Confused Students Don’t Connect

What Enrollment Leaders and Counseling Professionals **Get Wrong** About Messaging to Students

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But, what is messaging?

What you say.

How you say it.

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We are all guilty of...

CONFUSING PEOPLE.

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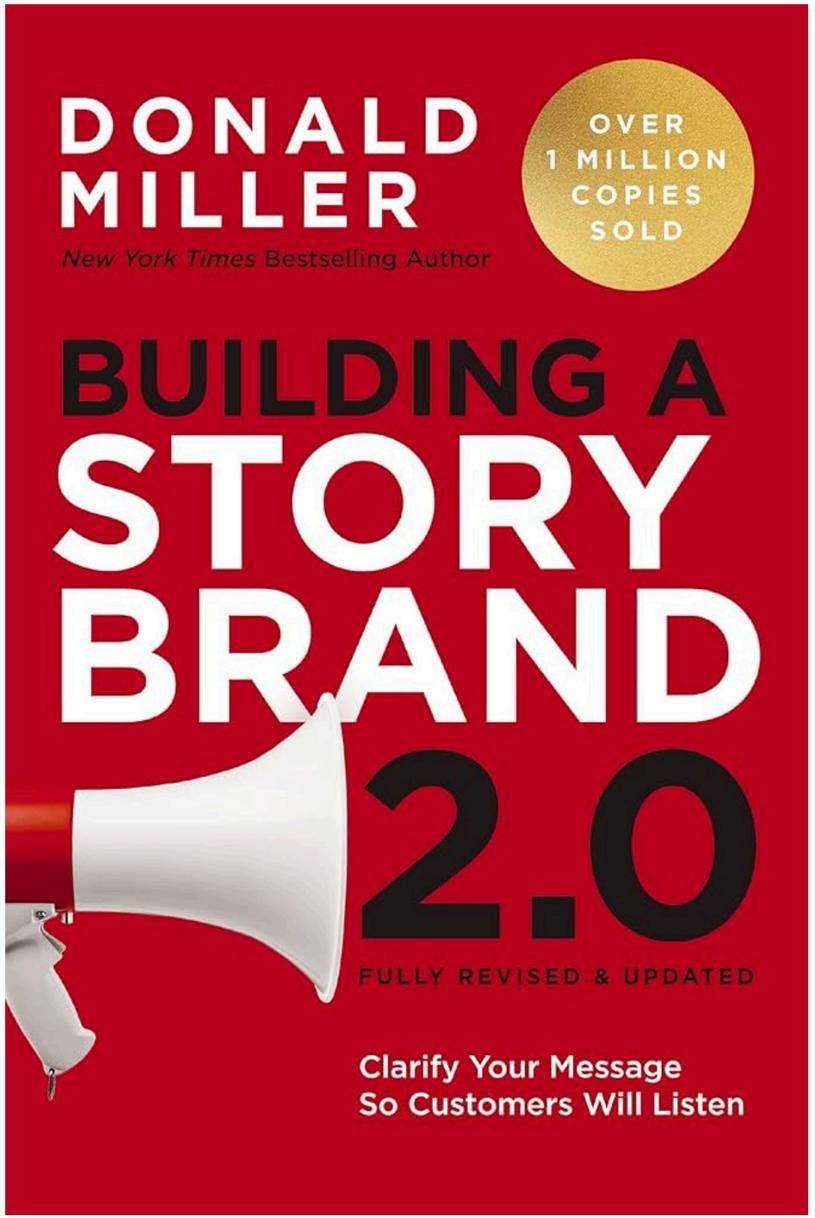
Goal

Rethink how you communicate with students and parents.

Do you engage them?

Or, do you confuse them?

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The 4 Rules of Messaging

FROM STORYBRAND

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LET’S GET STARTED

LOOK AT YOUR WEBPAGE

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Rule 01

Make It Zero Cognitive Load

Don’t make people think.

Nobody should have to work to understand your offer. A customer should know exactly what you mean the instant they read or hear your words.

