There are rules to creating an intriguing visual

TECHNIQUES
OF
EXPRESSION

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Pre-established harmony is an obstacle to expressing ideas.
Successful advertising eschews harmony.

Introduction

 I have been involved in advertising for almost twenty years, spending the majority of that time creating TV commercials. I have always had this strong belief that TV commercials are another form of video content with the same value as movies or TV shows. More than a means of providing information, I saw commercials as entertainment that viewers would enjoy and talk about, entertainment that would bear results far beyond our expectations. I may have been influenced by my desire to make movies some day or by the fact that I simply like that kind of entertainment. Another reason, however, was that by the time I got involved in the business, advertisers were already having to work harder to attract and hold the attention of TV audiences.

People don't watch TV for the commercials; so if you want viewers to see them, they'd better be interesting.

 This is an essential principle of advertising and an attitude I was taught to adopt as a creator. TV commercials are not something viewers intend to see, so efforts should be devoted

to make them as enjoyable as possible. In a certain sense, it is actually somewhat of a moral obligation or even a courtesy toward the viewers. In an era in which TV is losing ground as a focus of interest and losing its power to attract people, however, what can we do to draw and keep viewer interest?

Advertising needs to have something that viewers seek, something that they want to share with others.

Advertising needs to have powerful content. Successful web media creator knows this, and their work shows it. Their work must have the appeal that can transcend boundaries of nation, generation, and culture; otherwise it is not interesting, and really never could be. Their work must be based on an idea that captures viewer attention. But isn't that what expressing is about in the first place? When I was a kid, we imitated and acted out TV commercials that had caught our attention; and any of our friends who hadn't seen the commercial felt left out. It's a matter of course. All expressions must contain something that pulls us in, that attracts us. Unfortunately, however, too many of us have forgotten this simple fact because we concentrate too much on how to precisely and accurately

communicate the message we want to get across. High-impact advertising is powerful regardless of the approach it takes. Any inspiring expression that can move the world possesses that power.

People don't talk about fun and entertaining advertisements anymore, not because of the decline in the power of media but because we fail to create ads that are appealing.

I have made movies, and I have written novels and theater scenarios. I value these non-advertising projects for they help broaden my perspective and keep me free from the habits we tend to develop in advertising. When I made movies, I tried to create something that could not be created by someone who only made movies. When I worked in theater, I tried to tap attractiveness that can only be achieved through theater. I learned the difficulty and fear of expressing an unauthenticated product through advertising. I wanted to thrust aside any adverse force that dismissed my work as "just another one created by an ad man" by discovering the best way of exercising my strong points. What I have found every time I tried a new form of expression was –

It's the same.

If I were to speak out without fear of being mistaken, all that I have done has been the same in the context of expressing ideas – to communicate something, to inspire and to leave an impression in others. Concentrating on the pursuit of this objective will automatically generate content that is attractive and makes people want to see and tell others about. I realized that when we devote ourselves to seriously and sincerely considering what and how to express our message truthfully, the end result carries an appeal that people cannot ignore. It's as simple as that.

This book focuses on the methodology and preparation for creating something that people long to see, even if they have to search for it and something people want to tell others about, which are essential for expressing ideas. Some say methodology does not increase the power of expression, but reduces it. I disagree. Of course, there are always basics for everything. New ideas and content can only emerge after we stretch the potential beyond the basics. It is certainly impossible to become a professional without first mastering the basic skills

of your profession. Anyone who avoids the basics and relies solely on their individual sensitivity or instincts cannot be called a professional. Sensitivity and individuality flow out naturally in the process of expressing ideas even when we ignore them.

However, methodology also has its limits. Methodology alone will not lead to high-impact expression. We are not moved by our understanding of the methodology behind the process of expressing ideas. Methodology is only a way of thinking through what we want to express. Only after we have thought through what we want to express seriously and deeply can we create an expression whose power reaches beyond the methodology that underlies it. We must suffer and struggle first before we can come up with an attractive, entertaining expression. Like it or not, that's how it is.

**The sole purpose of expressing ideas is
to effect a change inside a person
however slight that change may be.**

**We devote our lives to touching
the unknown and hidden souls of people.**

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Touching People's Heartstrings

Emotions swing like a pendulum.

Laugh   Cry
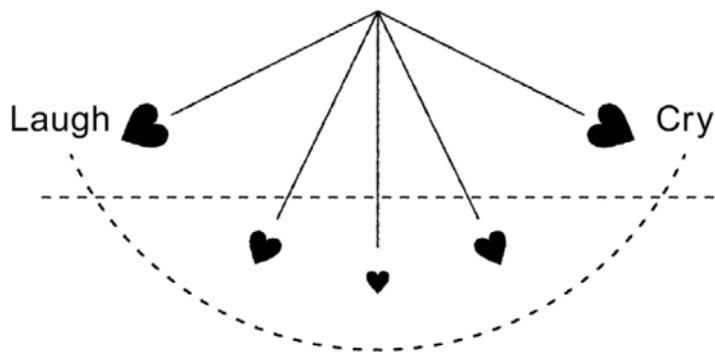
Think of our emotions as always swinging back and forth like a pendulum. When we see a clear blue sky, a couple breaking up, or stains on stairs, although they have nothing to do with us, our emotions are moved slightly. Expressions that move us have a significant impact on the swing of our emotions. Conversely, expressions that don't make emotions swing are worthless. Expressions are created to cause a change in an audience. If there is no change in our emotions after watching a movie, the movie has no value. Creating such change consciously and carefully is what expressing ideas is about.

It is often said that how to interpret what the creator is expressing is up to the audience, but there is something that should come before that. Creators must be clear whether they want to make people laugh or cry. Only after creators have devoted their full strength to expressing their ideas can their work be left to the audience to interpret.

Moving someone is like making their emotional pendulum swing. When it swings fully to one end, people cry. When it swings fully to the other end, people laugh. (Illustration 1) If the creator succeeds in producing a moment in which people's

emotional pendulum swings over the dashed line in the illustration, the ideas expressed by the creator have touched their hearts. Indeed, although our emotions are not always easy to touch, we are always looking for the creator to provide such moments. Creators produce such moments with facial expressions and through stories that touch us in some way. Basically, however, we are always looking to be touched, which is why we pay to see movies, pick up a book, or listen to stories. Expressions that make the emotional pendulum swing is precisely what we seek – something that people long to see, even if they have to search for it.

There is an essential factor in swinging people's emotional pendulum enough that it crosses the line.

Laughter comes when we are caught off guard.
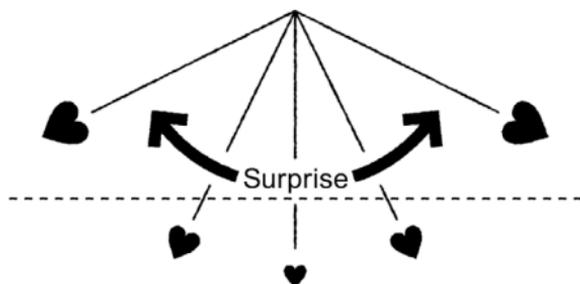
Surprise

An absolutely necessary element in moving someone is surprise. Laughter comes when we are caught off guard. There is a popular Japanese variety program in which comedians try to make others laugh with silly antics while the participants do their best not to crack a smile. The segment is very simplistic; but if you watch carefully, you notice that their laughter is always a result of their being caught off guard by changes in the comedian. No one laughs without a cue.

The same thing applies to crying. After we are relieved to know that a character in a story has gotten out of a tough spot, the character suddenly lands in another one. Conversely, after we are led to believe that a character will land in big trouble, the character comes out without a scratch. Such surprise creates emotional ups and downs that stimulate the tear glands. There is also emotional sharing when one person's separation from us or death makes an entire group cry. However, in producing greater and more frequent swings of the individual emotional pendulum, we need to make sure that the ideas we express contain an element of surprise.

Have you ever experienced not being able to hold back your

tears during a movie when, for example, a father lying on his deathbed suddenly says something funny? In such moments, we are caught off guard and our emotion swings from one end to the other. Touching someone's heartstrings is making their emotional pendulum swing. This, however, is not easy. We need a watertight structure, truth, expectation, and other essential elements to carefully, but boldly move the emotional pendulum with well-planned ideas.

Surprise is absolutely necessary to get the audience to let its emotional guard down. As I mentioned at the beginning of this book, pre-established harmony is an obstacle to expressing ideas. Confounded prediction is what prompts the feeling that something was great to see, and the desire to tell others about it and see it again.

The trap of organized storytelling

From childhood, we are taught the importance of maintaining the flow of a story from introduction to development, turn, and conclusion. This is, however, only a method of organizing events. The flow is not the story; and at its worst, sticking to the flow often makes the story horrifically boring. Once we start following a story along the time flow, we begin guessing the conclusion in the middle of the story. Then, it becomes necessary for story makers to confound the predicted conclusion. In other words, we create a hurdle that we need to clear to move the audience higher. This should be avoided.

The same thing applies to our day-to-day conversations. People who are good at talking have a certain thing in common. They start from a conclusion. To illustrate, let's take a look at people who are not good at talking.

"I went out drinking with my friends last night and we met a guy there. He was so much fun and I remembered we were out until 3 in the morning. But I can't remember what happened after that. When I woke up in the morning, I was at a stranger's house."

This incident is nothing special. But let's start from the ending. "When I woke up in the morning, I was at a stranger's house." It sounds more dramatic. When a story sounds dramatic, the listener pays more attention to it. They become interested in what and how it happened. At the same time, the talker is relieved from the burden of leading the audience to the ending. Because we start talking from the conclusion, there is no need to prepare for an exciting climax. What we need to add is the reason that the person drank so much that he couldn't remember. If we can make the audience wonder why in a clever way, we make the incident more interesting. This is the difference between an incident and a story.

When we write a story, what we call a plot in movies and plays, it is very important for the overall organization to follow the flow of the story from introduction to development, turn, and conclusion. But when we enter the stage in which we create the story structure to flesh it out, we need to be careful because this flow works in a completely negative way. In creating commercials, following the flow is totally impractical, indeed rather destructive. Let's look at some examples.

TVCF 1 – Breath Care Chewing Gum

A couple is waiting their turn at a dance competition. The woman is put off by the man's breath.

