

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE * 37

YOU'RE THE STAR OF THE STORY!
CHOOSE FROM 5 POSSIBLE ENDINGS.

COVER LETTER DISASTER

BY TRES CROW



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INTRODUCTION

Hiring a new team member can be really, really boring. You sort through stacks of the same ole' standard cover letter ("I'm perfect for this role," "I've done this and that," blah blah blah), while you stare wistfully out the window, desperate for a reprieve from the torture.

I understand your pain, and that's why I've gone and used my Home Time Machine Device™ to go back to the bad old days of the 1980's to partner up with the good folks at Bantam Books to create a brand new, exciting cover letter experience: Choose Your Own Adventure: Cover Letter Disaster!

Join the excitement as YOU become the hero, seeking to avoid disaster at your work place with the help of your brand new hire, Tres Crow, marketer extraordinaire, a mysterious marketing

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force from the outer realm of the digital world.

Will your team be able to stay the course, or will you succumb to the terrible outcomes that await you in *Cover Letter Disaster*?

Oh, and if you'd rather read a more conventional cover letter, you can check out Tres Crow's actual cover letter on page 13. Happy choosing!

COVER LETTER DISASTER

"Darn it!" you say, as you set your phone on your desk. "Bill from the Matchstick Company said he's not happy with the level of service he's been receiving."

"But we send him an email every week letting him know how his account is doing..." replies your assistant, Rodrigo.

"Yes, but he says sales are down, and he thinks it's our fault for not paying enough attention to the Matchstick Company."

Your heart is beating hard, and you shuffle papers on your desk to try to clear your mind. You only just got the Matchstick Company account a few months ago. There's hardly been enough time to move the needle on the account, let alone see much spike in sales. After-all matchstick sales are down across the industry, and...well, the Matchstick Company isn't as popular as it used to

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be. Plastic lighters are simply much more popular.

"Rodrigo, who's on the Matchstick account?" you ask.

"Barry is, sir."

Hmmm. You scratch your chin. Barry is one of your most seasoned account managers, and he's had a lot of success. But sometimes, he can be a bit lazy, and short with clients, and he isn't the most creative manager you have. He doesn't seem to work well with your creative team.

Just then there's a knock at the door.

"Come in," you say.

The door opens and your new hire, Tres Crow, marketeer extraordinaire, walks in. It's only been a few days, but you still haven't got your finger on the pulse of what makes Tres tick. He was intriguing in the interview. He had ideas. He was amiable. And he seemed to have a good grasp of the marketing basics. But, you found his stories a little hard to believe. After-all, he said he'd come from the digital realm, and was sent here to help companies keep and grow their customer base.

Very curious.

"I just popped by to see if there's anything I can help with," says Tres, holding his phone like a wizard wand.

"Actually...there just might be..." you say.

CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTION 1: Send Tres to get coffee and keep Barry on the Matchstick Company account. (Turn to page 6)

OPTION 2: Put Tres on the Matchstick Company account and see what happens. (Turn to page 7)

TRES CROW - MARKETEEER EXTRAORDINAIRE

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"Rodrigo and I could use some coffee," you tell Tres. "Would you mind running on down to the Coffee Corp and getting us a couple lattes?"

"Not at all," says Tres, turning on his heels and heading to get the refreshments.

You Slack Barry to have him come to your office. He arrives about 20 minutes later, annoying you a little.

"Barry," you say. "We need to double down on the customer touches with the Matchstick Company. Bill is getting worried we're not as engaged as we should be."

"So, I should email him twice a week?" asks Barry.

"It's even worse than that," you say. "I think you might even need to call him once a week. And i think we might need to inject a little creativity into his pay per click campaign."

Barry looks deeply uncomfortable.

"Can you do that?" you ask.

Barry nods and leaves.

Two months later you get another call from Bill, the marketing manager of the Matchstick Company. He's irate. he says Barry hasn't been present enough, and sales are slumping. He fires your company on the spot and says he will be leaving a bad review on your company's Facebook page.

You start to cry. An airplane falls from the sky on your office, putting you out of your misery.

YOU CHOSE WRONG, GO BACK TO PAGE 5

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

"Tres, have you ever managed an account before?" you ask.

"Why yes I have!" he says excitedly. "I love working directly with clients because you can really get a feel for what makes them special."

"What do you know about matchsticks?" you ask.

"Not a thing."