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EXAMPLES

Category	✗ High Cognitive Load	✓ Low Cognitive Load
Mattress company	"Adaptive multi-zone support engineered with temperature-neutral foam technology."	"A comfortable, cool bed for better sleep."
Accounting software	"End-to-end financial workflow automation with real-time reconciliation."	"Intuitive bookkeeping done right and made easy."

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ALPHA UNIVERSITY

KNOWLEDGE · PEOPLE · A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

Alpha University
Admissions Overview

Curious Minds.
Greater Possibilities.

Why Choose Alpha University

- Rigorous academics and real-world learning
- Supportive, inclusive community
- Global perspective and service opportunities
- Vibrant campus life and leadership development
- Commitment to creating positive change

A community for today's learners and tomorrow's leaders.

Academic Programs

- 70+ undergraduate majors and minors
- Popular fields: Business, Computer Science, Health Sciences, Engineering, Arts & Humanities
- Interdisciplinary programs and research opportunities
- Experiential learning: internships, co-ops, and global study
- Faculty dedicated to student success

70+	Hands-On	Global	Real-World
Majors & Minors	Learning	Opportunities	Impact

Application Process

1. **Explore Our Programs**
   Learn about majors, faculty, and opportunities.
2. **Complete Your Application**
   Submit the online application and required materials.
3. **Submit Supporting Documents**
   Transcripts, test scores (if required), and essays.
4. **Application Review**
   Our holistic review considers your academic achievement, character, and potential.
5. **Receive Your Decision**
   Admissions decisions are released on a rolling basis.

Student Profile (Fall 2025)

8,500	28%	46	72+
Total Enrolled Students	International Students	U.S. States Represented	Countries Represented

3.8	1420	31
Average GPA (Middle 50%)	Average SAT (Middle 50%)	Average ACT (Middle 50%)

Campus Life & Outcomes

- 200+ student clubs and organizations
- Division I athletics and intramural sports
- Arts, culture, and performing arts
- Community service and leadership opportunities
- Career support, internships, and mentoring
- 94% employed or in graduate school within 6 months of graduation

More than a place to study — a place to belong.

Tuition, Scholarships & Contact

$62,000
Tuition (Undergraduate)

$28,000
Average Need-Based Aid

68% Students Receiving Financial Aid

Merit Scholarships
Available for outstanding students

Contact Us

admissions@alpha.edu
(800) 555-0100
www.alpha.edu

Follow our journey
@AlphaUniversity





Start College Abroad.

Graduate in 4 Years from a Top University.

Your pathway to an *accessible and transformative* college education.

VERTO EDUCATION



Rule 02

Link It to Survival

The one thing that motivates human behavior.