You have bad breath…

Our turn is coming up.

The man's breath smells so bad that she has to pinch her nose.

Yes.

You have bad breath…
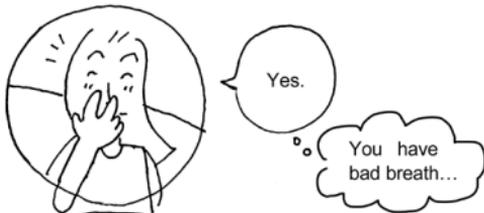
It's their turn. She cannot put up with the man's breath, and dances with her head held far back.

You have bad breath…

Freshen up your breath.

XYLISH

XYLISH

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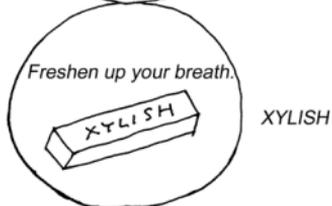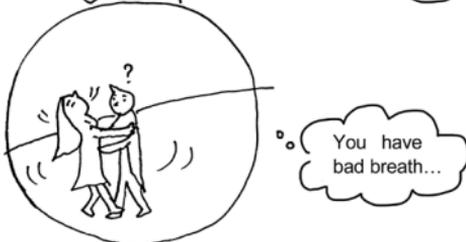
 This is a storyboard of a TV commercial presented in chronological order. It shows the flow from introduction to development, turn, and conclusion. This is not so interesting. Let's change the order by placing the last cut at the beginning.

TVCF 2 – Breath Care Chewing Gum

A couple is dancing on the dance floor.
But the woman looks awkward.

She is bent backwards.

And keeps dancing in this unnatural posture.
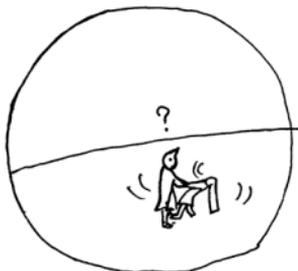
Freshen up your breath.

XYLISH

It is obvious that the story became more interesting when the order was changed.

The idea of following the flow from introduction to development, turn, and conclusion is mediocre and uninteresting. If 100 people write a TV commercial based on the same plot, such a mediocre and typical storyboard would be the norm. However, by simply shifting the order of the clips, it is possible to create a storyboard that is far more interesting. This is a basic skill in advertising.

To create distinctive commercials, we must include something very special. This applies to movies too. To create the ups and downs in a story and give energy to it, we need to have the courage to change the typical flow from introduction to development, turn, and conclusion. Otherwise, the audience loses interest in the story very quickly.

Conversely, if the story has a strong ending, it is sometimes more effective to follow chronological order.

TVCF – Public Service CM Following
Chronological Order – A whale

An art class.
A boy keeps painting
papers black.

Teachers do not know
what is wrong with him.

The boy keeps painting
papers black.

He is taken to a doctor,
but doesn't listen to what
the adults say.

He just keeps painting
the papers black.

His homeroom teacher looks
at the black paper and gives
a reluctant sigh.

Then a page in a magazine catches her attention.
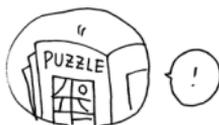
Puzzle… Suddenly it dawns on her.

There's an outline in the boy's drawings.

She calls someone.

She lays out the boy's drawings on the gym floor.

When she's finished,

She sees a giant whale.

Do not stifle a child's power and freedom of imagination.
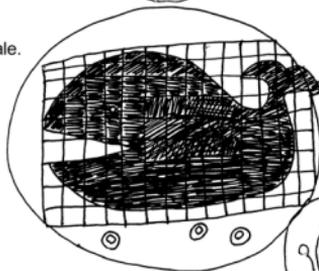
The next morning the boy comes to school as usual.

This public service announcement succeeded in increasing the audience's sense of concern about what would happen to the boy. With a predetermined ending that assuages worry, it is possible to keep increasing the worry without causing concern. But this is an extremely rare case. I only succeeded once during my almost 20-year career. My experience may suggest that it is not so easy to come up with ideas that can satisfy every audience.

Destroying the organized flow of a story means controlling the chronological order. Revealing the ending first generates the desire to find out the cause. This desire produces a sense of excitement. It's a bit like card magic. Which card should we show them first? The order is important in sparking the imagination of the audience. Using this imagination, we can create an unexpected story that excites the audience.

If we can utilize chronological order effectively when we design movies and commercials, they become highly entertaining. Time is the most powerful key to creating excitement and the most effective tool for creating suspense. Creating movies is to create time, which is the most peculiar privilege

that only creators have access to.

Think spatially

Video images should be conceived spatially or in other words, three dimensionally. Simply approaching it with planar thoughts will only make the story go sour. The world has depth. Approaching it three dimensionally or spatially allows for more that can be done.

Let me illustrate methods of creating excitement using space. Planning with a picture storyboard has the danger of neglecting this rich technique. If you are using a screenplay or a storyboard when developing an idea, this spatial methodology tends to be passed on to the staging or production phase. However, this is a major weapon that should be used wisely just as you would use time. Here are some examples.

A woman is standing.

There's a man standing in front of her.

The man has just proposed and the woman is so happy, she is moved to tears.

This scene can become more dramatic, by having another woman standing in the background, watching the two with a look full of jealousy. Doesn't this suddenly stir your curiosity about what is going to happen next?

Let's raise the theatrics one more level. Give the woman in the background a knife. Now we've got a thrilling turn of events.

Go one step further and give the woman in the front a ring that she has just received after being proposed to. Depending on the way the story develops, the level of unhappiness has gone up a notch. The more happiness that the woman in the back can destroy, the more interesting the story becomes.

This is one example of creating a story using space. Creating a future that only the audience knows is a basic rule of comedy and suspense. The most outstanding lesson I was given on that was a skit in a popular Japanese comedy show starring a comedy group called the Drifters. A mischievous ghost lurks behind comedian Ken Shimura playing pranks. Shimura isn't aware of the ghost, but the audience sees everything. Eventually, unable to stand the frustration of watching him at the mercy of the ghost any longer, the audience screams, "Shimura! Behind you!"

Creating something that only the audience knows is a technique that can be used in a variety of situations and is effectively used in movies as well. In the foreground you see a close-up of a gun, the evidence that the culprit is searching for, and in the background the culprit is desperately searching for it. The audience grows apprehensive about whether the gun will be found or not. Such scenes are quite common. Consciously adopting this method to always plan with a three-dimensional method of thinking will add another trick up your sleeve.

A future that only the audience knows is extremely effective in the axis of time as well. For example, a story unfolds in the context where only the audience knows who the culprit is. A love story progresses while you know that one of the lovers is going to be killed in a traffic accident. The family and the audience are aware of the terminal disease, but the person diagnosed with it does not know and speaks excitedly about the future. When the story created is given to the audience, and only to the audience, a sense of responsibility is also attached to it. Because of that, the audience is forced to think about how to deal with that reality. Their heartstrings plunge forward as they watch in earnest to see if the story progresses the way they had imagined. This is one of the fundamentals of creating a story that grabs people's hearts.

Deviation becomes fun

Something that is interesting almost always has a deviance. When you shift something out of place, it becomes funny. Contrarily, something that has no deviation is not interesting. It is common to see a boss giving his staff an order and for the latter to obey, but if you create a scene where the boss is taking orders from his staff, this is where the deviation appears. It is nothing more and nothing less. But by inserting that deviation, you can add an interesting twist to the intent of the creator.

One of my favorite sketches that used this deviation is in a skit by Monty Python. The scene is a boring class at school. The students are yawning, looking away, snoozing, or secretly reading books. However, what is being held there is a class about sex. It is not just the teacher lecturing. He brings a bed into the classroom and begins to demonstrate. Still, none of the students take interest. They are simply bored, as if this were a math class. The teacher scolds them and tells them to watch carefully, but the students cannot hide their absolute boredom. This situation carries on and on, and it's very funny. Just by replacing math with sex, something happens there that is ridiculously silly. It could inadvertently take you beyond funny and

give you the feeling that what we have protected until now really is no big deal.

I often use this method of creating an intentional shift or deviation and call it "replacement."

Here are some examples.

There is a scene where a police officer is interrogating a suspect.

Now switch them around.

This looks like something is going to come of it. When you make this replacement, as a rule, you must only replace one element per scene. Otherwise, people won't know what was replaced with what, making it difficult to understand the intent. There is another way to use this substitution. It is an extremely effective method of verification when you are trying to improve your plan. When I finish putting together an idea, but I am anxious about whether it's going to give a sense of déjà vu or if it's not quite as clear-cut as I would like it to be, this method is very effective.

Shift just the setting, more and more. Let's say you have a craving for a snack. The more unacceptable it is to eat, the funnier the situation becomes. If the setting is a conference room rather than home, it is more interesting. An important board meeting would make it more interesting than a regular staff meeting. A matter of national security would be even better. Think about how strongly you can express someone eating when they shouldn't be. Not only could you improve the precision of your plan, but it could also trigger an idea for an even more interesting plan of another dimension.

You could sometimes get carried away and end up adopting an absurd setting such as being attacked by aliens, but that would be an over-exaggerated deviation. The objective is to shift the setting to emphasize the seriousness of "should not eat." A comical scene of fiction will make the seriousness fade away. If it only amuses the creator, the audience quickly loses interest. It might work, however, if it is carefully and thoroughly presented as a serious onslaught of aliens to the level of, say, the movie "District 9."

This type of shift in the setting must be verified in the process of improving the precision of the plan. Let's look at some examples using a storyboard.

TVCF: Breath care after a meal

The boss's lines sound like what he just ate.

The *garlic* will become *garlic* by doing *garlic* so our only choice is to *garlic*. No matter how much the clients *garlic*, all we can do is *garlic*, right?

The boss has bad breath, and it's unbearable.

Is your breath okay?

Have one after you eat.
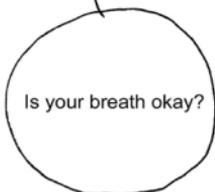
XYLISH

Change that setting to a couple

A couple talking in bed.

His words sound like what he just ate.

The man has bad breath, and it's unbearable.

When we were *garlic*, I never thought that I would be *garlic* with *garlic*. Without *garlic*, I am *garlic*. Will you *garlic* me? I'm serious.
I *garlic* you.