"Perfect!" you exclaim. "You're the new account manager for the Matchstick Company. I'll Slack you the account info. They want to boost their sales and find a way to cut into market share of plastic lighters. It's a daunting task. Are you sure you're up for it?"

"I'm ready," Tres says, and leaves the office with a skip in his step.

The first thing Tres does is call Bill and introduce himself, making sure he follows up with a ton of open-ended questions to get Bill talking. Drawing on his 10+ years of customer service and management experience, Tres finds spends most fo the call listening so that he can understand what really makes Bill and the Matchstick Company tick. He finds out that Bill is really passionate about the process of turning trees into matchsticks. His family has been in the matchstick business going back 100 years, and he believes strongly that matchsticks are simply the best way to start fires. The enthusiasm is infectious, and Tres can't help getting excited too. He loves dreaming with customers, learning about their passions and fears, and helping find creative ways to overcome their business obstacles.

Tres come sup with a plan.

TRES CROW - MARKETEEER EXTRAORDINAIRE

Tres works with the creative team to create a new pay per click campaign that focuses on the tactile feeling of striking a match, with closeups of match heads burning, and that cathartic "pop, hiss" that comes when a matchstick is struck just right. They pair the images and videos with a 50% coupon and launch right before grilling season to get people salivating over the prospect of popping off some matches.

Tres also follows up every week with Bill over email and phone to go through the campaign analytics and get feedback on how Bill feels about everything. He also attends Bill's youngest daughter's bat mitzvah, and eventually gets included in his will.

You are recognized as a managerial genius for switching Tres to the Matchstick Company account, and are rewarded with a bonus and a yacht, which you sail occasionally in the Mediterranean. But, you don't brag too much about it, because you're a humble person.

Life is good.

A few months later, one of your star sales people, Brittany Beloo, lands one of the company's biggest accounts ever, the Rubberman 8 Ring Circus Consortium, the country's only remaining traveling circus with live tigers! You're very excited and want to make a big impression because you loved circuses growing up. You also love tigers.

So, you call the whole team together for an all-hands on deck meeting. Brittany explains to everyone that Rubberman are looking for something new and exciting to draw in new crowds. They currently spend most of their marketing budget on postcards, pay per click ads, and a little paid search, but they've found that these methods seem to be growing stagnant.

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Brittany looks at the team with a look of determination.

"We need something bold, something new, something extraordinary!" she says.

Barry raises his hand, and suggests, "We should pour all their budget into television and radio ads, and boost their Facebook ad spend.

Brittany looks around for other ideas, but there are none. She looks worried.

And then Tres raises his hand, a mischievous look on his face.

CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTION 1: Pretend you don't see Tres, and go with Barry's marketing strategy. (Turn to page 10)

OPTION 2: Hear Tres out and see what he has to say. (Turn to page 11)

TRES CROW - MARKETEEER EXTRAORDINAIRE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

In spite of Brittany's concerns, the team decides to go with Barry's marketing strategy of keeping it safe and buying more television, radio, and Facebook ads. And at first it looks like it's working. Attendance goes up, and the Rubberman 8 Ring Circus Consortium seems pleased.

But then a few months pass and attendance flatlines. While more people have come to the circus, they aren't coming back, and eventually Rubberman's ad budget dwindles. Attendance drops, and the day you dread comes...Rubberman calls to fire the company.

You're crushed. You always liked the circus (especially the tigers!), but now you're known nationally as the person who couldn't even sell tickets to the circus. You're a failure.

You lay your head down on your desk and have a good cry. Then a tiger jumps through the window and east you up.

It's a sad day.

YOU CHOSE WRONG, GO BACK TO PAGE 9

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

You call on Tres, and he raises his phone up into the air. Suddenly a blast of lightning strikes down from the heavens, and a portal opens above the team. Some hazy goop swirls around like a tornado and then zips into Tres' phone. Just as suddenly the portal closes.

"I have an idea," says Tres. "I think what the Rubberman 8 Ring Circus Consortium needs a way to connect with a younger audience. Circus might have been cool back in the old days, but they aren't as cool as they used to be. So let's meet the audience where they live."

The team is riveted and a little scared that another lightning portal might open.