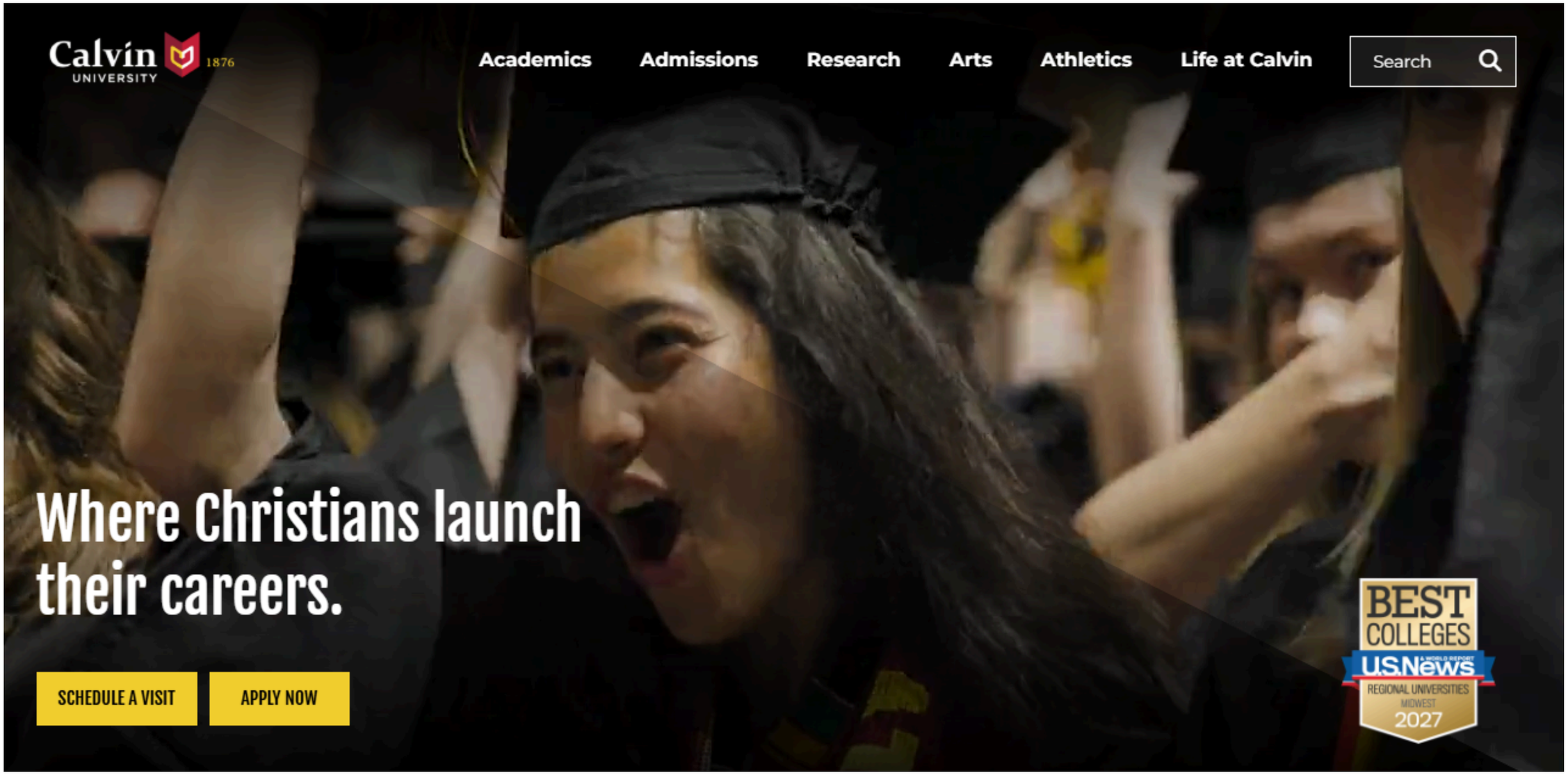
Human beings buy one thing: survival. We are survival machines, always scanning our environments for anything that helps us get ahead. Saving money, saving time, looking better, gaining status, securing a better future.

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EXAMPLES

Category	✗ Weak Survival Link	✓ Strong Survival Link
Solar panels	“High-efficiency monocrystalline panels with 22% conversion rates.”	“Cut your power bill in half.”
Gym	“State-of-the-art equipment and certified personal trainers.”	“Get fit enough to keep up with your kids.”

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Rule 03

Make It Memorable and Repeatable

If they can’t repeat it, it won’t spread.

The best advertising is word-of-mouth advertising. A customer should be able to repeat back your message word for word in the moment and the next day. A vague message dies the moment it’s spoken.

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EXAMPLES

Category	✗ Forgettable	✓ Repeatable
Coffee shop	“Artisan, ethically sourced coffee crafted by expert baristas.”	“Coffee worth waking up for.”
Moving company	“Full-service residential and commercial relocation solutions.”	“Nothing breaks, whatever it takes.”

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Rule 04

Make the Customer the Hero

You’re the guide, not the hero.

Your message should not be about you. It should be about the customer. They are the hero of their own story. Brands that talk about their mission, history, and their passion bore people.

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EXAMPLES

Category	✗ Brand as Hero	✓ Customer as Hero
Marketing agency	"We're an award-winning agency with 20 years of storytelling expertise."	"Invite your customers into a story and win their business forever."
Boutique hotel	"Experience our historic property, architecture, and four-star kitchen."	"Unwind, sleep well, and wake up in a place you love."

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SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY MADRID

The Buffington Brief

Heidi Buffington

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Your personal guide through the college admissions process.