Is your breath okay?

Have one after you eat.

XYLISH

Make the setting more serious
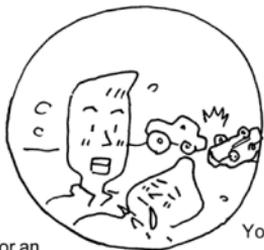
A tense scene, waiting for an ambulance immediately after an accident.

The man's dialogue sounds like what he just ate.

This is how unbearable bad breath is…

You'll be okay. A *garlic* is coming. The *garlic* will be here soon. Then your *garlic* will stop. *Garlic* in there! *Garlic*! *Garlic*!! You'll be all right!

Is your breath okay?

Have one after you eat.

XYLISH

Just by re-examining the setting, you'll notice a change in the force of the storyboard. Using your brain like this when you are developing a plan is also quite effective. So how can you make your plan more impressive? Which element should be retouched to make it more interesting, and which should not be meddled with too much? You must think it through very thoroughly and find the borderline. If you are going to introduce a setting such as the alien attack mentioned above, it must be made to look serious. However, you tend to sense the creator's own amusement, which is a big reason why the audience becomes turned off. Once you are turned off, your emotional pendulum will not swing. The only way you can obtain the biggest swing is by meticulously controlling the details. To create that swing called laughter, you need to pay attention to those details.

Laughter is a technique

Laughter is the foundation of every expression. It is made under the condition that you have absolute control of the other person's emotions. This means that it can also be applied to control any type of emotion, but laughter is unobtainable unless you can freely create feelings of hatred, jealousy, or sadness. At the same time, there is nothing more difficult to create than laughter. It is precise and delicate. If you miss a button, it will be lost. Joe Sedelmaier, the genius American CM director who dominated the '70s, once declared in an interview that you could not make laughter while you're laughing. Laughter is made by exhausting all of your techniques of expression. Being able to create through technique also means that if you train hard, it is a skill that you can acquire. The ability to notice this point is what basically determines whether or not someone has the talent to create expression. In the process of creating, the critical turning point is whether you absent-mindedly decide that it might be funny if someone was awkwardly dressed in a gaudy outfit, or you are able to logically think it would be funny if someone dressed strangely.

Since childhood, I have never been considered funny. I was

never the type to tell humorous stories, nor did I have any entertainer qualities that would attract the attention of those around me. But when I started working at this job, I was able to create funny things. That is because laughter by expression is created by brushing up skills and methods. One day I realized that learning this technique of laughter means learning the techniques of basically all expressions. This technique taught me a great number of things. It was indeed a treasure trove of knowhow.

 Conversely, you don't have to learn the techniques of planning to be able to create tearjerkers or emotional stories to a certain extent. That is because it is relatively easy to invite tears and sentiment by appealing to emotions that everybody has in common, even with a technically amateurish plan. So if from an early age you learn to enjoy works of simple empathy and then go on to misunderstand that this is a power that you have, you will lose the opportunity to hone the true techniques of a planner. By the time you notice that this is an unfortunate thing, you may already be too old to build up the muscles for planning. So it is especially important at the early stage to come face to face with laughter without running from it,

and make a habit of thinking logically about the techniques of expression.

 Know the difficulty of laughter and continue to update yourself at all times. This is actually what it means to "distress properly." The brain is a muscle and it will become stronger with training. But if you train it with mistaken discipline, you will not develop proper muscle. In order to distress properly and to train properly, you need to plunge into this ocean of techniques of laughter.

Make laughter by relation

Gags and laughs are slightly different. It's not that one is superior to the other as a form of expression, but in a book written by playwright and essayist Minoru Betsuyaku, laughter is classified by type, as follows:

(1)   Wordplay laughter
(2)   Practical laughter
(3)   Laughter by character
(4)   Laughter by relation
(5)   Absurd laughter

Of these, he says that in order to brush up the skills of laughter, the basics of what you need to think about are in (4). For example, think of the laughter that comes when what you had thought was a cake was actually a bomb or with a scene where you treat a bomb as if it were a cake.

The laughter that is created by changing a relationship is indeed the basic form of laughter that is created through planning. What is only a cake in this story becomes a cake that has been mistaken as a bomb. Because of that, people start to

appear humorous. That is what drama is. Making a funny face. Falling down. Making a pun. But rather than simply laughing at such direct events, there is bound to be a laughter that feels a little bit richer.

However, basics are no more than basics, so we make adaptations or intertwine aspects of (1) to (4) to make something new. In other words, each day, we take something that includes surprise and develop it while making litmus paper out of our own senses. This is how laughter is created. It has nothing to do with whether the person making it is funny or not.

Laughter can also include sorrow in a sense that brings a very human aspect into it, and it is possible to make the audience empathize with that human aspect. Laughter that is created by pretense is precisely that.

All of the laughter that Torajiro Kuruma shows us in the movie "Otoko wa Tsuraiyo" (It's Tough Being a Man) teaches us an extremely human form of laughter. I have had several opportunities to learn about the film from the director, Yoji Yamada. Just as I did when I was a rookie, I prepared many

storyboards and discussed them with him. Yoji Yamada turned down about 90 per cent of them, saying they would not be interesting. My intention was to use powerful expressions that would be suitable for a commercial message, but right from the beginning he said, "This is not something that requires this particular actor. Asking an actor to do something that a comedian would do is not going to be funny, is it?" Storyboards that were not compatible with the flow of the play or were not realistic died away. I thought I had always been fairly careful about both of those aspects, but I realized then that there was something that I had been unconsciously allowing, in order to make it interesting as a commercial.

"When an audience becomes aware of even the slightest bit of our convenience, if they feel even the smallest bit of forcefulness by the director or playwright, their hearts will drift away from that movie."

If you want to make something that communicates to people, you should enforce it.

When the conversation led to directing, he said, "Sometimes,

when I have comedians act, they do things that are not in the script just to get people to laugh. They probably feel a need to do so in order to feel confident, but they need to understand that they are funny just by being there. It's our job to make it funny by using them in relation to the story."

Laughter by relation is not only for the purpose of creating laughter but is a requisite for creating all stories. We build the relationship and create new meaning to it. That is what we call the story.

Once during a test shoot that I had the honor of participating in, Yoji Yamada was very particular about being "realistic." He would say, "Do people really fall down like that?" or, "If there was a handkerchief on the ground, is that how you would find it and pick it up?" Whenever he found anything unrealistic in the acting, he would correct them all.

When something proceeds according to our convenience, people's feelings drift away and become unemotional. For that reason, eliminate all things that interrupt people's feelings. Laughter is only complete when it is built on that kind of

flawless consideration.

Don't explain the story

During an interview with Naoki Prize novelist Noboru Kiuchi, he told me a little bit about his style of creating novels.

"I try to write through the behavior of my featured characters. If I write their emotions, that will end the story. I think about what actions the character might take when faced with a certain sadness and observe carefully as I write."

When he said that, I understood why I so strongly felt the true fascination of novels through his work. At the same time, I thought that this holds true in every aspect of making films as well. Let me explain in detail.

A.   A man is alone in the reception room.
     He says, "Man, I'm getting nervous."

B.   A man is alone in the reception room.
      He lights a cigarette. But there is already a lit
      cigarette in the ashtray.

Which portrayal of his nervousness has more depth? Of course, this type of behavior comes into place depending on how the man's character is established. This means that the difference in how he acts when he is nervous is also his character. Combining this sort of portrayal on top of one another renders a deeper description of the person's human nature.

Only the featured characters can unfold a story. When the story is allowed to proceed according to the convenience of its creator, it becomes cheap. People's pendulums will stop swinging. In film, there is a specific way to eliminate the writer's convenience. Let the visual and the script do different things. When graphics are being created, you do not label a photograph of a fish being caught with a copy that says, "A fish is caught." It is an obvious waste to describe in words what the photo is already saying. Words should be used to amplify the power that the photo beholds. The same can be said for film.

A: A man and a woman are parting.
    The woman says, "I'll miss you."

B: A man and a woman are parting.
The woman says, "When can I see you again?"

Which dialogue has deeper meaning? In a television commercial, the number of seconds available is extremely limited, so some might say that 'A' is better because it's easier to understand. But if you begin with 'A', you'll end up having to say 'B' anyway. Since 'A' is already understood in 'B', 'B' is a far superior script because it deepens the human portrayal in a minimal amount of time. The extra seconds can be used for something else and that difference can greatly influence the outcome beyond imagination.

Letting the visual and the script do different things also means that you can use your time most effectively. When you are reviewing your own plan or scenario, consciously check to see where you can use this because it will add depth and richness.

Using dialogue and film to explain the setting or progress of a story will cause it to lose meat. The audience is not interested in watching a storyline explained or the character's feelings told. Using these as tools to progress your story will turn your film into a simple "account." A story is something that the featured characters move ahead. It must not proceed at the

convenience of the writer. This is something we must never forget.

The omnibus ban

During a normal planning procedure, there is one method of expression that I do not allow. I call it the omnibus. I am talking about the type of commercial that connects a series of similar scenes and attaches some nice music to it. I'm sure you've seen corporate advertisements showing consecutive scenes of people reuniting to very touching music. I consider this an abandonment of planning.

It is easy to think that you've somehow made a statement by presenting typical scenes that you've seen before, but that is equivalent to having said nothing. Do you feel deeply moved when you see the often depicted farewell? Probably not, because that emotion is very likely superficial and easily forgotten. The emotion we should aim for is something that will always be remembered, so when people see that scene, it has to create a movement in their hearts that surpasses a real life experience.

My biggest reason for declaring that an omnibus is the abandonment of planning is that you can feel the presence of a hypocritical planner who doesn't seriously believe what he is

showing. It's nothing more than a plan that 100 out of 100 people would be able to make. There's a tendency to do this when creating the visual to a message that has already been determined in advance. Let me give you a few examples.

Typical "nice" insurance commercial

Man and woman with arms around each other.

♪*Sentimental music*

Grandpa doing his best to hold his grandchild up.

The baby moves in the mother's womb.

The baby takes her first step.

Nice copy with a scenic view of the city.

Taking care of who you care about.

