



ATOMIC

WORDS

**CUT THROUGH THE NOISE AND
DELIVER IMPACTFUL COMMUNICATION**

GABE ARNOLD

CEO OF BUSINESS MARKETING ENGINE

Atomic Words

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DELIVER IMPACTFUL COMMUNICATION

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Advance Praise

I was so excited when I heard that my friend Gabe Arnold was writing a book.

Watching the evolution of his regular emails over the past few years—which began as updates about his business but quickly morphed into compelling stories with profound lessons for his readers—it was obvious that a book was in his future.

And now it's here.

With Atomic Words: Cut Through the Noise and Deliver Impactful Communication, Gabe practices what he preaches...while writing in a friendly style that, in his words, is like having a cup of coffee with a friend...with lesson after lesson, some hiding in plain sight...and some painfully obvious.

I guarantee you will be a better person after reading this book.

His writing style is a calming teaching style with examples throughout...with an emphasis on impact.

Gabe lays out the tools in an organized way...tools that every entrepreneur or business leader can put to use to create con-

sistent, congruent and courageous communication with their audience.

He makes a compelling case that writing is the one tool we all have in our toolbox that will never become obsolete...and the more we write, the more impact we make.

And that's whether we communicate through email, letters, a journal...and in the best case, a book...using “atomic words” that are all our own.

He delivers on the promise in the title by cutting through the noise from all other books on this topic... with an infectious writing style...using his own “atomic words” to set a good example for all of us.

— Brian Kurtz, Titans Marketing and author of *Overdeliver: Build a Business for a Lifetime Playing the Long Game in Direct Response Marketing* and *The Advertising Solution*.

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Additionally, the author would like to warn the reader that using any of the communication tools, frameworks, principles

DISCLAIMER & WARNING

and strategies contained in this for harm or for evil is not advisable. Using good tools for bad work will almost always result in more damage to yourself than to others. Please, please use the powerful information in this book to make the world a better place. That is what the book is intended to do, make your world and the world around you a more peaceful and loving place.

With Gratitude

This book is the culmination of over two decades of study and practice in the art of communication. Whether it is the spoken or the written word, our ability to communicate effectively has such a profound effect on our own lives and the lives of those around us.

Writing a book is a *massive* undertaking. I have written a few smaller completely unnoteworthy books in the past, but this book is the first book that I've written that I am truly proud of. I've taken many clients through the book writing process over the past few years. I love coaching clients on writing their books, and my team and I love ghost-writing books for our clients as well. This is because they often have the most magnificent ideas and solutions to share with the world.

We record our interviews with our clients and then simply write their words for them. And what is truly magical about writing a book, is that when you're done you've created something that can (and hopefully will) outlive you. A book is one way to actually leave a legacy for those who come after us, and I

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am immensely grateful to all the authors who have done that work for me over the years.

Even with all that experience of helping others write their books, I had no idea how much work it was going to be to write my own book. This book would not have been possible without the love and support of my beautiful, patient, and ever amazing partner Rachel Strong. We started our path together as business partners and I'm incredibly grateful that in time we also chose each other to be life partners.

Rachel, you give me beauty, peace, and kindness every day. Your relentless study of me, and your endless service and support of me, is the reason why we have the life we have. It's also the reason why our team gets to have a fully present, grounded, and intentional CEO to lead them.

And even more importantly than all the life and business adventures that we've been able to embark on together, you are the most amazing and thoughtful mother to our son Arlis. I know that your dedication to him will be one of the reasons that he looks back and says, "I had a wonderful childhood." Thank you for loving him and serving him with the same passion and intentionality that you show me.

And to my son Arlis, the moment that you came into this world I knew you were going to be a bright shining star for our big beautiful world. The day of your birth was one of the happiest and most transformational days of my life. You and I spent the first few hours of your life together while your mom

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was in surgery, and I told you about all of my dreams for our life together. Arlis you have inspired me more than any other person to chase my dreams, and to do the hard work that is required to truly understand myself, and to truly understand what I believe and why.

This book is a result of me doing the deep work required to understand what effective and impactful communication is made of. Arlis, you are already an amazing and effective communicator and a voracious reader. You are strong and you are kind. You make me proud of you every single day, and I will never cease to thank the Universe for giving me the privilege and great honor to be your father.

To my siblings and their spouses: Heather and Jim, Amos and Katie, Caleb and Gina, Judah and Nikki, Cody and Kaya, and Andrew and Taylor: thank you for loving me and accepting me through all the ups and downs that I have gone through. I know I unintentionally dragged you into those ups and downs at times as well. So thank you for showing me grace. Thank you for backing the book. You have all been so incredibly generous and it means the world to me. I am very grateful for the fact that you are all my siblings and some of my dearest friends. I'm proud of each of you and grateful for the opportunity that I was given to grow up with you and also have seasons where I have been able to guide and support you.

To my ever growing list of nieces and nephews: I love each of you as if you were my own children. You all melt my heart and make me so proud to be your uncle. I will always be here for

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you no matter what happens. Zeke, I want to give you a special shout out to say thank you for being so generous and donating to my book campaign as well. You are the oldest cousin, and I am the oldest boy in our sibling group. I know what that weight feels like and I am committed to supporting you in any way I can. Thank you for being patient with me and showing me grace when I haven't deserved it. I promise to keep working on myself and showing up for you and all of the cousins in better and better ways over the coming years.

To Pam Kesling: Your generosity and support mean the world to me. I am truly grateful that you are part of my life, and that Arlis has you in his life as well. Thank you for being so kind.

To Christian and Danielle: I appreciate how you both continually choose to grow in your leadership abilities. Without your love and support I would never be able to grow our company Business Marketing Engine the way we have been able to.

