

## 10 WORDS FOR YOUR BOOK

By Breda McGing

### Ideas

This is it, where it all starts! Without ideas nothing else matters. You're trying to convince us of your conceptual ability. You need to fill your portfolio with five to seven original and brilliant campaigns. Each campaign should have one central idea that is supported in three ads. In case you don't have a calculator available, that comes to 15-21 ads in your book. Don't show the advertising world your book, until you're proud of it.

### Imagination

You either have it or you don't. Let your work show how far out there you can go. Once you start your career, your Creative Director can rein in your ideas. This is the one and only time the work you're doing is completely yours. There is no client influence or account service person to stand in your way. Have fun and release your imagination.

### Diversity

We're talking products you choose to highlight in your portfolio and the target market your work is geared towards. Prove that you can solve tough problems. Don't just sell fun products to yourself...that's way too easy. Try selling financial planning to the folks at United Airlines. Are you up to the challenge?

### Knowledge

You need to know what you're selling, who you're selling it to, and the competition. Do some investigating. Next time you're at the store really think about your purchases. Why do you buy Crest over Colgate? As you go from aisle to aisle, be nosy, what's in the carts around you? If you're so inclined, talk to your fellow shoppers. The smarter you are the better your ads will be.

### Personality

Put a little of your self in each ad. If you're a comedian use that to your advantage. Most, but not all of your ads should make people laugh out loud and maybe snort! A Creative Director should get some sense of who you are from your book.

### Consistency

All your work needs to be at a high level, quality over quantity. If not, a Creative Director will wonder who helped you with the good ads. Don't make them think someone else helped you hit the highlights.

### Rhythm

Your book needs it and you should have some instinct as to the order in which you place ads and campaigns. How does one campaign flow to the next? Your book should start and end with a bang. Personally I suggest your two favorite campaigns in these positions.

### Passion

You have to have it to survive in advertising! The love for your craft whether it's words or pictures needs to come shining through. It can't be forced or faked. Each ad should reflect your passion. It should demonstrate how much you're willing to give of yourself; hard work and a piece of your heart.

### Evolution

Just when you think the work is over...it's not (I'm yelling to keep working). Your book should always be improving. You can never settle. You should be able to see the progression in your work. Reviewers will expect to see new work if they've seen your book before. If this daunts you or depresses you, you're probably pursuing the wrong career. However, if you're up for the challenge, you're on the right path.

### Life

Live your life. Read. Go to the movies. If you've never been to the ballet, go see one. If you're a diehard Country and Western fan but a friend has invited you to see the Rolling Stones...go, don't hesitate. Where do you think your ideas are going to come from? Enjoy and absorb everything around you. Art imitates life.

*Breda McGing is a creative advertising recruiter with more than twenty years experience in the business. McGing is also founder and President of Critiquemybook.com, an on-line service that offers users an objective evaluation of their portfolios. McGing has worked with agencies of all sizes and has spent a great deal of time working with entry-level creative talent. McGing has a long association with many colleges, universities and art schools and regularly instructs classes on portfolio preparation and presentation.*

For more information about a portfolio critique, visit [www.critiquemybook.com](http://www.critiquemybook.com).