〇〇保険　*XX Insurance*

Doesn't it look like a ready-made advertisement full of scenes you have seen before? But, if you do happen to write a story-board like this, here is an idea. Take just one scene from it and remake your plan.

Remake using a single scene

Baby falls and cries out loud. She can't walk yet.

thump

Wah～

Daddy tries to go and help, but Mommy stops him.

. . . .

(No, don't.)
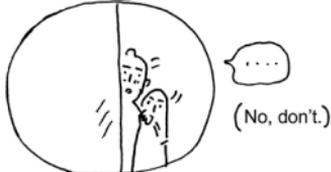
Baby tries to get up again.

(cries)

She fails.

(cries louder)

And tries again.

(and louder)

Daddy and Mommy watch over her.

Taking care of who you care about.

. . . .

○○1 顔

XX Insurance

Now isn't that something that can only be illustrated in this plan? By digging into one scene, you can start a story with what was only a superficial message. By doing so, you can also avoid becoming too typical. Saying, "This is what I thought at a time like that," is far more convincing and seemingly universal than saying, "Most people would think this at a time like that." Surprisingly, a personal story has much more ubiquitous power than general theory. This "omnibus bacteria" will do anything to find its way into a plan. Here is an example of a "crypto-omnibus."

Commercial for a certain TV company

A platform at a train station in the morning filled with commuters bent over.

×× *Station*

♪*Beware of muscle pain.*
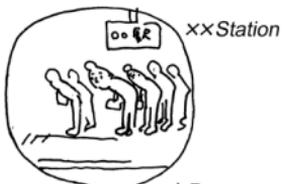
School children, too, walk to school bent over.

Everywhere in the office – even in the elevator – everyone is bent over.

Beware of muscle pain.

The reason …
TV shows that are so funny they give you stomach cramps.

FUNNY TV

74

At first glance it doesn't look like an omnibus, but this is indeed an omnibus. Get rid of it immediately. The method is the same. Focus on one aspect.

In the world of motion pictures, using an omnibus is also frowned upon. It is probably for the same reason: it only takes away from what needs to be communicated, and the audience doesn't want to watch stories that share a common factor.

A little bit of unhappiness for the leading character

Especially in advertising, most leading characters are saved by the product. Of course, because it is an advertisement, it is natural to appeal the benefits of the product. The danger in that, though, is the pre-established harmony that comes lurking within. Everyone basically thinks that advertising is about singing your own praises. That is all the more reason to leap a bit beyond in order to capture people's hearts. It's easy to do.

Don't save the leading character

Say you make an advertisement for a fast motorcycle. Using the expression, "I got there in time because my bike was fast," is nothing more than singing your praises and it is absolutely boring. But what if the motorcycle is so fast that it is a bit of a problem? Because it is so fast and travel time is cut short, the leading character ends up a bit unhappy because he did something he wouldn't have if he hadn't had all that extra time. You can break away from pre-established harmony by using the bike's speed as an axis and exaggerating it.

au Your friend's name episode

You run into a friend but you can't remember his name.

Hey, OO!! It's been a long time!

What was his name?

You try to pick up hints from the conversation.

So Sato is getting married…

Not Sato.

And I can't believe what happened to Sasaki.

Not Sasaki, either.

Did you know that Yamamoto is in the United States?

Who is he?

Before you know it, you've had dinner together and you're on the way to the bar…

click

What' are you doing?

Just taking a picture of us.

Finally, you use your last resort.

click

You send the picture with an email to a friend.

peep

What's this guy's name?

peep

A response comes right away.

peep

peep

But you don't know how to read that name.

That's 鏑木.

I don't know how to pronounce this.

(Pronounced Kaburagi, difficult characters to read)

au by KDDI

I had prepared a bit of unhappiness for the leading character in this episode, which was that he didn't know how to read his friend's name. It came as a surprise, which drew laughter. Finding a bit of unhappiness that was brought on only because of the product's outstanding features is one way of breaking pre-established harmony. By the way, the name is read Kaburagi.

The audience is comfortably anxious

It is said that drama is an orderly complication. One of the rules allows the featured characters and the audience to share a complication, and this complication or problem is what arouses interest in the story.

How will the leading character solve the problem under these conditions?

Can you put the audience in a railcar for two hours and keep it running till the end of the story? In order to do so, it is very important to establish an interesting problem, which in this case is: "under these conditions." If no problem arises, the audience will not be able to grasp what it is they're supposed to be looking for in the story and their interest will fade away. It is important to make it clear how they should be watching the film and what problem needs to be solved while this railcar is running.

Only a transplant will save my son's life. However, there is no money for that.

Someone stole my girlfriend.
It still hurts after all this time, and then I heard that she recently broke up with him.

The audience needs to be given a setting that has a complication with a rule to be comfortably anxious.

The next thing you need is a conflict. Conflict is indeed the aphrodisiac that makes a story rich. Stratified stories are overwhelmingly more interesting than those told in a monistic manner. To get there, a conflict that simply involves friends and foes is not enough. You need to be aware that there is "another side" to everything.

Behind the scene of a happy marriage…
The bride's younger sister continues to have feelings for
the groom.

In a setting like this, the merrier the wedding, the more it starts to have another meaning. Then the audience will begin imagining their own turn of events. The railcar will continue to run as it stirs and uses people's imaginations.

Lost on a snow-covered mountain, you suggest climbing down.
Then someone says that it would be better to wait here.

This is good conflict, too. When a conflict occurs, the audience naturally becomes glued to the story. This is evident even with a single character.

A kind criminal
A white person who loves black music
A sushi chef who hates fish

A problem caused by conflict is what makes the story and its people interesting. That is because one can imagine that this problem is going to lead to an incident. The audience will ride in the railcar, excited about the coming future that they are imagining.

A complication arising from conflict is what moves the story along. A story unfolds, not according to a scenario, but tangled up in the character's complications. People who have been given this type of setting will make a theatrical (off-target) choice. That is indeed the story.

"The ship sinks" is not a story.
The story is "the ship sinks" as a result of trying too hard

to reach its destination on schedule.

 The story should focus on the man who wants to get there on time. Telling the story of a sinking boat is only explaining an incident. What is lost because of that, and the pity of not being able to avoid it – that's what the story is.

 Another thing that should not be forgotten is discovering the theme. What is that advertisement, that movie, that drama trying to convey overall? What do you want to communicate through this work? There is no need for an original message; a universal one is fine.

Families are wonderful
People who hurt others are the ones that get hurt.
Nobody is born evil.
The reason for living is to meet someone.

 Why do writers go through the incredible suffering and pain it takes to make a film or to create a scenario? Perhaps it is a kind of determination as a writer that is not fazed by the pain.

 The theme is truth, and the story belongs to the character.

Especially if you are making a film based on an original piece of work, you have to dig deeper than the surface and determine which part of the original should be established as the theme before you share the plot. It is the value of existence of the work that combines you and the original work. Or in other words, it is an expression of love for the original work.

Some might say that this sort of theme is unnecessary in an advertisement. But it determines a great aftertaste, and as long as it greatly affects people, it is an awareness that the writer needs to have and something that is essential in future advertisements. Why does the world need that advertisement? You must never let go of your will to express something, as long as it is going to be expressed outwardly.

An expression that is a crystallization of one person's thoughts is much stronger than one that is made by a group of people. Perhaps a theme is something like one person's thoughts.

Write your storyboard

An increasing number of creative staff members do not draw pictures for a continuity nor think about the camera blocking, and I am convinced that this is degrading our work in an alarming way.

As I have discussed in the first half of this book, we are film designers. When I see a storyboard slapped out in haphazard script that is trying to get away as being funny or interesting, I feel that the writer is being disrespectful to the profession of film-making. Should we do camera blocking or do the scene in a single cut? Should a song be inserted? How much dialogue should there be? From which cut would it be effective to start the story? Doesn't the dialogue at the beginning need to be more captivating? What is the proper way of using the 15-second timeframe? What we should aim for are continuities as finalized blueprints drawn after all of these questions have been thoroughly addressed. Professionals must have professional answers.

Leaving that up to the director and writing continuities full of holes with no image of a goal will in no way develop your

skills as a creator of visual expression. How much can you fit into 15 seconds? What kind of a rhythm is this continuity going to proceed with? What will it look like when it's finished? It must have a high degree of perfection so that you can explain it to your client and the actors. Do not take a childish storyline and call it a plan. Cutting and pasting images from the Internet to create a continuity is out of the question. You need to realize that there is nothing more unproductive than taking what is already out there and making a visual out of it. Keep drawing storyboards and create lots of films. Repeating this process will train your intuition.

Recent graphics, especially advertisement photography, are getting old. Some say that they have lost character and are not supplying the world with freshness. I believe that one reason might be in the comprehensive layout that uses photos that already exist. Some originality gets shaved off to give way to a sense of completion during the presentation. Every little way you do your job could mean a gain or a loss. You need to always be suspicious of these details too, because having that doubt can change your expression.

What if it had intel inside? ~ Cactus

A boy is calling a girl.
His feelings for her aren't getting
across.

Uh, Hello. I was wondering what
you were doing. Nothing special?
Oh, I see…

If a cactus had intel inside.

The cactus suddenly expands
and shoots off its needles.

A, itai
(Ouch)

One of the needles pricks the
boy's bottom.

Me too.

A, itai
(Ouch)

I want to see you,too.

The boy says: "A, itai (Ouch)" but the
girl understands it to be "Aitai (I want
to see you)" and says, "Me too." (A
play on words meaning "Ouch" and "I
want to see you.")

A, itai
(Ouch)

I'm happy.

Huh?

(I did it !)

intel

*Technology growing with you
– Intel.*

Meiji XYLISH – Human lighting version

A man arrives home.
He enters the living room.
And switches on a "human lighting" device.
A stylish end to the day.