To Doug Beaver: You are one of my oldest and dearest friends, mentors, and coaches. When it comes to effective communication, you have faithfully demonstrated to me how a true leader lives, acts, and communicates. I would never have been able to reach the levels of success that I have today without your friendship and guidance. You have stood in the gap for me so many times. Thanks for giving me my first paid music gig and thank you for taking me to the Odeon to see all those rock shows. You've been an amazing father figure in my life for so many years, and I am a better man because of it.

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To Brian Kurtz: If it wasn't for your example, I would never have been able to become a writer like I am today. When I first realized (by your example) that it was possible to write about umpiring Little League games while at the same time teaching marketing lessons, that's when I decided to become a copywriter. Your example has inspired me to write and has led me to make millions of dollars. More importantly though, your example of living a 100/0 life has helped me grow and mature as a leader, and my life is richer because of you. Thank you for being a living example of what a true overdelivering servant leader is.

To my friend Jay Crouch: I hope when you open this book up and see your name here that you understand at a deep level how impactful you have been in my life. This book would have never happened without your passionate pursuit of effective communication. It would never have happened if you didn't patiently take the time to challenge me and help me grow as a communicator. Thank you for making the world a better place for me and everyone else to live in. Your words and your support of me will be ever in my soul.

And to everyone else who so generously backed the campaign:

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with, Albert Martinez, Barry Kleiman, Frank Mendoza, Shane Fielder, Sonny Tran, Brea Starmer, Susan McVea, Erick Magana, Iron Wil Becker, John Thompson, Scott Lucas, “Big” Chris Senkeresty, David Van Deman, Miguel Jones, David Conway, Jeeva Sam, Ryan Chute, Nate Kaminski, Shawn Cartwright, Adam LaFaber, Will Hurst, John Higham, Jeanie Holzbacher, Angie deBorja, Jeff Cool, Susan Cheek, Mary Ann Schneider, Max Bernstein, Lea Swanson, Sushee Perumal, Eric Butts, Justin Pickering, Wade Ellett, Jeff Brewer, Lori Gorrell, Cedric Crumbley, Christine Schlonski, Tim May, Todd Giannattasio, Alicia Schmitt, Paul Edwards, Diogène Ntirandekura, Amy Petrillo, Shanna Brown, Jason Hein, Brande Weber, Louann Vu, Marisa Cali, Bailee Szuter, John Kuder, Katherine Banfield, George Kalantzis, Alex Makarski, John Stiles, Billie Streets, David Ramsey, Betsy Aguilar, Jarrod Souza, Sean Scott, Amir Pozderac, Andrew Kaplan, Stephanie Jue, Jesse Krieger, Curtis Riley, David Foley, Lorna Moon, Mike Roderick, Ashley DeLuca, Paul Docampo, and Jeff Leshay.

You are all some of the best friends a guy could wish for. I could write some pretty amazing and hilarious stories about our times together, but that would end up being another book in itself, so please just know how much I appreciate you being in my life. Because you decided to bet on me and help me make this dream come true, tens of thousands of people will be impacted by this book. I will never forget how you helped make this dream possible for me.

And for every single other person who shared the posts about my book, told friends about it, and to YOU the reader hold-

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ing this book in your hands, thank you for trusting me with your most precious asset: your time. I promise you that I have given you every last drop of goodness and truth that I can in this book. Thank you for buying this book and for choosing to invest in your communication skills.

I believe with all my heart that when we improve our communication skills, and truly learn to speak from the goodness of our hearts, that the world becomes a better place. You are the one creating the world around us, just as much as I am. So thank you for making it the beautiful and wonderful place that it is. I appreciate you.

INTRODUCTION

Why Communication Matters

Thank you for picking up a copy of this book.

My intention in writing this book is to empower you to live a rich and powerful life that knows no limits. Let me tell you, writing it wasn't as easy as I would have wanted it to be. I'm just like you.

I have fears and insecurities, and if I would have focused on those, this book would never have been written. While I believe that all of us have a book inside of us, I'm not naive enough to believe that everyone will put in the work to create something that has the potential to outlast them.

Legacy is something that many people talk about, but in reality, our legacy is pointless to us. When I'm gone I'll be buried in the ground somewhere, or maybe be sitting in a jar as a pile of ashes, and my "legacy" won't matter one damn bit to me.

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So what is the point of focusing on legacy? Does it even matter? As someone who studies the stoic philosophers (Marcus Aurelius is one of my favorites) I tend to follow their advice when it comes to this life and the afterlife.

Recently as I was reading Ryan Holiday's book *The Daily Stoic* (which I highly recommend), I came across a meditation that really grounded me as it relates to my legacy. Essentially what I learned from that passage in Ryan's book was this:

My legacy is meaningless if I'm both foolish enough and arrogant enough to think that it's something I will personally enjoy. And while I plan to live to be at least 120 years old, it doesn't matter how long I can stretch out my existence here on Earth as it relates to my legacy. I'm going to die just like you.

While that may sound like a morbid thing to say at the beginning of this book, it's actually something I find quite hopeful and grounding. Legacy is for and about everyone who comes after us. It's not something we'll be able to hold up as some kind of trophy.

Just like I read Marcus's book and received his wisdom centuries after he died, I truly hope that there will be people who get to enjoy this work of mine and find it valuable in their daily lives. I also hope that all the other work I'm doing in my life will stand the test of time and create a foundation for my great, great, great, great grandchildren.

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Every day I wake up and tell myself “Esta es el momento perfecto” which means: This is the perfect moment. It reminds me that this is the perfect time to take action on what matters. It’s the perfect time to tell someone that you love them and care about them. It’s the perfect time to change the course of your life and leave a bigger dent in the universe before you check out.

So with all that said, the reason I decided to write this book is twofold:

First, I believe that communication is one of the foundational pieces required for a leader to achieve entrepreneurial success (and success in life in general as well).

Second, because I truly believe that everyone would be wise to consider writing a book and sharing their story. The world becomes more empathetic and connected when we take time to openly share with others.

I don’t know about you, but I want my son and the generations that follow him to live in an increasingly better world. Despite what the flavor of the day is on the “news” (aka entertainment channels), I truly believe that the world is becoming a better place.