We help students and their parents navigate the college admissions process.

"Committed to helping students discover colleges where they will truly thrive by focusing on fit, authenticity, and personal growth."

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17-20 Expert

10-16 Pretty Good

5-9 Needs Improvement

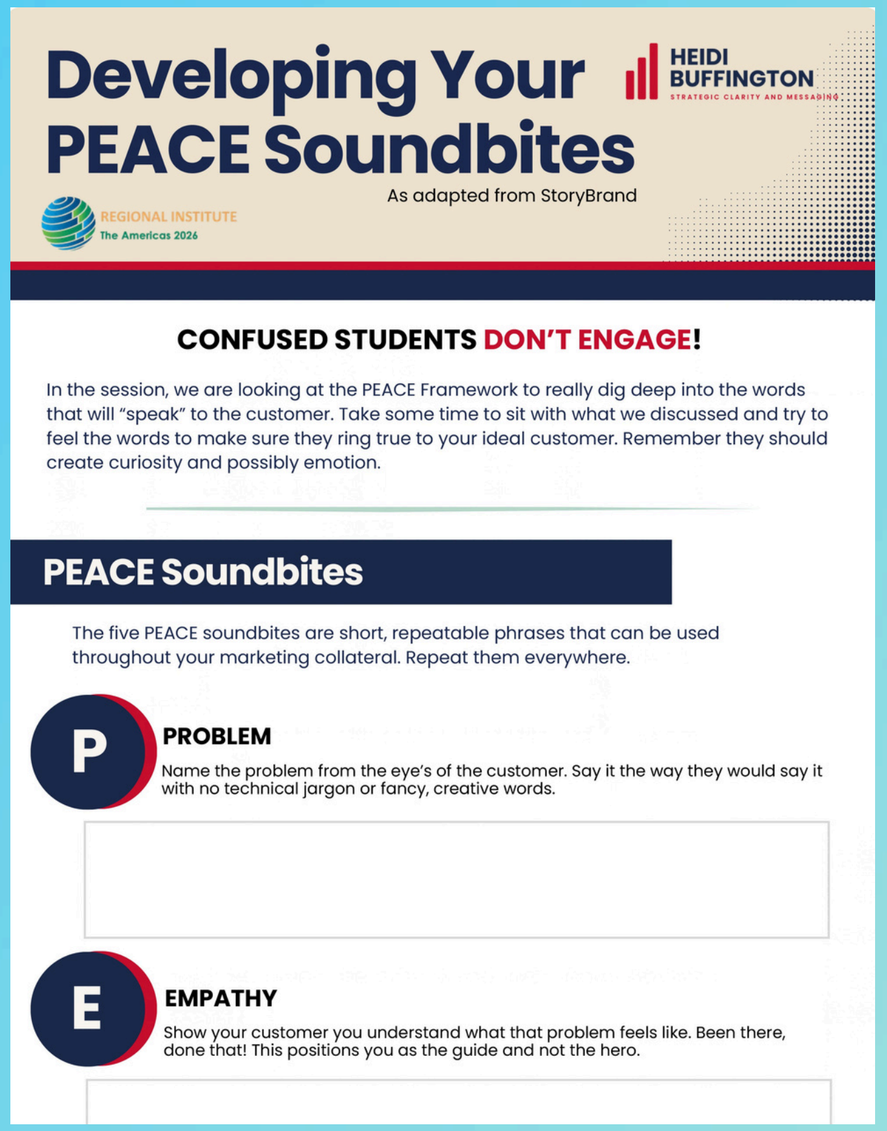
0-4 Thanks for Playing

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The PEACE Framework

FROM STORYBRAND

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Developing Your PEACE Soundbites

HEIDI BUFFINGTON
STRATEGIC CLARITY AND MESSAGING

As adapted from StoryBrand

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CONFUSED STUDENTS DON'T ENGAGE!

In the session, we are looking at the PEACE Framework to really dig deep into the words that will "speak" to the customer. Take some time to sit with what we discussed and try to feel the words to make sure they ring true to your ideal customer. Remember they should create curiosity and possibly emotion.

