Once And For All" is way better. The end of your headline is your PROMISE, and it's essential for readers to understand what they're going to learn, feel, and/or receive as a result of the 30 seconds or 3 minutes they spend reading your writing.

These 5 pieces combine to create the CURIOSITY GAP.

- Great headlines tell the beginning of the story, and the end, but not the middle
  - For example, take a look at the headline below. The bold line chopping the headline in half is showing the beginning and end of the story—but notice how there's no "middle." In order to learn what the "9 reasons writers suffer from writer's block & give up writing forever" are, you have to click and read the article—and that's the point.

It's not clickbait as long as you keep your promise.

Clear > Clever with headlines

## 10 Proven Headline Formats

BIG Numbers: "3,000 People Just Filed For Unemployment In This Small Town In Arkansas. Here's Why"

Dollar Signs: "\$400 Million Is How Much You Need To Make In Order To Afford This Insane Mansion In Malibu"

Credible Names: "Will Smith's Advice On How To Live A Fulfilling Life Will Change The Way You See The World Forever"

"This Just Happened": "Michael Jordan Just Gave A Press Conference And NBA Executives Are Furious"

Question/Answer: "Can't Be Productive In The Office? Try Organizing Your Calendar Like This"

The Success Story: "How This Small Team Managed To Secure A Six-Figure Investment In Less Than 1 Week"

Things That Shouldn't Go Together: "7 Things KFC And Miley Cyrus Have In Common"

For The Industry: "3 Things All Successful Small Business Owners Do To Stay Profitable"

Topic Within The Topic: "7 Ways The Real Estate Industry Is Changing (And How You Should Be Investing Your Money)"

X Number: "13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do"

### The Golden Intersection

- Answer the reader's question
- Tells a personal story

For example, if you write an article or essay titled, "The 7 Secrets To Becoming A Millionaire," and you give readers actionable steps they can take to become a millionaire themselves, that's great. But what makes that essay or article 10x more memorable is if you pair that actionable advice with a personal story (even if it's only a few sentences in the introduction): "When I was 19 years old, I was broke as broke could be. I was living with my mom, who was unemployed. My dad had left when I was a kid. And I grew up on food stamps. Fast-forward to today, I just turned 30 years old and have a little more than \$1,000,000 in liquid assets. The path I took to becoming a millionaire is something anyone can do. Which is why I want to share the steps I took with you. My goal is to shorten your own growth curve so that you can get out of whatever bad situation you're in, become a millionaire, and achieve financial freedom yourself."

The idea is to take your content (however complicated) and organize it in a way where readers can quickly skim, figure out what's going on, and latch onto the pieces of information that most grab their attention.

So, how do you do that?

### Skeleton Your Piece (Before You Write It)

The easiest way to nail formatting is to create a skeleton of your essay or article before you start writing.

Headline: What is this piece about? Who is it for? What will the reader get in exchange for reading through to the end? AND, why should they trust you (what's your credibility)?

Introduction: (Repeat the information from the headline with slightly more detail.) What is this piece about? Who is it for? What will the reader get in exchange for reading through to the end? AND, why should they trust you (what's your credibility)?

Main Points: What "proven approach" are you using to organize this piece? (Is this piece organized by Steps, Lessons, Mistakes, Tips, etc.?) How many do you plan on including? 3 Steps? 4 Lessons? 5 Mistakes?

Conclusion: What's the final takeaway? What do you want readers to walk away with after reading this piece? What's the morale of the story?

By creating a skeleton of your piece in advance, it becomes significantly easier to know where to start.

### The 2 Most Important Uses For Subheads: Wheels & Spokes

When organizing your content, there are two different types of headings you should use.