♪*British rock music*

"Human lighting" devices open their mouths and their teeth shine. They are like a stylish interior decoration.
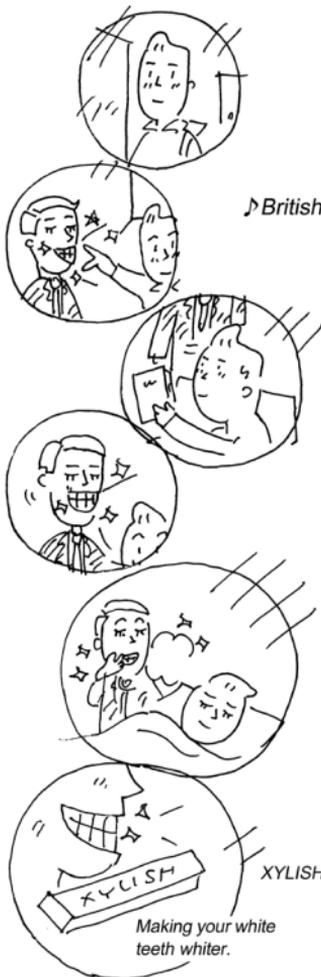
XYLISH

Making your white teeth whiter.

Meiji XYLISH – Brad Pitt only by breath version

A man approaches a woman in the office. She doesn't like him much.

But when she closes her eyes, she sees Brad Pitt.

As long as her eyes are closed, he's Brad Pitt.

. . . . .

Can you take care of these documents, please.

Please.

How about dinner?

How about dinner?

Turn your breath into Brad Pitt.

XYLISH

Voice of the woman's heart: "I don't like Mr. Yamashita from General Affairs much, but he has breath like Brad Pitt."

His breath is like Brad Pitt.

Internet service that lets you send your voice — written argument version

Two men are fighting over a woman in a bar.
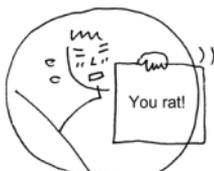
But…
Everyone is communicating using flip boards.
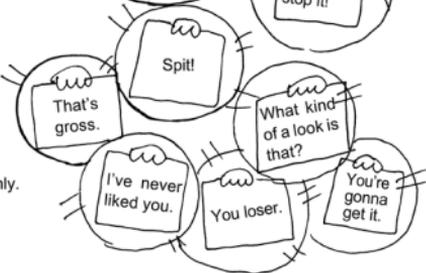
Communication by text only.

This was the Internet until now.
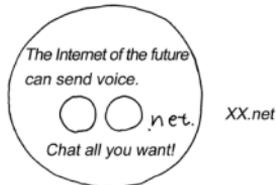
SUNTORY All Free – daughter's boyfriend

Daughter's boyfriend drinking All Free with her father.

. . .

. . .

Daughter is cooking.

. . .

♪ *This is the way it should be.*

She always talks about you, Father.

Boyfriend glances at her and speaks to her father.

BON

BON

BAKA

BON

Father disagrees.

I'm not your father.

BAKA

BON

Or so it seems….

!

BON

Call me Dad.

No.1

SUNTORY
オールフリー

Tasty non-alcoholic beverage, SUNTORY All Free

Yum!

JR EAST JAPAN MY FIRST AOMORI – Tokyo

My new posting is a
small local station.

It's just me and my colleague
working here.

> Tokyo!

♪

> Come here.

He has a habit of calling people
by their hometown.

I went out to see what he
wanted and was greeted by
a beautiful rainbow.
(Then came the pun.)

> Wow!

> See? A niji (rainbow)
> at niji (2 o'clock)

> . . . . .

> Do you like Aomori?

I answered honestly,
and he seemed pleased.

> Yes.

He has a nice expression
sometimes.

> Good.

He sees a local guy
who is from Okhotsk.

MY FIRST AOMORI

> Hey, Okhotsk!
> Long time no
> see!!

99

Purposes bring ideas with them

Where does the difference between art and advertising lie? The answer to that is whether the expression has a purpose or not. However, having experienced novels, movies, and theater that are not advertising, I also see that although the purpose is not to sell a product, no matter what you create, it is necessary to think about your expression with the purpose of keeping in mind what the person seeing it is going to feel and how that person is going to change.

Have a mission.
Think first about what kind of a mission you ought to accomplish.

When you find a mission, you will be able to organize what it is your expression ought to do. The easiest example is using the words "I love you."

A wants to tell B, "I love you."

There are countless ways to express this, but depending on the situation, the method would be narrowed down.

(1) B is presently going out with someone.
(2) B doesn't know A.
(3) A and B used to go out.
(4) A's parents and B's parents are enemies.
(5) A and B speak a different language.

 Each situation has its own way to say, "I love you." So what are you going to say to whom? The purpose determines the method.

(1) The "I love you" to get B to break up the present relationship and come to you.
(2) The "I love you" that won't make B feel uncomfortable about you.
(3) The "I love you" to make B feel the new you.
(4) The "I love you" to make B feel at ease.
(5) The "I love you" that you communicate in B's language.

 The situation creates the mission and the mission determines the details. Clarifying that will strengthen your expression.

 Think about it in film. Say there is a type of mineral water. Before choosing an expression for the mineral water, determine

that your mission is to get working women to love it. Once you have a mission, the impression of the commercial, the character, the music, the language – everything becomes about what working women love.

That is precisely why discovering the mission is extremely important. Whether you can find an attractive mission determines about 80% of the quality of the advertisement and the expression used. In most cases, however, market share and penetration of the concept, without discovering the mission in the true sense, are mistaken as establishing the purpose. Creativeness is already embedded in the mission. It is like a blueprint of the relationship between the product and society – and you will never find it written on the RFP from the client.

Finding the mission

Staring at the product and changing the way you call it will not create an expression. The product is not going to give you a hint for an expression. The hint is in the relationship between the product and people, or the product and society. Let me elaborate.

(Example)
Here is a mailbox.
How would you express it without using the word mailbox?

> **The red thing.**
> **Letter delivery apparatus.**
> **The town's communication box.**
> **Letter reception.**
> **Old-fashioned transmission apparatus.**
>
> **And so on.**

At this point, these are just different ways of calling it, just playing with words. There is no feeling of purpose. If this had an effect on someone's heartstrings, that would only be by coincidence. Think of a purpose.

(Mission)
Show it to be more valuable than digital email.

 Now you will start to think of ideas to express it as a device to transmit warmth that cannot be communicated digitally. Your theme of expression becomes warmth and you will come up with that type of copy. You will imagine music that will communicate warmth and decide whether to use an actual story or fiction to arouse the feeling of warmth more strongly. Once you decide on a mission, it will give you reasons to determine the details of expression. Using each and every reason to make the correct choices will lead to the creation of a strong expression.

  This goes for all forms of expression. Even wedding speeches. Once you decide that your mission is to make the groom's mother cry, the content and format will become clear. Although this is what is especially expected in advertising, exercising this train of thought will prepare you for any type of expression.

Even with movies and novels, which have no products to sell and are the type of expressions that require the creator to search within oneself, it is very important to imagine who would be affected and in what way. When you discover a good mission, the expression will come easily, but a mission that is forced will not readily inspire an expression. You will know that you have successfully discovered a mission if the "image of expression" is also in clear view.

Examples of mission discovery

#01 XYLISH

(RFP) "Gum to whiten teeth"

↓

Stylish, casual gum

↓

Making a commercial where the teeth get too white and shine

↓

Frequency of purchase increases when the theme is breath

↓

"Dress up your breath"

↓

Fragrance over deodorant

The competitor had an overwhelming market share. Their approach was serious, giving the impression that a doctor's recommendation gave it genuine endorsement. I thought about how the competition could be overcome with an advertisement for a product that had "enhanced ingredients to make teeth whiter." There must be a way to open up the market with an approach that was not dental. I came up with stylish. I decided to make my mission developing a market for a product that was something more casual which did not involve negative feelings about fighting cavities.

With that mission as a starting point, I made a commercial with "human lights" involving lots of people with sparkling white teeth that shine. After that, I made careful observations surrounding the product and realized that people seemed to make purchases far more often when they were concerned about their breath more than having whiter teeth. Because this product already had benefits for both breath and teeth, I made a presentation to suggest shifting the product's future value of existence to breath.

Now I needed to compete in the "breath" market. Instead of simply being a gum that gives you clean breath, I kept the stylish (casual) brand value and designed a concept to "dress up your breath."

The expression had to be something stylish. But gum is gum. It needed to be something that was easier to relate to than the kind of stylish that you expect with make-up. Then I realized that I should be communicating fragrance over deodorant as a benefit. To begin with, deodorant does not have a stylish image so I was careful not to make a portrayal of "bad breath." Portraying bad breath may seem like an easy way to make the presentation interesting, but exaggerating a negative aspect before using the product in order to make it look good is only for the convenience of the presentation and will not make it interesting.

#02 Tohoku Shinkansen

(RFP) "Advertise December 4 opening of Shin-Aomori Station"

↓

Difference in degree of enthusiasm between local residents of Aomori and those of Shin-Aomori

↓

Do not just advertise the opening day

We must raise awareness of Aomori as a tourist destination

↓

Create a fad based on the sense of unity among Aomori locals

↓

Perhaps an advertisement can arouse local enthusiasm just like popular TV drama serials do.

↓

Create a serial based on Aomori

This assignment was not merely a simple station-opening advertisement. We all felt that the gap in the degree of enthusiasm between the different areas was a problem, so we designed a project that would make the entire region feel as if it were about themselves.

Just prior to that, I had worked on NHK's annual historical drama serial called "Ryomaden" and had seen first-hand how it contributed to the economic benefits of the local area. I thought that this could also work with advertising if we involve the locals and integrate them to ensure economic benefits. We would make everyone in Aomori aware of our extensive search for a heroine and have her appear opposite famous actors from the region in a drama-like commercial series. This project steadily grew into a popular common topic among the local residents.

From beginning to end, when I explained the series to people, I talked about the new heroine of Aomori. That's all I needed for people to understand and let their imaginations expand.

#03 All Free

(RFP) "A new product free of alcohol, sugar, and calories."

    ↓

A mission to create a positive position for non-alcoholic beer
rather than the negative "beer replacement" as in the past

    ↓

It comes with no worries

Other companies offer negative products that cause metabolic
syndrome

This is a positive product with healthy benefits

    ↓

"This is how it should be."

 When I first received the RFP, it was tough. This product with
the world's first specifications had completely different pack-
aging and naming from what we know today. It was very much
like beer. No matter how interesting I thought my concept was,
there was something I wasn't quite sure of.

 A few days later, it was in the news that the competition was

launching a similar product and we panicked. But when I read the details in the media report, I saw a light.

We now had an enemy.