PEACE Soundbites

The five PEACE soundbites are short, repeatable phrases that can be used throughout your marketing collateral. Repeat them everywhere.

P **PROBLEM**

Name the problem from the eye's of the customer. Say it the way they would say it with no technical jargon or fancy, creative words.

E **EMPATHY**

Show your customer you understand what that problem feels like. Been there, done that! This positions you as the guide and not the hero.

Download the PDF

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LET’S GET STARTED

THINK OF ONE

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER PROFILE

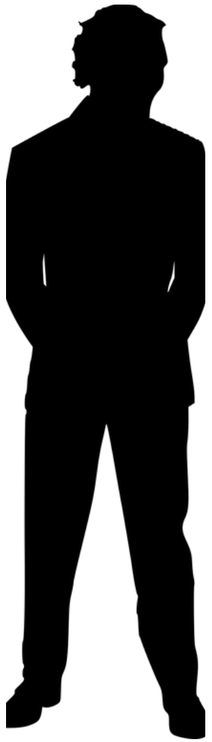
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THE PEACE FRAMEWORK

P	E	A	C	E
PROBLEM	EMPATHY	ANSWER	CHANGE	END RESULT

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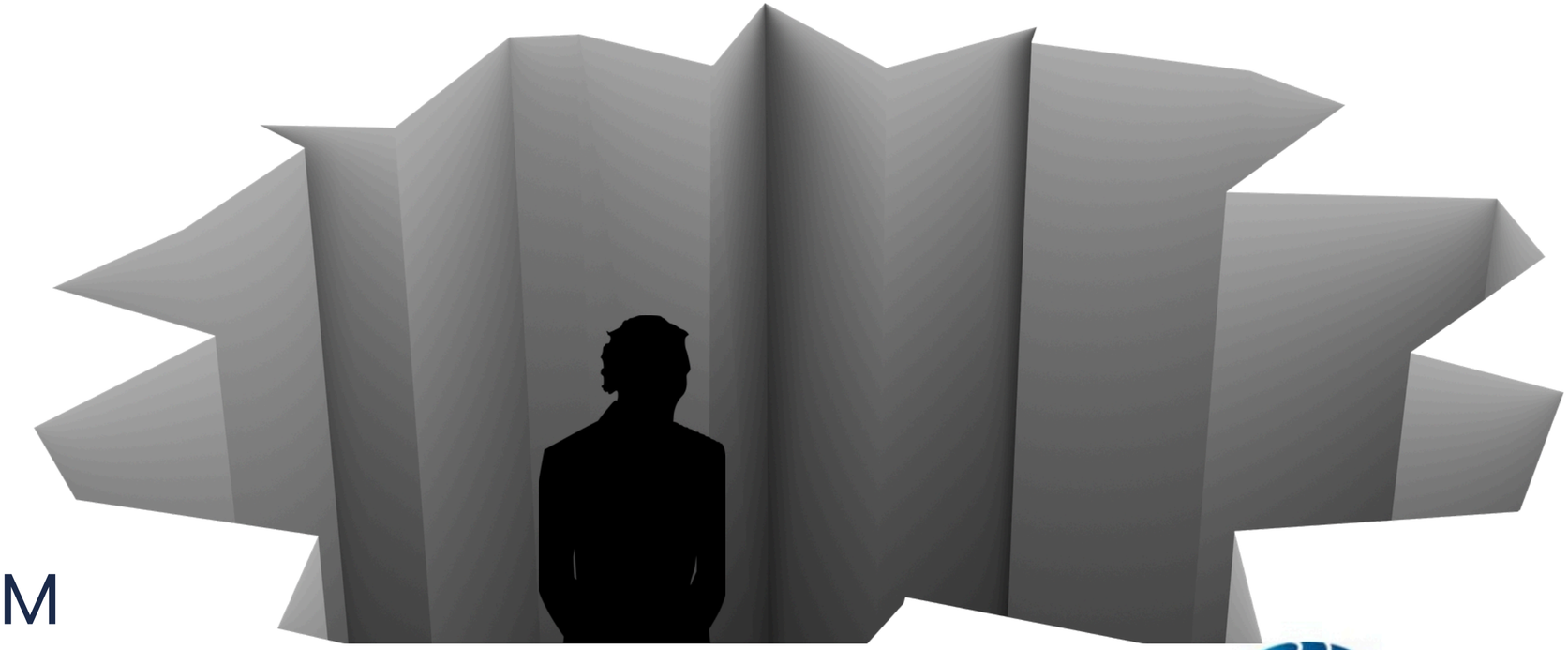
THE HERO AT PEACE