- Wheels: Big headings (H1) that signify the beginning of a new overarching section.
- Spokes: Small headings/subheads (H2 or H3) that separate important sections within the overarching section

## 1/3/1

*This first sentence is your opener.*

*This second sentence clarifies your opener. This third sentence reinforces the point you're making with some sort of credibility or amplified description. And this fourth sentence rounds out your argument, guiding the reader toward your conclusion.*

*This fifth sentence is your strong conclusion.*

Example: <https://www.categorypirates.news/p/campbells-soup-and-how-to-design>

## 1/5/1

The 1/5/1 sequence is the exact same as the 1/3/1 sequence, except with two more sentences in the middle for added description and/or explanation.

Here's how it works:

*This first sentence is your opener.*

*This second sentence clarifies your opener. This third sentence reinforces the point you're making with some sort of credibility or amplified description. This fourth sentence builds on that credibility or description, giving added context or new*

*information. This fifth sentence explains to the reader why you're telling them what you're telling them. And this sixth sentence drives home the point.*

*This seventh sentence is your strong conclusion.*

*Example: <https://www.inc.com/nicolas-cole/whats-hardest-part-about-being-an-entrepreneur-1-thing-that-should-be-easy.html>*

## **1/2/5/2/1**

Now, if you want to start getting fancy with things, you can *expand the middle* of your sequence to add even more dynamics into your writing.

The key here is to build up, and then build back down. In music, this would be called creating a "crescendo" (gradually increasing in loudness) and then creating a "decrescendo" (gradually decreasing in loudness). Notice again how the first sentence and the last sentence remains short, whereas the middle is slowly building.

### **Rate of Revelation**

For example, here's what a SLOW Rate of Revelation might look like:

*When it comes to building a daily writing habit, the hardest thing for most writers is remembering the importance of just sitting down and writing. It can be difficult to get yourself to write, but that's part of the name of the game. And in moments you can't write, you have to remember that all writers go through this—it's just part of the craft.*

Now, here's what a FAST Rate of Revelation looks like:

*When it comes to building a daily writing habit, there are three things that usually get in a writer's way. First, they over-edit. Second, they talk themselves out of the idea ("This will never work. I'm better off just doing laundry.") And third, their laptop runs out of battery at the coffee shop (this happens more often than you might think).*

Notice how in the second example, every single sentence is moving the idea forward.

### **"The Tequila Test"**

The Holy Grail for writers is to learn how to say what everyone else isn't. So, how do you do that?

A fun exercise we like doing with Shippers is asking them to think of all the things they might say in an article about how to build an effective morning routine.

The way you put The Tequila Test into practice is to start by writing down all the things most people would say about your topic. Make a list. What are all the things you've heard people talk about? What's the conventional wisdom? What are the cliché answers? Write them all down.

Now, don't use anything on that list.

What ELSE could you write about?

This is the secret to content differentiation.

### **The Lead-In Tweet**

# 1.

# The Lead-In

Summarize the entire journey to come:

- Story
- Framework
- Actionable Takeaways

Pinned Tweet

 **Dickie Bush**  @dickiebush ...

One of the most legendary marketers of all time: David Ogilvy

In 1982, David wrote an internal memo to the employees of his advertising agency titled "How to write."

And in just 10 bullets he put together a masterclass in effective writing.

Here's a breakdown of each one:



5:03 PM · Jun 1, 2021 · Hypfury

1,061 Retweets 77 Quote Tweets 5,127 Likes

Your lead-in Tweet is what introduces readers to your writing.

If you are writing and publishing Atomic Essays as part of Ship 30 for 30, your lead-in Tweet is going to be the “hook” you use to get people to read your 250-word essay. If you are writing Threads on Twitter, your lead-in Tweet is going to be the “hook” you use to get people to read your Thread. And so on.

The secret to writing effective lead-in Tweets is to answer three very important questions for the reader (going back to our Headline framework):

- WHO is this for?
- WHAT is this about?
- WHY should you read this? (What PROMISE are you making to the reader? What do they get in return?)

Readers on Twitter, in particular, love essays and threads that:

- Tell a story
- Share a framework
- Provide actionable takeaways (teaching the reader how to do something)

Notice, not every idea you have is going to fit nicely into one of those two buckets. And that’s fine. But if your only goal is to figure out how to “go viral” on Twitter, it’s worth thinking about how you can fall into one of these three formats.