This isn’t a pie in the sky dream, it’s actually a belief that is backed up with extensive research. In Steven Pinker’s book *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*, he

lays out a very clear and convincing data set that shows how our world is getting better.

Based on that book and other research I've done, I believe that violence began to decrease and empathy for others began to increase the day Johannes Gutenberg invented the modern printing press. That day, in the year 1440, I doubt that Johannes Gutenberg had any idea how impactful it would be.

Books change the world.

They change the world because they allow us to view things from another perspective. They allow us to communicate new ideas in great depth. Instead of asking a friend to sit and talk with us for 10 – 12 hours straight, while we are required to only listen and not respond, we now have the luxury of sharing all that information in a book that can be read at their leisure, bit by bit.

For those of you who have ever had your own garden, you know that a gentle rain is much safer and better for your plants than a torrential storm or flash flood. Gentle rain nourishes your plants, whereas the flash flood may destroy everything in one pass.

When we write a book we get to drip the information into someone else's head at a slow pace, just like the gentle rain helps your garden grow. There have been a few times in my 20+ year career as an entrepreneur I have received compliments that stuck with me. They were both moments where I was truly

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proud of my work and also able to receive encouragement from those I appreciate and trust.

The first time was when my good friend Tori Reid said this to me:

“Reading your emails feels just like we’re having a cup of coffee together. You feel so warm and approachable.”

The second time was just recently when Wycliff Maina, one of my online family members who reads my email newsletters each week, wrote back to me and said this:

“Thanks for your rich life insights. Sometimes when reading your emails, I feel like you are there face to face addressing me and I must admit that is incredible.”

I have to agree with Wycliff. It is incredible. The fact that we have the ability to put our words down on paper and share them with others is a truly amazing gift.

I’m sharing these two simple stories with you because I want you to realize that you too have the ability to care for, influence, and lead those around you with amazing communication. I believe with all my heart that excellent communication is the key to success in all areas of life.

When we’re able to clearly communicate our intentions, where our heart is, and what we want to accomplish, it allows those around us to connect more deeply. As you’ll learn throughout this book, I believe that entrepreneurship is servant leadership.

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True entrepreneurs make a difference in the world by creating lasting impact. They make a difference by showing up and serving their audience at the highest level. While possible, I believe it's incredibly difficult to serve others well without having mastered communication.

This book is the summation of 20+ years of my journey to discover, learn and apply the principles of communication. While I realize that my work in learning communication will never be 100% complete, I do feel confident that you will find incredible value in this book.

Communication affects everything. Our relationships, our team building efforts, our marketing, our sales, nearly everything comes down to communication. The principles and tools I will share with you here are ones I've learned from much wiser people than me. I've tested them, adjusted and improved on some of them, and done my absolute best to make them instantly applicable for your life.

I promise you that if you start implementing these tools, you will have the ability to impact more people in a positive way. You'll also have the opportunity to deepen your relationships with those around you that you love. As you read through the following pages, I have one recommendation for you:

Be open to trying these new tools and approaches.

Even if they seem silly or difficult to try at first, I'm absolutely certain that they can change your life. So when you learn a

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new tool, give it a try. You never know how it might change your life. And more importantly, you never know how it might impact the lives of those around you that you love and care for.

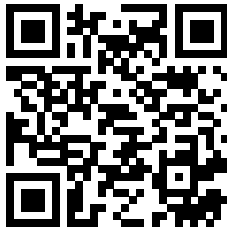
Improved communication is the answer you've been searching for in so many areas, so together let's give it a try. I promise you that I will do everything in my power to serve you and improve your life in the following pages.

If you choose to invest in yourself as it relates to your communication, I know that you'll be pleased with the result. Communication is everything and I'm going to do everything I can to teach you more about it.

With all my love,
Gabe

Getting the Most Out of This Book

Before your dive in, I want to ensure that you are able to get the maximum value out of this book. I've created a resource guide, along with bonus videos that accompany this book. You can visit <https://atomicwords.com/resources> to get your free copy of the bonuses. Or just scan the QR code below:



There is a three minute long video on the resources page that, if you watch it, will help you take the first step towards delivering impactful communication. So go watch that now before you proceed. I promise you it will be worth the few extra minutes.

SECTION I

THE FOUNDATION

Foundational principles are what help us understand the path forward in any new skill, or any skill we're working to improve.

In this first section, I'm going to share the foundations that I've discovered over the course of the past two decades of work in communication.

I'm excited to share them with you, so let's dive right in.

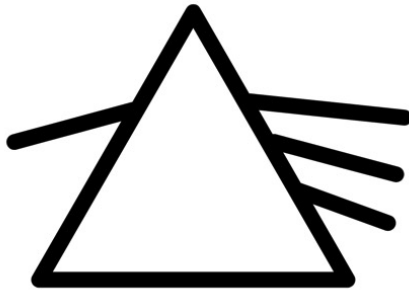
CHAPTER 1

The Prism Effect

“Only the development of compassion and understanding for others can bring us the tranquility and happiness we all seek.”

— The Dalai Lama

The Prism Effect



Have you ever held a prism in your hand? I have. To me it looks like a glass pyramid. When the light passes through it, the rays of light are split into a rainbow of beautiful colors. This image is probably most famous because Pink Floyd used it on their album *The Dark Side of the Moon*.

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What I love about holding a prism is that on one side of the prism, there is normal light, and on the other side is an array of beauty and color. I believe that our perspective is The Prism Effect that we use to view the world around us. It affects how we interact with others, how we feel about them, and even how we feel about ourselves.

Let me share an example from my life that will illustrate this clearly.

I grew up in a family with one older sister and five younger brothers. Cody is my second to youngest brother and is one of the smartest, toughest, and kindest men I know. Even though he is over 10 years younger than me, I look up to him.