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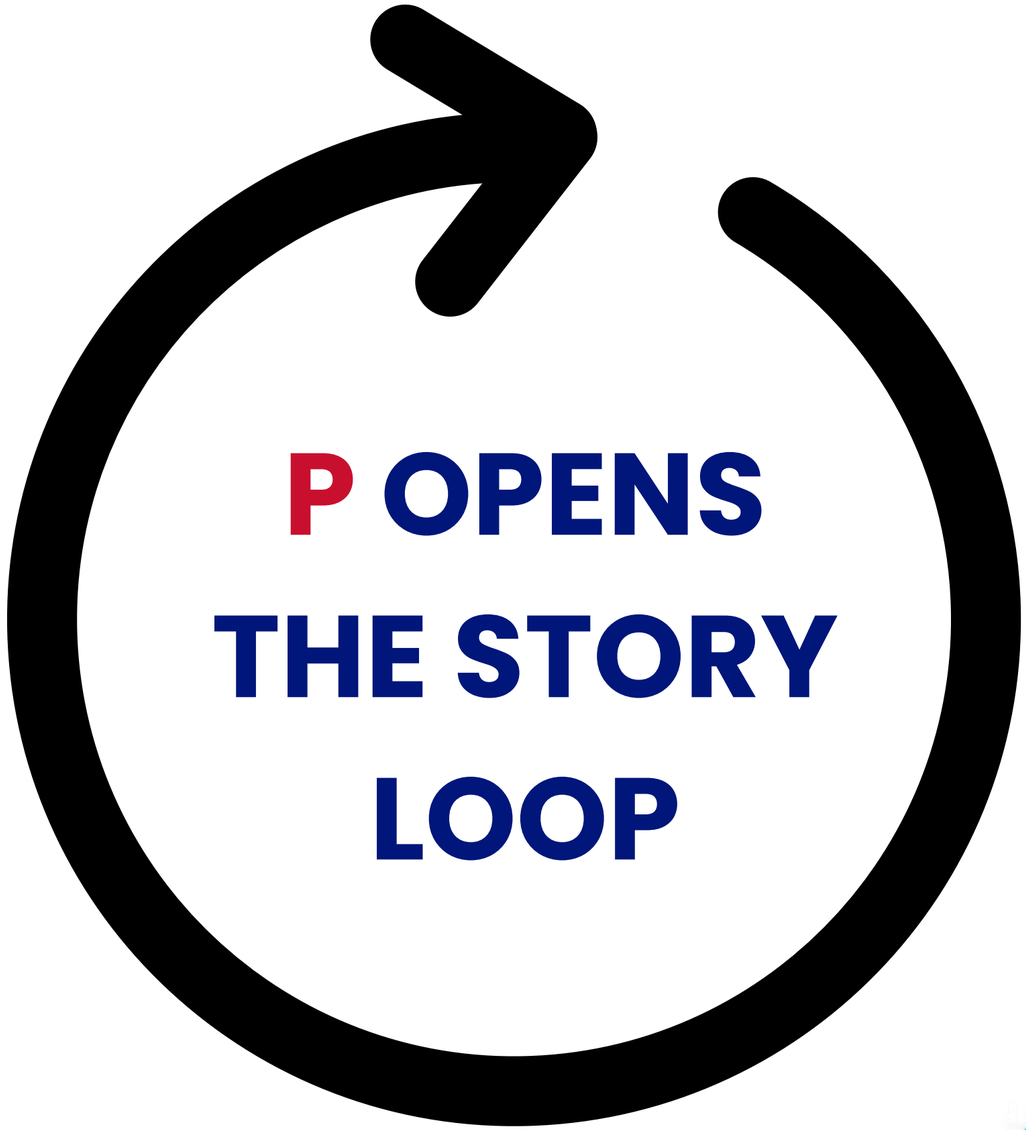
THE HERO HAS A PROBLEM

P



PROBLEM

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

Isn’t it annoying when your dog barks like crazy when someone knocks at your door?

