

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Welcome to another dose of Uncommon sense.

I hope you find value herein.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Corporate Slogans

In my professional work, I have often found myself in the enviable position of offering guidance to individuals, teams, and whole organizations.

One of the themes I have dealt with has concerned a company's identity –



how they wish to be seen in the marketplace. And in my coaching practice, I have advised many an individual entrepreneur about the need to differentiate oneself from the crowd.

As I think about mission statements, core values, vision statements, statements of purpose, elevator pitches, and taglines, I am mindful of the fact that in some ways all of these things are like slogans, catchy terminology to try to give prospects a sense of what the product, service, organization, or individual is all about. They are attention-grabbers. They convey a value proposition. They are identifiers. At times they are very clever and brilliant (e.g., Nike's "Just Do It"), other times less so (General Electric's "The Power is On").

In fact, see if you can identify the organizations behind the following 7 taglines:

- "Can you hear me now?"
- "The Happiest Place on Earth"
- "Finger-lickin' good"
- "The Ultimate Driving Machine"
- "When You Care Enough To Send The Very Best"
- "Don't Leave Home Without It"
- "What's In Your Wallet?"

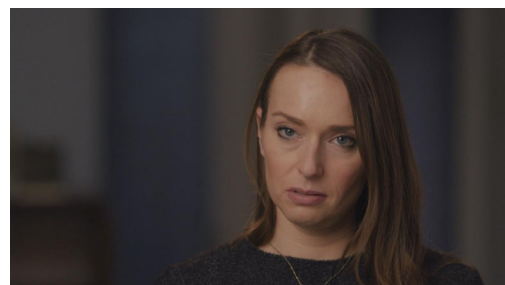
If you identified them as coming from Verizon, Disneyland, Kentucky Fried Chicken, BMW, Hallmark, American Express, and Capital One, you answered correctly.

If you think of yourself as a brand, what might be your own "slogan" that captures the essence of who you are? That is something that deserves your best efforts. Take some time to capture on paper words and images that reflect your essence. Then weave such words or images into a clever, memorable whole that will enable buyers and influencers to see your value.

The Elephant in the Room

The Left and Self-Delusion

I find it instructive to get inside the head of those who wish to bring disorder and chaos to our country and get a glimpse of how they think and what they stand for. Julia Ioffe,



a woman of the Left, provides us with just such an example. She has all of the *bonafides* one could ask for in a die-hard, radicalized Leftist. She went to the right schools, she resides in Leftist havens, she knows virtually no conservatives, she writes for publications that promulgate Left-wing themes, and she possesses seething hatred for Donald J. Trump and those who voted for him – about half the country.

Thus, it was interesting to see her on television with Bill Maher, expounding on what she really thinks about Trump voters. Ms. Ioffe is nothing if not confident of her positions. And she sees herself as a moral authority on, well, morality. As a Leftist, she has convinced herself that a person who voted for Donald Trump committed a crime so grave, so far-reaching, and so egregious, that there may not be redemption for such a person. The mere act of voting one's conscience is intolerable if the vote went to Trump.

Here is one such gem:

"It is personal. I think Trump made a lot of things personal. And when we talk about the division in this country, we can't talk about it as if it's a meteorological phenomenon that just happened, right? There were certain things that were done by certain people in certain institutions, Trump among them - very consciously, to divide this country, to prey upon the fissures that already existed and to make them wider and wider and wider to the point where we can't see each other across them."

Get it? Trump and his voters deliberately wanted to divide the country. No one on the Left did anything to divide the country. A talentless comedienne who held up a prop resembling the severed head of the President of the United States was not being divisive. The entire Russia-Collusion Hoax was in no way divisive. The phony impeachments were not divisive. But Trump and his followers did "certain things" to divide the country.

She goes on: "So it's not just like, 'Oh my, this has happened.' This was done in many ways on purpose by Trump... and so when we say it's not personal, it is personal. And I do think people who supported Trump and who enabled Trump do have something to apologize for and do have a lot to repent for."

What is the "it" that was done on purpose by Trump and those who supported him? She doesn't say. But she does use a religious idea, the concept of repentance, which she says Trump supporters have a

lot to repent for. They have committed sin and must be cleansed by turning back to the truth – the truth of Leftism.

Finally Ioffe does provide some specific things that Donald Trump has allegedly done (and, presumably, that his voters countenanced) that bothers her. She mentions that Trump referred to a country (Haiti) as a “s___ hole.” To her thinking, to the degree that it could be called thinking, that one statement disqualifies him to from being in power. (I would ask her, “What would you call Haiti? A paradise?”)

She also claims he told congresspeople of color to go back to where they came from. What is she alleging? That he wants black congresspeople to go back to Africa? Has he actually said that? I’d like to see some context. But for this alleged sin, Trump is not fit to have the nuclear codes.

She claims he calls women pigs. To my knowledge, the only woman who received that insult was Rosie O’Donnell, with whom Trump has had an ongoing spat. They have called each other names. But to Ioffe, that means Trump is unfit to control the army.

She claims that Trump makes fun of women’s menstrual cycle. That seems to be a possible reference to a comment he made in reference to debate moderator Megyn Kelly, but it’s not established that he was referring to menstruation. Either way, that statement disqualifies him from having control over the Department of Justice, if we are to believe Ms. Ioffe.