At the same time he's one of my youngest brothers so I feel a huge sense of responsibility for his well-being. I want to always give him the best advice, and of course the best possible work I can give when he hires my team and me.

So my intentions, focus, and emotions around my choices as it relates to Cody and serving him and his business are a mix of love, care and concern coupled with having deep respect for him as leader and businessman. With that frame of mind I'm deeply committed to serving him with amazing work that is on time.

That's how The Prism Effect first came to mind for me.

When I think about any one of my clients (and I believe that my team members are my internal clients), I ask myself, "If this

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was my brother Cody or my sister Heather, how would I treat them at this moment?” As I reflect back now with a little more wisdom, I feel like I’ve really dropped the ball in this area of my life in the past. Unfortunately, I haven’t always viewed my team members and clients, along with my friends, in this light. While I think it’s pretty normal to have a season of arrogance and narcissism in our lives, I regret that this season in my life was longer than it should have been.

I’m now deeply committed to using The Prism Effect every day in every way possible. You can achieve this powerful new perspective too. The specific shift and state change I’m recommending for you will help you hold yourself and your team to a higher standard of client service. I strongly believe that as entrepreneurs and leaders we must become great at showing care and empathy in our words and tone.

The true inspiration behind The Prism Effect is from a principle that one of my mentors Brian Kurtz talks about. He calls it 100/0. When we choose to go 100% of the way in a relationship, we are choosing to serve the other person at the highest level. Not expecting anything in return, and truly investing in relational reciprocity (not shallow transactional “reciprocity”), is what Brian teaches and is all about.

When I first heard his concept of 100/0 I intellectually got it, but I didn’t truly understand it in my heart. It wasn’t until I realigned my focus into serving at the highest level did it truly click. Once I understood that it was my job to go above and

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beyond in service, 100/0 made perfect sense to me, and the Universe delivered The Prism Effect to me.

I believe The Prism Effect can solve nearly all the problems that we face in business, and I also believe that it can solve almost all the problems in the world. There are too many “leaders” in our world right now who believe that trash talking and bullying are effective forms of communication. They aren’t.

When we think about the perspective of others, and when we truly show regard for them in the same way we would a dear loved one, then we are operating with a heart of service. In my personal experience, approaching a relationship with this perspective allows us to use the tone of voice and words that are aligned with our heart of love and service.

Years ago when I was taking a very brief break from full time entrepreneurship, I was working in an auto repair shop. It was part of a large chain that you drive past every day if you live in the United States and it was truly one of the best learning experiences I’ve ever had. And interestingly enough, working there ultimately led me to create my first million-dollar product Copywriter Today. Copywriter Today is a content subscription service that allows our clients to have an unlimited stream of fresh content for their marketing purposes.

When I started working at the auto repair shop, my manager, John, taught me how to truly listen to what the customers wanted. He used to say, “Just sell them what they came in for Gabe!” He also taught me how to resolve conflicts with cus-

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tomers by just listening to them. While John had spent over 30 years in the auto industry at that point, he had managed to not become one of the bad guys.

I remember one day when one of the mechanics in the shop made a nearly fatal mistake and didn't properly tighten and check the torque on the lug nuts on a BMW he had just put new tires on. The customer had just returned from a deployment in Iraq.

This mechanic's nickname was Hulk. He was big and strong, and generally a decent enough guy to work with. The odd thing about this day is that there were two contrasting situations that occurred.

The first customer, the veteran, had an \$80,000 BMW and Hulk seemed more interested in the car than his work. When we received an angry call from the customer a couple hours later, my manager John lost his temper and was screaming at Hulk. The customer had been on the highway and lost one of the wheels.

He had a near death accident and was rightfully upset. The way my manager John reacted was obviously not the way to communicate with anyone, but I did understand why John was so angry. Hulk hadn't been paying attention and nearly killed one of our customers.

I remember John talking about our customer and saying, "He survived Iraq but he nearly died from Hulk's terrible work!"

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Oddly enough, right after putting tires on the BMW, Hulk had put new tires on my beater car as well. He drove it around the block for me and double checked everything. Fortunately for me, he did excellent work on my car. None of my wheels fell off on the highway. I didn't have a near death experience.

As I reflected on this experience last year before I even knew I was going to write this book, I realized that this was The Prism Effect in action. Hulk hadn't connected the fact that the other customer should have been treated like a brother or friend that he loved and cared about. But Hulk *did* connect the dots on my car. It was easier because we worked together, but I could tell he genuinely cared and wanted to do a great job for me. His perspective ultimately caused safety for me and near death for the other guy.

I believe that our perspective matters more than we realize. So next time you're faced with a situation where your attitude or the other person's attitude isn't the greatest, ask yourself this question:

"If they were a loved one, how would I treat them at this moment?"
Or as one of my dear friends Pamela Savino asks in her book *Soar*, *"What would love do?"* Those are the questions that we can ask to put The Prism Effect into practice every day.

Sometimes You Have to Love Them and Let Them Go:

As much as I wish that we could love every client and everyone around us for the rest of time, it's not realistic. Let's use my family as a real and accurate example again.

I have a few family members that are just toxic for me to be around. I love them, but it's really unhealthy for us to spend too much time together. We just don't connect energetically and it's a strain to be around them. I actually develop a sore throat when I'm around one of them for too long. I guess that's my body's way of warning me that the relationship is toxic.

I also (and I know I'm probably not the only one) have a family member that lies to me once in a while. I still love them but I can't work closely with them because I don't trust them like other members of my family who are honest with me no matter what. So I want to love all the clients I can, and I also know we will need to love some people from a distance because they are not trustworthy enough for us to work closely with them.

This mindset and the stories here are important to me because they outline how I want to show up in the world and treat those around me. Not every relationship is what we want or need, but even in those times when we know things need to change or even end, we can still be direct and kind when we part ways or slow down a relationship.

One thing I do with both those who lie to me and those trustworthy people like my brother Cody is, with the intention of

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love, challenge them periodically on their ideas and choices. I'll call them out gently on things they say that are bullshit.