Tres continues: "Fortunately, I have a bit of experience working with software designers to create unique web experiences, so I've summoned this new AR app from the digital realm. The app will overlay a cool adventure game circus attendees can use both in and out of the circus grounds. The story is that the circus tigers have escaped, and the user has to find them, tranquilize them, and return them to the circus. As the user collects more tigers they will get prizes that they can redeem at the circus...free tickets, snacks, VIP experiences, the like. We'll build an easy share and competition function so people will want to share it with their friends, compete against them, and even collaborate to earn more rewards."

The room is hushed. A pin drops somewhere and everyone can hear it because it's so quiet.

"Oh, and we'll pair it with an Instagram campaign highlighting the best users, selfies with the tigers, and tie-ins with corporate

TRES CROW - MARKETEEER EXTRAORDINAIRE

sponsors.

Tres waves his phone in the air, and bolts of lightning shoot from his phone to all the other phones in the room. And just like that, everyone has this new AR adventure app on their phone. The room is suddenly filled with terrifying AR tigers, ready to attack. The team disperses throughout the building, seeing who can get the most tigers.

Brittany presents the idea to the Rubberman 8 Ring Circus Consortium, and they are so excited even the elephant in the room can't help but trumpet its enthusiasm.

A few months later the app rolls out to consumers, and it's downloaded 180k times in 4 minutes, and becomes the talk of the marketing world. Attendance goes up and stays up for the circus, and you are hailed as a marketing genius. You get a raise and free box tickets to every Super Bowl there will ever be. You get on the cover of Forbes.

Life is good. You realize hiring Tres Crow was the greatest thing you've ever done.

THE END

TRES' REAL COVER LETTER

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am applying for the **Website Optimizations Strategist** position because I believe I would be a solid fit for **SunTrust**. I am an experienced marketing and sales executive, with extensive skill getting powerful results from small to medium-sized teams. Having worked successfully in various areas of the sales and marketing funnel--as copywriter, designer, webmaster, and chief marketing officer--I have a far-reaching perspective on the marketing needs of businesses of all sizes.

I've had measurable success at every level of my career, most notably as the Chief Marketing Officer at Skyfire Consulting, the nation's leading public safety drone consultancy. During my time there, I designed and implemented the marketing and sales strategy using a variety of digital tools, from Squarespace and Hubspot to Adobe Creative Suite and Canva. The professionalized sales and marketing process spurred the company to 3x revenue growth in 18 months, and 10x lead generation, enabling the company's first ever profitable year, employee growth of 50%, and \$400k in seed round investment for future projects.

With my experience in companies of all sizes, I believe that I would be perfect to help your team manage your marketing strategies, from strategic design to creative and implementation.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to the opportunity to learn more about **SunTrust**,

Richard "Tres" Crow

DID YOU ENJOY

COVER LETTER DISASTER

**THEN TRY THESE OTHER AMAZING ADVENTURES
FROM TRES CROW AND BANTAM BOOKS!**

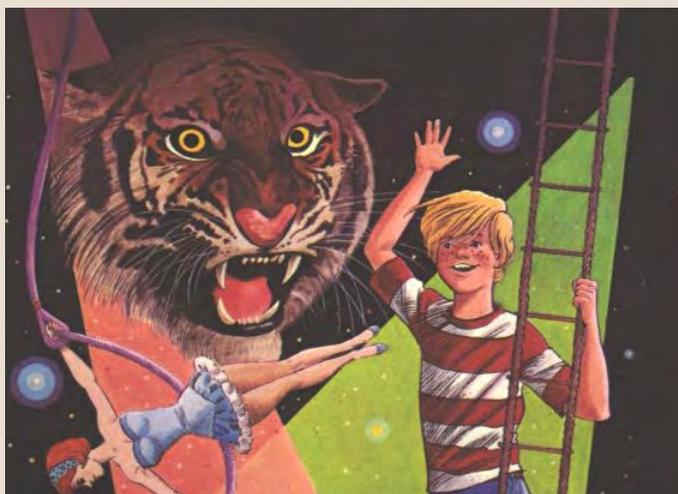
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"What an amazing way to spend my work hours!"

- LA TIMES

"It made me really want to hire Tres
Crow...like, right now!"

- SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO HIRE TRES CROW



You're an aspiring manager at a marketing firm, and you've just hired a mysterious new team member named Tres Crow, marketer extraordinaire. As the months unfold you face untold marketing emergencies, from client dissatisfaction to boring pay per click campaigns. Will you work with what you have, or will Tres Crow bring a new level of talent and creativity to your team. It's your choice, in this exciting new cover letter adventure, where YOU are the hero.

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