And that’s all there is to it, as far as Ioffe is concerned. Nothing else matters. The fact that Trump secured the border doesn’t matter. The fact that Trump lowered unemployment for everyone, especially people of color, is irrelevant. The fact that the economy was booming under Trump is a non-issue to Ioffe. The fact that Trump had the courage to move our embassy in Israel from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem, and to broker The David Accords with several Muslim countries is worthless to Ioffe. The fact that Trump decimated ISIS is not on her radar. He called a woman a pig. That’s what matters.

Still, the fact that Ioffe drew upon the principle of repentance for Trump voters is an interesting one. A person would understandably picture Ioffe as a deeply spiritual woman and of high moral stature. And in fact, Jeffrey Goldberg, Editor-in-Chief of *The Atlantic*, called her an “elegant writer.”

Elegant? Spiritual? Moral? Wise? Let’s see. . .

In March 2018, Ioffe was given a book deal with a HarperCollins imprint to write a book, *Russia Girl*, to be published in 2020. Two years later, she hasn't produced the manuscript yet. But she certainly received a hefty cash advance.

Although she was vaccinated against whooping cough, she contracted it. And who did she blame for that? The "anti-vaxxer" community.

While working as a staff member for *The New Republic*, when owner Chris Hughes decided to make changes allowing for more balanced, responsible political coverage, she resigned in protest. To her, there is no justification for fairness in political reporting.

While working for Politico in late 2016, she tweeted an unconscionable and outrageous claim: "Either Trump is f*cking his daughter or he's shirking nepotism laws. Which is worse?" Wow! Talk about civility and decency. Fortunately, Politico fired her for such a foul, obscene statement. Yet *The Atlantic* hired her immediately, as they like low-lives on their staff.

In October 2018, she opined, with a straight face, that Donald Trump "radicalized so many more people than ISIS ever did" to perpetuate anti-Semitic behavior – even though Trump's daughter is a devoted adherent of Judaism.

The bottom line: we have a radicalized hater of Donald Trump and all Trump voters who believe they have much to repent of. Evidently she does not see the need to repent of her own perversity. Such is the Left: proclaiming the sins of ones opponents while turning a blind eye to their own dark hearts.

* * * * *

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

From Ara's Journal

On Self-Awareness

When I was in the first grade, I had a very jarring experience.

While sitting comfortably in my classroom, Room 210 at Portola Elementary School, I, along with 3 or 4 of my classmates, were

summoned to meet a school official in Room 315, a small room I had never before set foot in. We didn't know why we were being summoned, but being only 6 years of age, none of us thought to ask. We dutifully walked into that classroom and encountered a Mr. Andrews. I had never seen him before, but he explained that he was from the District and worked as a speech therapist. I didn't really know what that meant.



Mr. Andrews had a small tape recorder with him. A hand-held microphone was plugged into that little recorder, and he handed it to me. He also handed me a book and he instructed me to read from that book and to speak directly into the microphone while he recorded me. I read a paragraph, after which he asked me to hand the microphone and the book to the student next to me. I did so. Mr. Andrews had that student read a portion of the book and to, likewise, speak into the microphone. Then he had that student hand the book and microphone to the next student. And so it went, each of us reading a portion of the book and speaking into the microphone.

After each of the students had been recorded, Mr. Andrews played the entire recording back to us.

When I heard my voice on that recorder, I was at first very confused. The reason I was confused was because I recognized the words being read were the same exact words as those I had read from the book, but I did not, for the life of me, recognize the voice of the reader. Yet, it was me!

I had no idea I sounded like that! It was horrifying to me! It almost frightened me. I not only was shocked to realize I sounded nothing like what my own ears processed whenever I was speaking live, but I was also shocked and humiliated because I deemed the sound of my voice, as I was truly hearing it for the very first time as others heard it, was ugly. I wanted to run and hide in shame. The basic thought process in my young, unformed mind was "My God! *This is how I actually sound?! People must hate me for sounding so ugly!*"

Only years later did I come to understand that a six-year-old does not hear or perceive his own voice the way others do. This has something to do with the placement of one's ears; what the six-year-old imagines he sounds like is a far cry from how others hear him. Therefore, while I was shocked at the sound of my voice on

tape, no one else in the room was shocked. To their ears, my recorded voice and my actual voice were one and the same. I alone imagined there was a massive disparity.

And so it is in life.

We may well be shocked at how we come across in the eyes of other people. If we could truly perceive how we sound, how we comport ourselves, what our unique mannerisms consist of, our quirks, etc., we may well be quite surprised, perhaps even rattled. Thus, it is important to at least attempt to be mindful of how we are coming across in social settings, in professional settings, in family settings, etc. And sometimes it is helpful to have someone observe us and provide unvarnished feedback. We may not like everything we hear during that debrief session, but it could prove eye-opening and very valuable, putting us on a path of improvement. Food for thought.

The World of Words

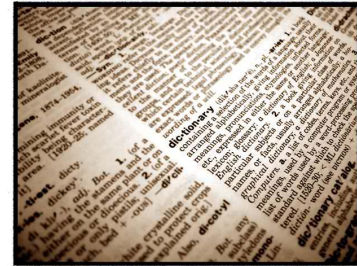
Iterative

Building Your Power of Expression

Iterative, adj.

Pronunciation: it-uh-rey-tiv

Meaning: This word denotes a development strategy that involves a cyclical process of refining or tweaking the latest version or [iteration](#) of a product, process, or idea to make a subsequent version.



Usage:

- *Website design is a highly iterative process.*
- *The new restaurant finalized their menu after a year of diner feedback and iterative improvements.*

- *True innovation depends on iterative learning and constant experimentation to find that magic combination of customer and product.*

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