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A GUIDE COMES WITH EMPATHY

E

EMPATHY



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EMPATHY STATEMENT

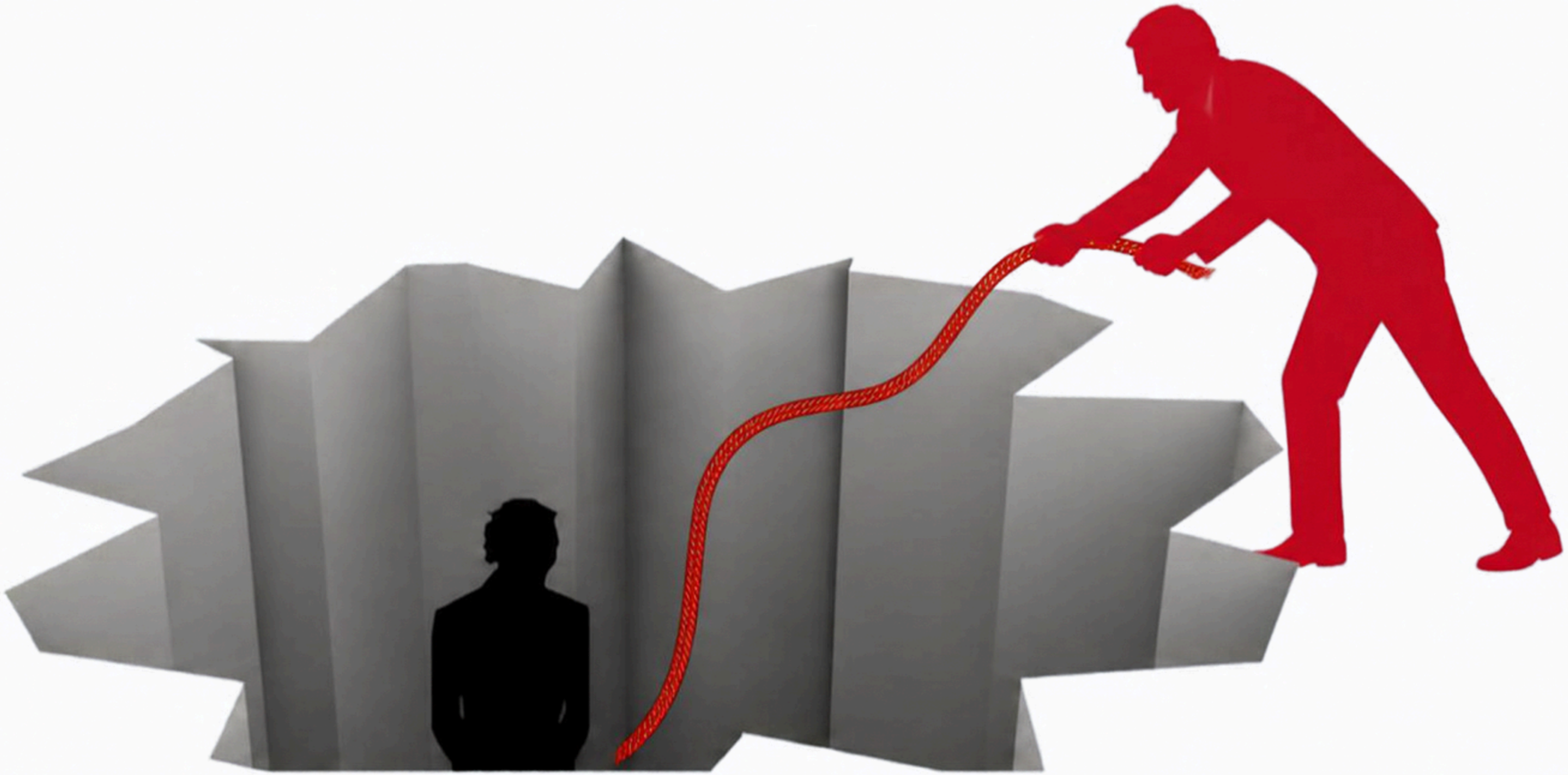
As dog owners ourselves, we know how frustrating and jarring the barking can be.