Why do I choose positive confrontation in both relationships? Because I believe it's one of the most important ways that we love people. I strongly believe that positive confrontation is one of the healthiest forms of communication. It's also one of our guiding principles at my company Business Marketing Engine. So with both our clients and team members we love on, and also with those we have to conclude services with, we can lovingly challenge and confront them from time to time. When we confront anyone, we should begin from a place of love and service to them. If we state that intention of love and service before we confront them, we could make such a positive impact in their life by challenging them in a healthy way.

Going forward I'd encourage you to treat your clients and team members like your dearest loved ones by using The Prism Effect. When we hold the prism up and look through it, everyone we see around us suddenly is recognizable and beautiful in their own way because we see our loved ones in our clients.

You get to create the world you live in, so why not make it a beautiful place? Your world can be full of love, colors, joy and healthy communication. All you have to do is use The Prism Effect every day.

Putting it into practice:

Write down three people or groups you dislike. Ask yourself where that perception came from and see if it is objective.

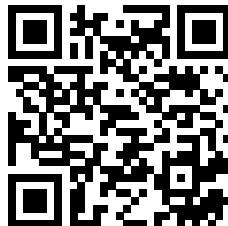
Write down things you want to change about your perception and relationships with those people.

Put these notes somewhere where you'll see them every day for a week.

After a week, see if your perspective and perceptions of others have changed.

Recently, as I finished the final touches on this book, I discovered that I had been missing an area in my life where I needed to apply The Prism Effect. Had I not taken time to reflect on this, I could have damaged a very important relationship and simultaneously lost out on millions of dollars of opportunities.

To hear this story, and to also see if you may be making the same mistake I was, make sure you have your copy of the bonuses that are available to you at <https://atomicwords.com/resources>. Or just scan the QR code below:



CHAPTER 2

The Wisdom Triangle

*“Wisdom is not a product of schooling but
of the lifelong attempt to acquire it.”*

— Albert Einstein

In the middle of summer in 2020, my son and I decided to take a road trip from Ohio to Montana and do some camping. The reason for that was because 2020 wasn't exactly the year that anyone on the planet Earth planned for. With the COVID pandemic hitting hard in all areas of the world, the family cruise we'd planned to take got canceled. While I was disappointed at first, I chose to be grateful for the opportunity.

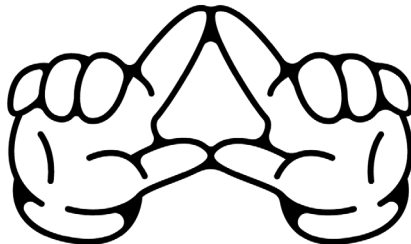
My son was eight years old at the time, and I knew that this would not only be the perfect time to get away from the rest of the world; I also knew that this was summer number eight of 18 that I had with him before he'd move on to adulthood. Being a father is something that I've dreamed about since I was my son's age at eight or nine years old, and so I never take for granted the time that I have with him. Every moment we get to spend together is truly magical.

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And so while the world seemed to be burning down according to the entertainment channels that label themselves “news,” I got to experience one of the most magical and amazing summers of my life. I believe that the only reason that I’m blessed to be able to make that statement is because I’ve been striving for wisdom for years.

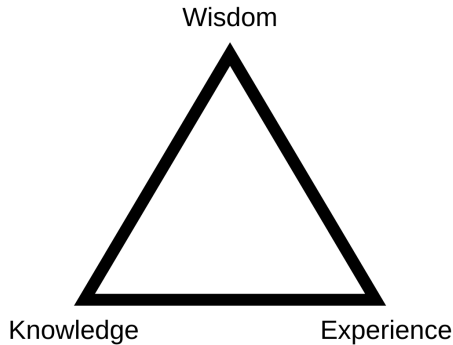
Einstein had it right in his quote. Wisdom isn’t really an arrival point in your life; it’s more of a journey of creating a principled approach to finding it. I hadn’t fully realized this until one night when my son and I were sitting at the campfire having a deep conversation about life. We were tired out from hiking up the mountain that day, and I was enjoying a beer. He was eating an incredibly burned marshmallow, just the way he always likes them.

Out of nowhere he shared a story about someone else in his life who kept making the same mistakes and kept forgetting things. As we talked about this person, he shared with me that they read tons of books all the time. He didn’t understand how they could read a lot but still act in a foolish manner. As I was sitting and listening to my son share this story, the concept of the Wisdom Triangle came to me. I held up both hands and made a triangle shape using my thumbs and index fingers.



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I then explained to him that the wisdom triangle is made up of three corners. In the lower left is knowledge. The lower right point is experience. On the top point is wisdom. You cannot achieve wisdom unless you have both knowledge and experience. Those alone aren't enough either though. Your upward focus must be on discovering the pinnacle of wisdom. Wisdom doesn't just come to us naturally. We have to invest time and energy in deep thought.



Taking time to reflect on what you know, and then comparing that to the empirical data that experience brings us is the first step. When you take time for deep reflection on both points of your knowledge and experience you can then ask yourself, "What does this mean and what should I do with that meaning?" That is the path towards wisdom.

Asking ourselves big, impossible questions is also something that I've found to be incredibly valuable. Whatever higher power designed and created our brains made them so that they can process information consciously and unconsciously.

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This is incredibly valuable because if you ask yourself the same big hard question on a daily or even weekly basis, eventually your mind (after passing that question through some of your 86 billion brain cells a few times) will come back to you with a solid answer.

Your mind can actually turn something over trillions of times in just a matter of a few days or weeks. While in today's world we are beginning to have access to supercomputers that can mirror the performance of parts of the human mind, we don't yet have a computer that can achieve all the nuanced thinking that our brains can.