Our client immediately made a dramatic change to the packaging and naming. The moment I saw that, I knew how to beat the competition. At the same time, I understood why I was feeling guilty all along. I had assumed that people would feel negative when they were buying the product. Portraying "when you can't drink" or "because you can't drink" obviously makes the advertisement negative. The new and improved product had all of the answers.

The mission was simple.
Change the non-alcoholic category into something positive.

As soon as I thought of that, my copywriter wrote, "This is the way it should be." This well-known phrase from a popular Japanese animation on TV is also a line in the song that accompanies the program. I gave the song a bossa nova arrangement and drew swirls over the actors. All of the pieces

of my expression puzzle started to fit into place.

Create with positive imagination

When you have an attractive mission, that is all you need for your expression to be attractive. Conversely, a mission that does not bring along attractive expression is a bad mission.

If you only think about the expression, it is very hard to make it attractive. First exhaust all of your options about what you should do and what sort of change you should be offering the world. A mission that the creator considers interesting. A mission that the client is willing to spend an enormous advertising expense on. A mission that makes the audience want to change. These three can be realized with one exceptional mission. We have to think of something that will make it all come true.

This is not something that is created through marketing. To give you an extreme argument, marketing is a thing of the past. It is only targeted at conditions leading up to when products and expressions are launched, and it doesn't tell us what changes will occur afterwards. This is more a matter of what you intend for your goal to be, and to draw out the will to express.

As I have mentioned through a number of examples, what is important is never to see the product as being something negative, but to make it a positive existence in its relationship with society. This awareness must be embedded in the foundation of your mission. Using exaggerated negativity to make an advertisement might be interesting to the person making it, but the people watching will not think so. Perhaps it is about believing in and loving the product.

Advertising exists in order to sell things, but it can also do more. A whiskey commercial might teach an elementary school student who doesn't drink whiskey to be kind to others. Someone might see an airplane advertisement and decide to try a little harder. When people are moved by an advertisement, they end up liking the company who made it. They will even choose other products by that company. From that point of view, let us never forget the importance of creating expression that takes the form of advertising.

Always think carefully about why advertisements exist in our world. The answer will become part of the plan's invisible

foundation from where ideas will arise. And it will become clear, maybe not directly but inevitably, how the creator as a person views other people.

"Because this is what the client says." "This is the level that everyone would understand." This kind of creative attitude is actually weakening the form of expression we call advertising. What meaning is there to try and move the world with something that the creator does not believe in 100%?

Advertising is one element that shapes society, so ad creators need to have pride and moral responsibility. Such creators will be able to discover attractive, powerful missions. Only expressions created from a positive point of view can make people happy. A creator's complacent expression will not produce good ideas. I sometimes see ads that try to generate laughter by making the actor do something strange, but that idea has no class. When you express something negative, it might look interesting at a glance, but that's only because the creator's vulgar philosophy is viewed as unusual. You must not call that challenging. You must not call that freedom of expression. Such poor spirit will in no way have a positive effect on the

client, the cast, or the world.

There is absolutely no need to create something that will hurt someone.

What you gain by hurting someone has absolutely no value.

Creating a way to create

Creating a way to create

New expressions always come about through new ways to create them. For that reason, it is important to first clearly understand the expression you want and to create the entire process of obtaining it.

When making movies, I found that they were made so systematically that whether they were movies about monsters, love, or suspense, at times they left me feeling slightly uncomfortable because they all proceeded in the same pattern. But when I look back on them and think about advertising, I feel even more uncomfortable about the arrangement. There is no comparison. Perhaps it's hard to see things when you're wrapped up in your own world.

In order to avoid the final product for being regarded as totally out of the question, certain proceedings of verification make an expression fairly mundane. In order to obtain stronger expression, you need to leave all options open. Simplifying the façade also simplifies the possibilities of expression. Programmed checking eliminates the power to doubt and takes away the opportunity to brush it up. Simply speaking,

you must not skip any of the processes of your work. Doubt every aspect of what is normal, the syntax, and methods, once you have chosen your goal. Expressions can easily become boring and the reason creeps in from every direction. So, be aware during every step of the way.

Once there was a poster shoot where we wanted two actors acting as father and daughter, to act naturally. Normally, we would have asked them to act naturally, but in this case we wanted a style of "natural" as you see in actors in movies. This script I wrote for them would not be made public, but follows the process of movie making as the characters act their parts. The camera would take the cuts that fit.

Father and daughter

A refreshing spring day.
Father is sitting on the porch drinking a can of All-Free.
In the house, his daughter is browsing his bookshelf.
She has a can of All-Free in her hand.

Daughter: "Wow. You read these."

Father: "Hm? Which ones?"

Daughter: "Kuniko Mukoda"

Father: "Sure, I read Kuniko Mukoda."

Daughter: "Can I borrow this?"

Father: "Of course."

 Daughter picks up a book and approaches her father.

She turns the pages, and a photo flutters out.

Daughter: "Hm?"

 She sees a picture of a beautiful woman

Daughter: "Who is she?"

Father: "Uh… I don't know."

Daughter: "What was that bit of hesitation?"

Father: "I think that's Kuniko Mukoda. Yes, that must be her."

Daughter:" No, it isn't. That is not Kuniko Mukoda. I can tell that much."

Father: "Someone must have made a mistake."

Daughter: "Who?"

Father: "Someone."

Daughter: "She's pretty."

Father: "Do you think so?"

 Daughter watches Father carefully as he takes a drink as if to hide something.

Father: "What?"

Daughter: "It's acceptable."

Father: "What is?"

Daughter: "I think it's okay. That sort of thing."

Father: "What do you mean, that sort of thing?"

Daughter: "Oh, never mind."

 Daughter hands her father the photo and enjoys another sip of All-Free

Daughter: "Ha"

 Then she ignores her father's stare and starts reading the book.

Father drinks his All-Free while he watches his daughter.

Then, thinking there's no sense in worrying, he takes his eyes off of her and looks at the photo.

His expression is that of nostalgia, as he takes another sip of his All-Free.

Daughter: "Oh!"

It seems as though she has found something in the book.

Father: "Hey, what is it?!"

Daughter: "You must be kidding!"

Father: "What is it? That's no way to behave."

Daughter: "Hehehe."

Father: "What do you mean, 'hehehe.' Don't do that."

Daughter: "Hehehe."

Father: "I said stop it."

Daughter: "Hehehe."

Father pretends not to care and takes a big gulp from his All-Free.

Daughter looks at him briefly.

Then her eyes follow an airplane across the sky that seems to be flying at a lower altitude than usual.

Photos taken in this manner ended up being "natural" as a result of good acting. But most of all, making every creative effort in the process was the reason the photos turned out so nicely. As creators, we should always consider and choose the best method to reach our goal.

Before I became involved in advertising, I had absolutely no education in expression. So the first thing I did was to concentrate all of my energy on a single theme: I collected the things I liked and the things that moved me. I obsessively collected advertisements, movies, newspapers, picture postcards, picture books, phrases in novels, and even match boxes from bars. Then I filed them, not only as topics of interest, but with commentaries of why they interested me or how they could be used to make them interesting. It helped me to understand my physiology objectively, and simultaneously provided me with a clue on unravelling the reason why something became so interesting. It trained me to take a single feeling and extend

it into an expression. Especially with TV commercials, I was able to continually break up and reorganize ideas from different angles thinking that the commercial would become more interesting if I did this or if the product were more like this. It didn't matter whether or not it won high praise at Cannes. My target was anything that sparked my mind. If I thought something was interesting, I had to figure out how to make it. For me, that was a time to explore how to create.

Create a way to create that is best for you. Think about how to get closer to what you want to create. Closely following textbook-like material that someone else has written will not get you there. Discover the syntax that you can use and create an answer at a higher level. Expanding your skills in that way is the natural thing to do as a professional.

Taking advantage of illusions disguised as senses and not attempting to study syntax is out of the question, but a creator without self-made skills cannot be called a professional. We have been given the time and opportunities to brush up these skills. People who do not have that time hire us to be creative. That is exactly why we should apply the skills that we have

thoroughly polished to find the answer we seek.

Creating ways to create movies

When I finally got a movie project that I had long hoped for, fear struck me along with my excitement. I was afraid of being labeled as incompetent in something that I was so in love with. After being in the 15-second business, I didn't know if I was capable of making a story that was two hours long. In advertising, no matter how messed up the story is, the moment the product shows up, it comes together somehow. I may have created great stories in advertising, but that was advertising after all. How is someone like me going to make a movie land on its feet without the least bit of merchandise to rely on? I was afraid that people would say it was too big of a feat for someone from the advertising business. All sorts of anxieties fell upon me at once, but it was an opportunity to make something I had a passion for. I was not prepared to make an advertisement-like film, saying it was a new type of movie.

I decided to do what I did when I first joined the world of advertising. To find what I liked, then to think about why I liked it. My work was to find my biological self. I consecutively watched all of the movies that I had liked in the past, regardless of the genre.

This time, rather than watching movies as a member of the audience as I had always done, the work involved re-examining the films from the producer's point of view – especially the writer's. This process gave me a whole lot of discoveries. I found that every movie I had liked was similar in construction, no matter what kind of movie it was. Even if the interactions between people looked complicated, there was a sort of rule in the configuration. I could feel the wonder of a movie where the opening and ending scenes were exactly the same, but they end up having a totally different meaning. There were so many discoveries. From these movies I decided to choose one that was closest to the plot of the movie I was about to create, and completely take it apart. I decided to start by creating my own way to make a movie from what I learned on my own.

First, I wrote out each chapter on tags and lined them up on the wall. Then I subdivided those and broke them up into small pieces. I arranged those according to each character. When I got that far, I realized that the movie scenario that all this time I had thought could be written so perfectly only by someone who had a special skill suddenly became a structure drawing. That was the moment the magic melted. Then I discovered that

the structure drawing after the magic melted was actually the base of the script that in fact anyone could use.

All movies are composed of basically three parts:

Scene 1: Raising the problem
Scene 2: Complicating the problem
         (the belief is shattered)
Scene 3: Solving the problem

Every movie had this structure, and the characters "grew" in some way, during the final scene.