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WHO GIVES AN ANSWER

A

ANSWER



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ANSWER STATEMENT

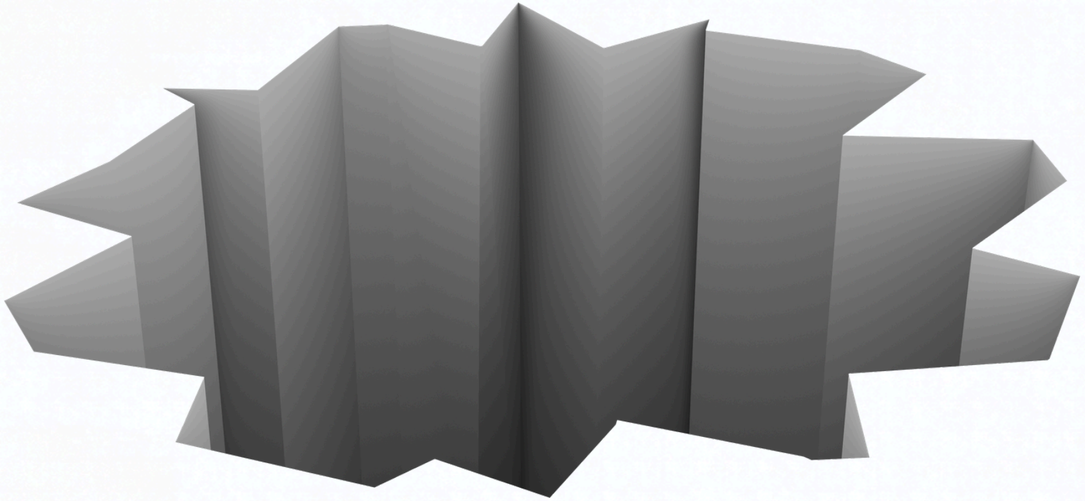
At our 6-week “Perfect Dog Boot Camp” we teach your dog how to stay calm and quiet when someone knocks.

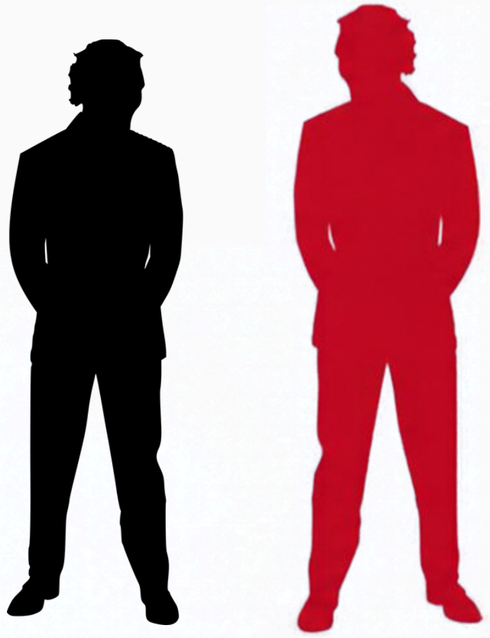
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HERO IS CHANGED

C

CHANGE





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CHANGE STATEMENT

You'll be the master of your house again.

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HERO LIVES HAPPILY EVER AFTER

E

END
RESULT



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END RESULT STATEMENT

Your dog will sit faithfully by your side greeting guests into your home.

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Use your soundbites as the foundation of your communications.

Use them:

- University presentations
- Landing page content
- Social media posts
- Emails & texts to students (and parents!)
- Talking points
- Brochure material
- Sales call script

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Your next email...

Remember PEACE

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Your next social media post...

Remember PEACE

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Your website rebuild...

Remember PEACE

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