## Telling Stories on Twitter

## 2. Story

What's an example that the reader can hold onto and remember forever?

\*Key: Tell a story that is unconventional in the context of what you're talking about.

Trung Phan @TrungTPhan

Microsoft just reached \$2T, pushing Steve Ballmer's net worth to \$80B.

Interestingly: when Ballmer joined MSFT in 1980, he was employee #30 and received ZERO equity. By its IPO in 1986, he owned 8% of MSFT.

How did Ballmer get that stake? A contract quirk.

Here's the story

6:56 AM · Jul 1, 2021 · Twitter Web App

564 Retweets 70 Quote Tweets 3,000 Likes

First of all, it's hard telling stories lots of people find interesting. Most of the time, the stories that "go viral" on Twitter are curated stories of famous people, little-known moments of success, unlikely outcomes in the public, etc. It's much harder for a personal story to go viral.

That said, regardless of what type of story you are telling, your lead-in Tweet should be structured like this:

- Here's the end of the story (big, crazy outcome)
- Here's the start of the story (humble beginnings)
- Read to find out the middle

All great lead-in Tweets follow this structure in some way or another. They tease the ending, they show you the beginning, and then they encourage you (the reader) to click and read to find out how someone down there got all the way up here.

## Frameworks

# 3. Framework

Give the reader an explanation of what they're about to dive into.

- How does this work?
- Why does this matter?
- What outcome does this unlock?



The second content format that performs best on Twitter is any kind of framework readers would find valuable and applicable to their daily lives.

The vast majority of the time, framework-style Threads on Twitter aren't original frameworks, but curated frameworks from people readers want to be like.

For example:

Elon Musk's Frameworks For Making Decisions  
Steve Jobs' Frameworks For Building Next-Generation Products  
Stephen King's Frameworks For Writing Best-Selling Thriller Novels  
Etc.

The idea here is to take one way of thinking pioneered by someone successful, break it down, and make it accessible to the average reader.

That said, you can also create your own frameworks as well—however, it's important to be very clear about what the reader can expect to unlock in their own lives in using your framework. Remember: what are you PROMISING them, and what they can expect to get in return for reading?

## Actionable Takeaways

## 4.

# Actionable Takeaways

List them out!

Nicolas Cole  
@Nicolascole77

Ghostwriting 101

Over the past 4 years, I have ghostwritten more than 2,000 articles for startup founders, C-level executives, Silicon Valley investors, and more.

Want to know a secret?

I use the same 5 templates every time.

5:00 PM · Jun 7, 2021 · Hypfury

View Tweet activity

972 Retweets 69 Quote Tweets 5,786 Likes

The final content format that performs best on Twitter is creating a list of actionable takeaways with the purpose of achieving some sort of end goal.

For example:

- 15 Marketing Tips To Help You Jumpstart Your Paid Newsletter
- 11 Copywriting Secrets To Help You Sell More Products
- 12 Meditation Mantras That Will Connect You With Your Highest Self
- And so on.

The reason readers love this type of content is because it feels immediately actionable. “If I read this Thread, I will know how to do X to achieve Y.” As a result, “actionable takeaway” Threads and content tend to be some of the most-viral within niche communities. For example, a thread on copywriting might not be as universal of a topic as “happiness” or “how to make more money,” but within the copywriting community, it will spread like wildfire. So if you are focused on writing for a niche, consider writing more about actionable takeaways for people within your chosen category.