Should I do this with a spaceship that doesn't know if it can return to Earth, or with an unknown transmittable disease, or with someone having trouble at work with a boss because of different values, or with a lover who refuses to break up? I may be exaggerating, but to me it looked like all movies were made based on a single pattern and the settings were just interchanged. That is how I got ahold of the standard structural diagram of a movie.

Then I decided to use this thoroughly with a certain Disney

movie. I had been impressed with the structure of the movie, and I felt as though the setting involving a confrontation that came with the young people of the big city coming to live in a small town was similar to a film production I had been working on based on the original "Honokaa Boy" novel.

After I completely dissected the Disney movie, I wrote a script exchanging the elements of that movie with those of "Honokaa Boy." The content of the story became something completely different from the way Honokaa Boy was actually put together. And then I determined that a separate method for interpreting the original book and presenting unconditional love would be more fitting, so I wrote it up with yet a different methodology.

As a result, the process of writing this Disney-like "Honokaa Boy" was an incredible experience for me. I was able to structurally understand how to write a script and to experience it by letting it go through my body once. This was a huge gain.

Let me show you how this is done using the typical Hollywood movie, "Die Hard."

Dissecting "Die Hard"

First of all, take notes while you watch the movie. Write everything that happens as they occur, then organize them in blocks. Do not copy down the script or details – just the incidents that help the story progress.

1. With a Christmas present for his daughter in hand, a man who is afraid of flying travels from New York to Los Angeles to see his estranged wife and daughter.

2. There is a glamorous Christmas party going on in Nakatomi Plaza.

3. The man is picked up by an unusually flakey limousine driver and taken to Nakatomi Plaza where his wife is. It feels like he's going to get caught up in something.

4. The man is bewildered by the high-tech building where his wife is working under her maiden name. He has mixed feelings. When he walks into the party he is out of place. The elegant Japanese company president truly appreciates the man's wife, while a sleazy businessman is jealous of

her advancement. With no acquaintances in Los Angeles, the man will be staying with his wife and daughter that night.

5. A suspicious truck enters the basement of Nakatomi Plaza. Intruders break through security one after another and shut the building off from the outside.

6. The man, who has temporarily left the party, notices that something is wrong. With the sound of gunfire, the intruders barge into the party venue and take the president as hostage. Their purpose is unclear.

7. Only the man is in the position to move about freely within the building. He studies the building and gets a grip on the whereabouts of the intruders. The bad guys try to force the president to tell them the code to the vault, but he refuses to cooperate. They kill him.

8. The man tries setting off the fire alarm in an attempt to contact the outside, but fails. The bad guys notice his presence. The man gets rid of one of the bad guys and declares

war. His wife notices that it is her ex-husband who is doing this. The sleazy businessman also notices. The man contacts the police with a walkie-talkie he has taken. A clueless police officer heads to the scene but starts to turn back, deceived by the bad guys' clever acting. The man drops the bad guy's dead body and purposely fires at the police car to alert them of what is happening inside. Eventually, numerous squad cars arrive.

9. The man declares war on the bad guys' leader. TV stations begin live coverage. The man seizes explosives from the bad guys. There is contact between the wife and one of the bad guys. The police are bureaucratic and dysfunctional. The man continues to contact the frustratingly clueless officer with the walkie-talkie and explains the situation. The bad guys eliminate SWAT members who try to enter the building. They even obliterate the armored vehicle with an antitank gun. The enemy is meticulously and overwhelmingly prepared. The only one who seems able to fight them is the man, who retaliates by blowing away the antitank gun with explosives that he seized.

10. We now know that the bad guys are terrorists. The man chooses the police officer as his partner, over the supervisor. The sleazy businessman offers to negotiate with the man. Stepping out of line gets him killed. The bad guys make a false statement, demanding that all terrorists in the world be set free. The vault's passwords are decoded one by one. The last door will not open.

11. The FBI come on board as an anti-terrorist measure. The man meets the bad guys' leader face-to-face but the leader pretends to be a hostage. The man believes him and gives him a gun for self-defense. The leader aims the gun at the man but finds that the gun is unloaded. It's a tactical win for the man. Then another bad guy arrives and a shootout begins. The man is barefoot and cuts himself on broken glass. Still, he outruns the bad guys and they become enraged.

    Wife: "Only John could drive somebody that crazy."

12. The FBI take textbook measures to deal with the terrorists. They shut down the power for the entire building, which is what the terrorists want them to do. Without electricity,

the vault door opens, exposing 640 million dollars. The man sends a message to the clueless officer using the walkie-talkie and leaves his last will and testament for his wife. The officer confesses the reason he lost his ability to shoot a gun.

13. A TV station notices that the man and his wife are hostages and interview the children. The FBI sends in an armored helicopter. Knowing that his wife has been taken hostage in the vault, the man attempts to enter the building from the rooftop to find that the roof is covered with detonators. He shoots to alert the helicopter but is mistaken for a terrorist and is shot at. The whole helicopter blows up on the roof. The man is miraculously saved but only has two more bullets in his gun.

14. In the basement, the limousine chases the bad guys' getaway car crashing into it and squashing it. The man shows up at the vault but is discovered immediately. His wife is used as a shield, forcing him to drop his gun. But he had another gun taped to his back. He shoots the two bad guys with the two remaining bullets. He and the police officer

finally meet in person after it's all over. Or so they think. Suddenly a bad guy emerges, but the officer shoots him down without mercy. He surprises himself with his own action. The man's wife punches the announcer who put her family at risk. The limousine comes to pick them up. The man and his wife kiss and leave the scene.

Turn it back into a plot

Now let's organize everything that happened and put it back together in a general plot (synopsis).

New York City Police Detective John McClane, who hates to fly, arrives in Los Angeles to spend the Christmas holidays with his wife Holly and his two children.

His estranged wife had moved up the ladder at a Japanese high-tech company in Los Angeles. John ends up having to attend the company's Christmas party. Being an old-fashioned type, he found the state-of-the-art, highly technical high-rise building uncomfortable.

Then terrorists barge in and seize the building. Their motive is to steal the 640 million dollars kept inside a tightly secured high-tech vault.

By coincidence, John has slipped away from the party. This is where the man's lonely battle begins.

His only hope is an unreliable police officer he was able to contact by walkie-talkie. The bureaucratic police department and the FBI that can only follow set rules are barely functional, but in spite of his injuries and through miraculous stints, John manages to corner the enemy.

This battle helps John to regain something that he and those around him had lost.

This plot has now become invincible. The basic structure of the story is still there. In other words, by changing the setting, you have access to any number of stories. The following are a few examples.

Japanese historical drama

It is now the dawn of the Meiji Period in the latter half of the 19th century. A worn-out former samurai is losing presence in his own home day by day, as the trading company that his inquisitive wife started grows bigger and bigger.

One day, the former samurai ends up having to deliver

something his wife forgot, to a ship from Holland that she was having trade negotiations with.

However, that ship was only a trading vessel by name. Behind the scenes it served as a base for a heroin smuggling organization.

By pure chance, his wife figures that out and is captured.

The man boards the ship unaware of anything. This is where his lonely dramatic rescue begins.

Aboard the ship, the former samurai runs into an aged scientist who had been taken captive. The two use the elder's scientific wisdom to battle the organization.

After the battle is over and he has rescued his wife, the former samurai who dislikes fighting goes back to his worn-out expression and says to his wife: "I'm hungry, aren't you?"

His wife sees him in a new light.
That intimidates him a little.

Medical drama

A doctor gets fed up working at the University Hospital that only responds to political issues, and opens up a small clinic on a remote island.

His daughter comes to the island for a visit during spring vacation. It was the day of the island festival.

Things start going wrong just as the fireworks begin. A gangster-type man vomits blood, and then many others start to do the same. The festival turned into a panic. The doctor notices that this is an infectious disease.

This is where his lonely battle to protect his daughter and the people of the island begins. The university receives word from the remote island and notifies the government of the situation.
In order to prevent the epidemic from spreading globally, a political decision is made to isolate the island.

The doctor's lonely battle continues without him knowing this. He asks his long-standing rival from his university hospital days for help, but is refused. The rival then faxes the clinic an old thesis that was once rejected by the medical association, mumbling that this is the best he can do.

After a great many difficulties the doctor succeeds in refining a vaccine, but there isn't enough for everyone. He makes a decision to put his daughter at the end of the line and administer vaccinations to the island residents first.

In the end, the doctor also becomes infected. His mind becomes hazy and he is ready to give up everything, when his old rival doctor from the university hospital shows up on the island. In his hand he has a vaccine that he created at the university.
And this is what he says:

I'm putting my name on this vaccine.

A love story

In a small town in Kyushu there lives a girl who has never been popular with the boys.

At her new part-time job, she meets the love of her life.

He is good-looking in every sense of the word and always the perfect gentleman. He is a star beyond reach.

Every day, the girl's heart is bursting with passion for him.

One day, she finds out about a group of girls who are after him. They try using cheap tricks to grab his heart. The girl gets in the way of their strategies.

Then one day she hears that he is planning to go to university in Tokyo. She makes up her mind to offer her first ever – and likely last – proposal of love.

The girl's friends set up an agenda for her remodeling. She absorbs all sorts of skills from all kinds of people and works hard at becoming the ideal girl. She overcomes many problems with great effort.

Through this process, she learns a lot of things.

Then the fateful day arrives. The boy suddenly tells her that there is something he wants to talk to her about. Her heart is pounding when she goes to meet him. When she arrives, another boy is standing behind him.

"He says he likes you."

She is turned down before she even proposes. But somehow she feels refreshed.

As you can see, the script's basic structure is extremely versatile. Replace the terrorists with an illness, a train that cannot stop, or the destruction of an economy, and the story starts to become clear. You could turn it into a story that has no shape, like a love story. Once you have configured the plot, all you need to do is follow the detailed structure of "Die Hard" and carefully replace components such as changes in value due to human struggles or incidents. If it fits perfectly, there you have a script with the same ideal level of perfection as that movie.

This is a basic script-writing skill. You cannot publish large

volumes just by exchanging one thing for another. It is not that easy. The purpose is to train yourself to learn the structure. From there it is how well you can apply the basics, and this is where your true talent is tested. In any case, I recommend that you try this once. It is a good way to absorb the methods of scriptwriting without someone else telling you how to do it. Through this process, you will begin to see the details of how a story is developed. Playwrights who can produce one hit after another do not have to think about this basic structure because it is already embedded in them.