I also feel it's foolish to discount the power of divine influence on our lives as well. Supercomputers can do crazy things, but they don't have the human element that we have (at least not yet). Our intellect (our brain's computing power), coupled with our own spirit's intuition, and hooked up to the Universe's knowledge can (if we let it) lead to incredible amounts of wisdom. It's our job to cultivate wisdom.

As I've studied the great religions of the world, Eastern philosophy, and the words of the stoics, I've noticed a repeating pattern. All of these different belief systems and philosophies put a very high importance upon the practice of meditation.

Gaining knowledge, gaining experience, and then taking time to chew on and reflect upon the knowledge we have is something that produces incredible results in the long run. If you don't already have a daily habit of meditation, silence, and

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contemplation, I'd strongly encourage you to start implementing that right away.

I have yet to meet a truly successful entrepreneur and leader who doesn't practice some form of meditation in their daily lives. As I said earlier, becoming wise is not an arrival point; it's more of a daily practice. I also believe that wisdom can fade. If we don't keep the two foundational points of knowledge and experience sharp, then we'll miss out.

Knowledge from 20 years ago may or may not serve you well anymore. It will only serve you well if you continue to increase your knowledge in that area, apply it through real life experiences and then seek out the wisdom you need.

The Wisdom Triangle is a symbol that the Universe gave me in that moment on how to find and develop wisdom. Just like I shared it with my son, I want to share it with you. If you take your hands and make a triangle with your thumbs and index fingers, you can now look through that viewfinder and see the world around you.

Wisdom gives us the ability to view the world through our knowledge and experience lens. It should allow us to prepare for the future and learn from the past. It should also ideally help us be more objective and rely on more empirical data whenever possible.

Sometimes I see myself or others around me relying on just their knowledge. This approach leads to painful failures. In

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my first business I thought I knew it all because I'd read all the books on business and I figured that was enough. The problem was that I didn't actually have the experience to make wise choices in certain areas of that venture. Ultimately, my failure to utilize The Wisdom Triangle led me to lose a multimillion-dollar construction company during the housing market crash.

I "knew" it all back then in my twenties, and because of that a lot of people got hurt. It's one of the failures that I've forgiven myself for, and it's also one of the failures that I hold dear as a gift because it gave me the experience that ultimately led me to the wisdom I have today. It's also that kind of hard earned wisdom that allows me to help so many of my clients overcome the challenges they face in their businesses every day.

When wisdom is properly cultivated, it should give us the confidence and ability to not react in the moment when something challenging occurs. When we intentionally use The Wisdom Triangle in every area of our lives and our businesses, we are able to show up with more love and service to others.

Why is this?

Because when you have wisdom, you have confidence in yourself. You have confidence in your knowledge and your experience. This confidence only truly comes when you have all three pieces in place. Knowledge, experience, and wisdom that comes from thoughtful introspection.

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The deep work of life and entrepreneurship is not coming up with your next business idea. The deep and important work comes from looking inside ourselves and asking, “How can I take the gifts of wisdom I have and make the world around me a better place?” Wisdom is a hard earned asset that makes you more valuable as an entrepreneur. It saves you and your team pain and failure. It helps you serve your clients at the highest level if you continually work to develop it.

Recently I was speaking with a long time client of mine who had to redeploy (fire) an employee because they had chosen to not do their job. Although in the moment it’s one of the worst parts of my job, I’ve successfully redeployed hundreds of people over the years. I also help my clients redeploy team members that should be elsewhere.

In my experience, and with the knowledge that I have acquired over two decades as an entrepreneur, I have the wisdom to know that redeploying people is often the best way to serve them. When we don’t let someone go when we should, we are actually hurting them, our teams, and ourselves.

So although it’s one of the jobs I like the least in the moment, I still redeploy those that are no longer a fit for my team. I help my clients do the same because the servant leader entrepreneurs that I work with have big hearts. It’s hard for them to let go of someone they invested so much in and had high hopes for.

In this case, my client knew they had to let this person go, and they did. It wasn’t a pleasant experience, but nothing explosive

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happened. Then, a few weeks later, this ex-employee started drunk texting my client all sorts of threats and hateful things.

My client (who has been in business for over a decade) has wisdom. She sent one professional reply and then chose to disengage from the conversation. Wisdom tells us that engaging and escalating the upset person could lead to unfortunate consequences. Instead of reacting, my client acted with wisdom because this was not their first time redeploying a team member to other opportunities.

That is how wisdom is applied. Use your knowledge, use your experience, and then reflect on what you should learn from both. It's only when we use The Wisdom Triangle consistently that we can go from a place of knowledge to a place of knowing (aka wisdom).

This story also reminds me of one of the guiding principles we have at Business Marketing Engine. Our seventh principle states:

Challenges Are OK, Emergencies Are Rare – We believe that unless someone is bleeding or actually dying that we aren't experiencing a true emergency and we can take time to think, plan and execute well. When necessary, we take The Matches Out of the Other Person's Hands.

Wisdom allows us to be responsive and not reactive. Rarely (unless as our seventh guiding principle states) is there actually an emergency that requires reactive and frantic behaviors and deci-

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sion making. We almost always have the time to stop, think, and apply the hard earned wisdom we have to the situation we're in.

While this is a simple foundational lesson, I strongly recommend that you take time to consider it. I'd encourage you to set aside a "wisdom hour" for yourself each week and take time for quiet reflection. No phone, no TV, maybe just a quiet place in your house, or maybe a quiet walk outdoors will work for you. For me, walking outside in nature is one of the best ways to reflect. There's a lot of science that points to the fact that when we are outside walking, the activity and the stimulation do incredibly wonderful things to our brain and health overall.

Regardless, whatever structure you put in place, stick to it for four weeks in a row and then see how you feel. Do you have more confidence in yourself? Do you feel more at peace? Or maybe, you start to feel uncomfortable because there are some things that you need to address that you've been ignoring. Whatever comes up for you, don't push it away. Sit with it and choose a curious and open state of mind.