## Formatting Matters

## 5. Tweet formatting

- Every tweet should stand on its own to maximize engagement
- Use bullet points and line breaks

Regardless of what type of content format you choose (Story, Framework, Actionable Takeaways), the formatting of the Thread itself should follow a few basic rules:

- Give each Tweet its own “mini headline.” The first sentence of each Tweet is the most important. If you are writing an “actionable takeaways” Thread, the first sentence of each Tweet should be the actionable takeaway. This allows readers to quickly scroll through your Thread, skim the mini-headlines, and then decide if they want to dig deeper and read the entire thing straight through (remember: skimmability = readability).
- Uses lists and bullets whenever possible. Tweets are small, which means you need to figure out how to compress a lot of information into a teeny tiny container. One of the easiest ways to do this is to swap prose for lists. Besides, readers enjoy “skimming” bullets way more than they do sifting through prose. As a rule of thumb: anytime you have a paragraph of 3+ lines on Twitter, consider turning it into some sort of list (or axing it altogether).
- Play with the 1/3/1 framework to make your Tweets clean and presentable. The 1/3/1 writing rhythm is terrific for writing individual Tweets. The single-sentence opener can act as your “mini-headline,” the three sentences in the middle can be turned into a bulleted list, and the one-sentence closer acts as a strong conclusion.

## The CTA

## 6. The CTA

- Your *second* to last tweet should be a CTA
- Make it easy to follow you and continue reading your best stuff

Dickie Bush @dickiebush  
Replies to @dickiebush  
If you enjoyed this and you're into writing, building, and growing:  
1. Follow me @dickiebush for threads like this 4x per week  
2. Check out some of my other threads:  
  
Dickie Bush @dickiebush - Mar 7  
My mission: Empower 1,000,000 people to build an online writing habit.  
Writing and publishing online is the highest leverage habit in human history.  
Below you'll find tweets and threads on building a writing habit, prolific content creation, and intentional audience building:  
[Show this thread](#)  
11:37 AM · Mar 30, 2021 · Twitter Web App  
[View Tweet activity](#)  
21 Retweets 306 Likes

At the end of your Thread, there are a few things you can do to wrap up the experience for readers.

The first is the CTA: Call To Action.

Your CTA should direct readers to more of your great content. If they just finished reading a Thread about writing advice, consider linking them to your BEST Thread about writing advice. If they just finished reading a Thread about a business story, consider linking them to your BEST business story—or, better yet, a master Thread you've created curating ALL your business stories. Think of your CTA as your Twitter Thread Gift Shop: “Thank you for shopping, can I interest you in a souvenir?”

## The TL;DR



## 7. The TL;DR

- Your *last* tweet should be a TL;DR
- When your thread posts, Twitter will truncate the middle and show just the first and last tweet

Dickie Bush @dickiebush

Replying to @dickiebush

The TL;DR:

- Never use jargon
- Use shorter words
- Write how you talk
- Check your quotations
- Read "Writing That Works"
- Give your writing time to breathe
- Get edits on important messages
- Never write more than two pages

Staples these on your desktop.

8:03 PM · Jun 1, 2021 · Hypefury

View Tweet activity

20 Retweets 5 Quote Tweets 199 Likes

The TL;DR is our favorite Twitter growth hack.

Think of this final Tweet as a super-compressed version of everything the reader just read.

Take your list of actionable takeaways, or framework steps, or story, and distill it down to a handful of bullets. The reason the TL;DR is so effective is because when Twitter distributes content in people's feeds, it presents readers with your first Tweet and your last two Tweets.

## Rewriting Your Bio

# Bio Checklist



**Nicolas Cole**  
@Nicolascole77

Writing Entrepreneur ✓ | 100M+ Views ✓ | I write about Data-Driven Online Writing & Category Design ✓ | Join the Ship 30 for 30 writing challenge ✓

⌚ Los Angeles, CA ✓ ⚖️ ship30for30.com ✓ Born May 23, 1990  
📅 Joined June 2012

396 Following 11.6K Followers

The key to writing a great bio is to say, very clearly:

- Who you are
- What you do
- Why readers should trust you

That's it.

Going back to our "Clever vs. Clear" framework, a great bio is not about being funny, or witty, or "punchy," or *cool*. Your bio is, quite literally, the most important piece of real estate you have on the Internet. And because social bios are short, it's your job to get the point across quickly, *clearly*, and efficiently.