Prayer, meditation, and thoughtful silence are some of the secret weapons that all great entrepreneurs use to guide them forward in their pursuit of wisdom. Wisdom tells us that slowing down will give us the time and space to thoroughly process through what's happening around us and allow us to make the best decision we can.

While taking action is an absolute key part of success, taking unplanned action often leads to expensive learning experi-

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ences. While we can learn from and value the times that we took that approach, it's not something that should be repeated over and over. I remember years ago when I first heard the international bestselling author John Maxwell share about his "thinking chair." He spoke about how each day he takes time to sit quietly and think.

Jeff Bezos of Amazon has a similar mindset. He doesn't believe in waking up crazy early like some entrepreneurs do. He takes time to ease into his day, have breakfast with his family, and I've also read that he will block out one to two hours per day for alone time just for thinking.

You can't conquer complex things and you can't grow your business without wisdom. Insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results, right? So in order to grow and change, I'd strongly recommend that you set aside time to think. Setting new thought patterns, considering what's working and not working, and reflecting on who you are and how you want to show up in this world is some of the most important work you'll ever do.

Putting it into practice:

Take time right now to block out thinking time as a recurring appointment at least once a week in your calendar.

Also, I'd encourage you to take time today for quiet reflection. If you just take 15 minutes right now, you'll have the opportu-

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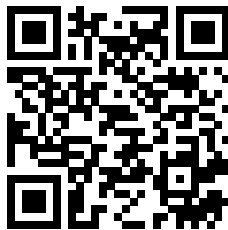
nity to deepen your wisdom and uncover the truth you need in this season of your life.

When you sit down to think, start by asking yourself these questions and then write down what comes to you. Ideally you should use an offline device for notes (like pen and paper or a device in airplane mode) so you don't get distracted with notifications and other noise.

Ask yourself:

1. What am I most proud of in my life right now?
2. What things do I need to improve on personally?
3. What knowledge and experience do I need to gain in order to serve and impact more people around me?

I have a special section in the bonus resources focused on how to apply The Wisdom Triangle to your life. So if you haven't already grabbed your bonuses, head over to <https://atomicwords.com/resources> to get your free copy of the bonuses. Or just scan the QR code below:



CHAPTER 3

The Confidence Core

“Because one believes in oneself, one doesn’t try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one doesn’t need others’ approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her.”

— Lao Tzu

As much as I wish that confidence was something we’re born with, I don’t believe that to be true anymore (at least in most cases). I’m an incredibly confident salesperson, writer, and entrepreneur and yet in other areas of my life I’m fearful and afraid. While admitting that doesn’t really make me feel that tough and strong, I’ve decided that it’s better to be honest and vulnerable than it is to sell you a load of crap.

I first noticed my lack of confidence in certain areas when I was 16 years old. I was already selling websites and doing construction and remodeling projects on the side, so I was clearly confident in some things.

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The challenges started popping up for me when it came to dating and approaching the opposite sex. I remember the first time I bought a girl that I liked flowers. I took a lot of time to plan it out. I figured that giving her flowers (despite the fact we weren't dating or in any kind of serious relationship) was a great first move.

So I bought her flowers and a card and walked into the church youth group meeting early. I found her, awkwardly walked up to her, said, "Here. These are for you," and handed her the flowers.

I figured I had it all nailed down...

Well clearly that is not how to approach some girl you like. She turned red, laughed, and then her friend laughed at me too. She ended up leaving the flowers sitting on a table and never came back for them.

I was crushed.

In that moment I realized that I had no idea what I was doing. It was incredibly embarrassing, and I didn't even know what I had done wrong. Unfortunately that experience along with a few other cringe-worthy moments shaped my lack of confidence early on as a teenager as it related to meeting and talking to women.

The good news is that I have been blessed with some amazing women who, over the years, have helped me overcome some

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of my fear and lack of confidence. The even better news is that my life partner Rachel saw how awkward and insecure I was when we first met and went the extra mile to show me the way to deep connection.

Now, thanks to her, I don't feel inadequate at all in that area of my life. We've had lots of long conversations and tried different ways to work together so that I don't feel insecure about any areas of my relationship with her. Before I met Rachel, I blamed myself for my lack of confidence in this area of my life.

What really baffled me was that I was *super confident* in so many areas of life, yet this one escaped me. By the time I was 25 years old I had already sold over 10 million dollars' worth of products and services. You'd think that with that kind of sales track record I could "seal the deal" with the opposite sex.

Unfortunately, confidence in one area doesn't necessarily translate to confidence in other areas. It wasn't until I set my intentions on writing this book that I finally uncovered the truth of where confidence originates.

The Confidence Core is something that I've witnessed in action thousands of times.

Early in my life I just didn't realize it was there. Until recently, when I did the deep internal and reflective work that it takes to uncover important truths, it was a mystery to me. Now that I've uncovered The Confidence Core, I personally believe that

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it is the truth for me and for almost everyone on the planet. Once I break this down for you, I want you to think about the areas you're confident in. I want you to think about the areas you're not confident in.

As you take time to reflect, I'm certain that this framework will not only illuminate new truths for you, but it will help you understand some of your past history too. So let's dive into The Confidence Core framework now.

In order to find confidence, you need the following key components:

First, you need a trusted advisor who has a servant's heart and truly cares about you.

Second, you need someone who teaches and shows you the way by example, not just by talking about things in theory.

And third, you need to practice their approach to get consistent results in your own life.

It's really that simple.

When I think about my confidence in sales, it reminds me of the time my grandfather took me to look at a prospective client's masonry project. When we arrived at the homeowner's house, the prospect explained that they needed their stone wall repaired.

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My grandfather held out his hand, smiled, and said, “Just hand me your checkbook. I’ll write in the amount, and we’ll take great care of you!” He said it with a chuckle, but what blew me away is the prospect *did in fact* hand him her checkbook.

My grandfather was one of the first entrepreneurs to show me (not just tell me) that entrepreneurship is truly about servant leadership. In the end he wasn’t asking for the prospect’s checkbook to rip her off; he was saying with his smile, his tone, and eventually his words and deeds, that he would take great care of her.

If that had been the only time I saw my grandfather sell something, it likely wouldn’t have been enough. Fortunately for me, he showed me how to look at blueprints, write up specifications, and figure out what things cost. For a guy who only had a third grade education and could barely read or write, he did incredibly well. Over the years I believe that my grandfather sold well over 100 million dollars in contracting services.

He also owned a restaurant, bowling alley, and investment properties. While he didn’t always come out on top in every deal he made, he did over time get better at it and retired very comfortably with two homes and multiple boats, cars and trucks and other toys that he enjoyed.

While his toys were something that he enjoyed, he would often look over at me during the work days we spent together and say, “*You know Gabe, we work hard so we can go fishing when we want to!*” That’s really all my grandfather wanted from life

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by the time I was around. He loved spending time out on the water, sitting, fishing, and reflecting on life. If I close my eyes, I can still hear his voice and see his warm smile.

He also deeply valued the relationships in his life. He would walk through his hometown with me on sunny afternoons as we made our way to get some pie and ice cream at his favorite restaurant, and it would take us an hour just to get to where we were going.

Everyone knew him by name, and they all loved talking to him. He was someone that truly valued relationships. He's the one who inspired me to create our first guiding principle at Business Marketing Engine.

It says:

“Relationships First – We believe that relationships are more important than money. We show up and give our best work to all those around us, we listen first and then serve.”

When my grandfather passed away, and I had the incredible honor and privilege to give his eulogy, there were hundreds of people in attendance. In that moment I understood at a deeper level that he truly walked the talk and showed up for all the people in his life that he led and cared about.

As I've taken time to reflect on the confidence I have, a huge majority of it came from my grandfather, Ray Arnold. He was that trusted advisor in my life with a servant's heart. He showed

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me the way to work hard, sell, serve, and love and help people every single day.

When I started practicing what he had demonstrated to me for so many years, it was easy to be confident. Even when things were shaky, I knew what to do, because I'd seen him work through some incredibly tough times.

Right now you may be lacking confidence in your communication skills. Or, you might be lacking confidence in another area of your life as well. I want you to know that it's OK to feel unconfident. I felt that way when I started writing this book.

It was only after reading, studying, and watching some of my trusted advisors that I discovered that there was a framework and process that I could follow.

I wrote a few small books to start.

I practiced what I had seen others do.

And over time... I started to see that the processes that I had observed began to work for me too.

In my experience, you're going to have to do the same thing with communication and other new skills that you want to learn and gain confidence in. So with that in mind, I promise to walk you through as much as I possibly can as it relates to what I've learned about communication. This way you can rely on me to be the trusted advisor that shows you the way.

What I can tell you with absolute confidence is this:

When you practice these communication tools and processes on a consistent basis, you will find that your work is easier, and your stress is lower.

Too often in life we are trying to force things that don't work well. Other times we don't have the confidence or skills to achieve the results we want, so we become stressed and end up breaking things unintentionally. Whether we're breaking things inside our own business, or hurting an important relationship, in the end the costs are far greater than we can afford. That's why mastering communication is so important.

With efficient and effective communication we can clearly communicate, serve at the highest level, and make the world a better place. And that, my friend, is what I am all about. Serving you and making *your world a better place*.

Putting it into practice:

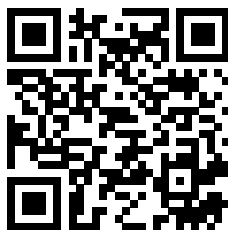
What is one area where you have amazing confidence and success? Who showed you the way?

What is one important area where you lack confidence? Where can you find a trusted advisor to show you the way?

Who in your life needs you as a trusted advisor? How can you give them the confidence they need?

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If for some reason you don't already have the bonuses for this book, I'd encourage you to head over to <https://atomicwords.com/resources> to get your free copy of the bonuses. Or just scan the QR code below:



In the bonus section for The Confidence Core I not only share how to find trusted advisors who can help you build confidence, but I also talk about how to identify those who should not be trusted. In my many years as an entrepreneur, I've run into my share of wolves in sheep's clothing that have cost me time and money that I didn't have to waste. I want you to be able to avoid those mistakes too. The Confidence Core tool actually came to me when I was doing deep reflection around a few people who, after I started working with them, turned out to be con artists.

The value of the lessons I learned was worth the price, but I'd rather you just get the lesson and skip the pain. So check out the bonus resources around The Confidence Core so you can benefit from my expensive lessons.

SECTION II

THE TOOLS

Having the right tools makes the job a lot easier, and it makes the quality of work we're producing much higher. It's not that it's impossible to dig a moat around your house with a spoon; it's just that it's a hell of a lot easier to do so with a big ol' excavator.

In this section I'm going to share with you the tools I've discovered, created, and used to improve my own communication skills. I also teach these tools to my team and clients, so they are tested processes that serve us all well. I'll use real life examples from my own life and my work with my team and clients.

The good news is that you get to start using these tools right away.

Don't worry, you won't be perfect on the first attempt, but let me tell you, using a big ol' excavator, no matter how unskilled

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you are, goes a lot faster than using the spoon you're used to digging moats with. So go ahead and give these a try right away! They will change your life, lower the stress and noise, and help you communicate at a deep and positively intense level.

But please remember this before we dive in:

Your heart's intention is louder than any words or tools you can use. So make sure you remember The Prism Effect before you begin any communication. Envision your audience as your dearest loved ones. That way you can come to the conversation with the right energy and the right intention. This simple approach has saved me so much heartache and so many mistakes, so I wanted to remind you again of it here as well.

We'll talk about how to make your communication and intentions even more powerful in this section, but for now, remember to show up to every conversation with love and care for the other person. That's truly the secret you need to ensure that these tools make an incredibly positive impact on you and those around you.