Post-It Scriptwriting

(1) Plot (short)

(2) Plot (long)

(3) Three-act divisions (main purpose)

(4) Dividing each act into several chapters (mid-range purpose)

(5) Making each chapter into a scene (minor purpose)

(6) Replacing episodes (underplot)

(7) Keeping control of each character (emotions)

 This is my original method that I acquired as a result of struggling to dismantle movies which I now use when writing scripts for movies, novels, and theater, among others. It is a method that I developed so that a human being with the imaginative brain capacity of a short-distance runner can properly structure a two-hour story. I wanted a method where I could make use of the same muscles in an effective way. I thought it would be a waste if I wrote without using any of the skills that I had been honing for nearly 20 years. I felt I should write something that only I could write.

Different personalities

Attraction

Meet

An incident (foreshadow)

Split up

United

An incident occurs

A mysterious email

A rival

A sign of illness

A lovely date

Switch

Required events

Express with the characters' actions

Reunite

Solve

Get back together

Rough flow
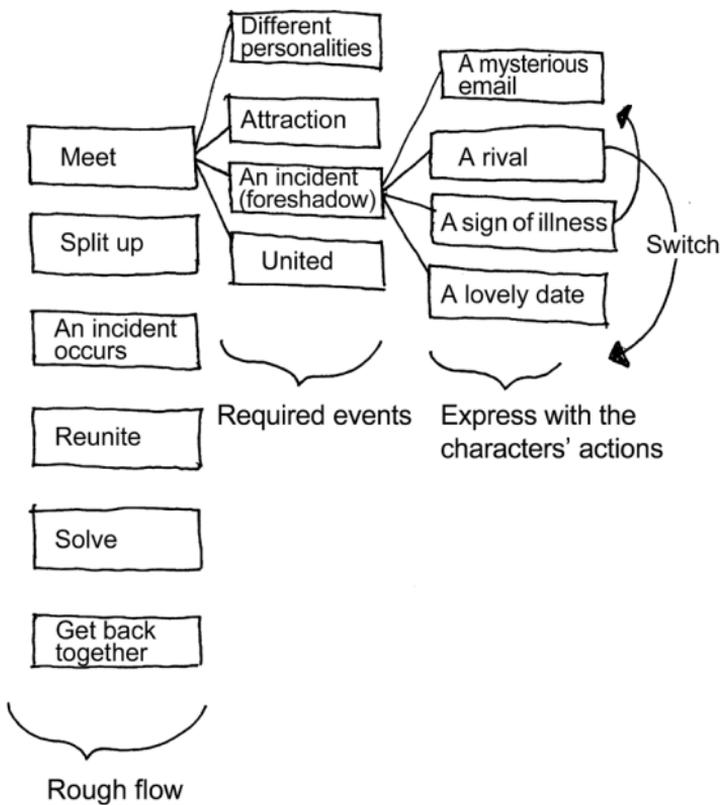
Now we're ready to write a script!!

To begin with, think about how you can express a two-hour-long movie as if it were only 15 seconds long by devising a concept. It could be something simple, like the new local heroine of Aomori created for the Tohoku Shinkansen project. Then develop it into a major plot (1). That would be your synopsis. Then expand that to make a longer, more detailed plot – play by play – to fill several pages (2).

Once you've done that, separate it into three acts, as I mentioned earlier, giving care to the role that each one plays. Then divide each act into chapters. Write the details on Post-It notes and stick them to your script.

You should end up with a selection of events like, "main character meets enemy" or "company is taken over."

Next to your "main character meets enemy" Post-It note, stick smaller notes describing the details of the incident.

If one note says, "he was once best friends with the enemy," then you need to put another note before that to explain an event that made them best friends in the first place. Use the

Post-It notes to help you stay aware of the flow of the story.

Next, take a step back and rearrange it all. You can organize your story in a number of ways and may find that a couple of things going on at the same time could unexpectedly make it interesting. Or you might see that foreshadowing is more effective.

Then pursue the story by character. Find the person that you conveniently took advantage of, or excavate the one who disappeared part way through and make a revision.

Structuring with Post-It notes can help you to understand your weak points and know what it is that you want to show. When you're satisfied with your Post-It notes, then you can finally start writing the script.

But here comes the crucial point. Even if you have perfected everything up until this point, when you start to write the script, the characters in your play can often move in a different direction. You can't help that, so don't push it, and if you start to become wary of where the story is headed, go back to the

Post-It notes once again. That process is there to take in the big picture so you can indulge in the script with no anxieties. The Post-It notes can be removed, rearranged, added, or replaced as much as you like. That's why you can proceed and watch your story go into infinite directions. What you grasp with the Post-It notes are the way that the events are organized. They are nothing more than a garden in which the story is being born. The characters are in that garden, fighting their fight, finding their answers, and facing their destinies. Using what you have as a map, you must go out to explore what is actually there. Don't write it out all at once. Proceed with care, make sure that there are no loopholes that you have left open, and write the script according to your very own map that you have made with the Post-It notes. Go back over your writing over and over again and wait until you are completely in synchronization with your characters.

At the beginning of a story you should install the rules of the story to your audience, so there are many things that need to be done. This is indeed where the playwright suffers. However, once this part is overcome, you can also discover the ending that you yourself are looking forward to. It feels so good that

is difficult to express in words. If you hastily write all at once because you want to be relieved, you expose yourself to the danger of revealing your intention to the audience. Keep yourself under control and proceed with caution.

 When you face a new expression, it is very important to stop and take a look at yourself. What can you do? What is it that you cannot do? How can you expand on what you can do? What should you do to compensate for what you cannot do? If you just continue writing without thinking about these things, you're just an amateur. When I'm in new territory, I'm a newcomer with no track record. Because I don't want to be just any newcomer, I think of ways to utilize the skills that I have. Being able to exert your possibilities is also a technique of expression.

Develop your imaginative brain

Use your right brain and your left brain

To create something that will communicate, the writer must be objective. An objective writer has the power to know what makes good expression more interesting, and can sort through conveniences and eliminate them. The objective writer knows how the words and actions affect the audience, and knows what it takes to make someone cry, or laugh. To put it another way, being objective can be a way of teasing.

For that reason, train yourself to use your left brain. Insist on being logical. Do not create laughter while you're laughing. Do not create sadness while you're crying. Be calm and calculate the other person's emotions through your imagination. Then let your right brain judge whether that expression intuitively hits the mark. Make sure your brain knows the roles that each side should fulfill.

Haphazard logic can be frustrating, like a fly buzzing around your expression. Thorough logic will help you overcome convenience or pre-established harmony. Think more logically than anyone else and you will reach a point where there is a view even your right brain can comprehend and accept. Once

your brain remembers that view and you repeat the process over and over, you will eventually develop the muscle that is needed, for our brain is a muscle. If you train it properly, you'll be able to use it properly.

Don't forget that in your final expression, if the course of your thoughts or your logic is obvious, the expression will be overwhelmingly boring. You can probably see it yourself. It's the kind of storyline where people can tell the syntax you were trying to portray. An obvious resemblance to something else is the most pitiful result. Make your right brain check it until your syntax is blown away by a great scene or by an outstanding line. The bottom line is that the audience should not be distracted by the syntax. When you pursue logic to the very end and reach a point that nobody ever imagined, and it is inspiring – that is the ideal expression.

Even when you start with your right brain, be sure to validate with your left brain. Always make your right brain and left brain work separately. Make your instincts and your objectivity go back and forth to make your expression stronger.

The power to doubt

Doubting is also a means of enhancing expression. Doubt everything that you create at every step from every angle. Doubt yourself more than anyone else would. Does this dialogue work? Is this setting okay? Does it flow? Is the music really necessary? Will people really understand this storyline? Is it so easy to understand that it will be boring? Will including the characters' reactions make it easier to understand? Continue to think about these things, even if you are complimented during the process.

There are many things that you will notice once the filming begins. If you get an impression that you didn't imagine before when you were sitting at your desk, think about how you could gain more points. It's not too late to change the dialogue then. You can change it all right from the start if that will make it more interesting and meaningful. It is okay to change your focus at any time. What we are creating is not the process, but the result.

If you think it's right, speak out. Not speaking out is equivalent to not thinking.

If you need to comment on the dialogue, don't hesitate because you think others might see you as being insensitive. If it's the right thing to do, the timing doesn't matter. If it's really the right thing to do, just get everyone to address the issue and find a solution.

Conversely, even if you don't see any immediate solution regarding your opinion, at least people will share your discomfort on which your opinion was based. Sharing this discomfort with others is actually important because people will feel the cause one way or another and will consciously or unconsciously try to resolve it through their expression.

A sense of achievement during the planning process will numb the function of your brain. It is an enemy. There is nothing more dangerous than the feeling that you have accomplished something. If you ever feel that you have achieved something, be sure to switch on your "doubt" button. Think about what other possibilities there might be. Perhaps there is a more interesting setting. Insist on raising points at all times. Always having the mind to doubt is an advantage to creating

something better.

Doubting is an act that strengthens your expression.

If it doesn't feel right, you'll see the answer

I doubt there are very many people who can quickly grasp everything around them objectively to create an expression. Use your senses well to get hold of objective thinking.

The senses I'm speaking of are those that make you feel that something is out of place. I often take advantage of things that seem out of place when I am editing films. After the different cuts of the film have been connected, I watch it over and over again. From the top cut, I go down one at a time to find things that don't seem right and simultaneously think why. I simulate in my head what can be done to correct it as I watch the film over and over again.

If it feels rushed from around the third cut, I think about cutting the last dialogue. But then the landing point becomes too soft, so I think about inserting some copy. On the other hand, perhaps I could eliminate a lot of what goes on by inserting some copy right at the beginning. Perhaps eliminating the script altogether would make it more profound. But what could be gained if I did that? What could I lose?

These thoughts circulate in my mind until finally there is nothing out of place. Because this process is private, I simply repeat this over and over until my thoughts are organized. There is no need to stick to the storyboard. The steps that follow are there to improve on the original storyboard. I then substitute my own character with those of the client or a third party and try to find something that is out of place. Whether that uneasiness should be corrected largely depends on how strong the expression can be made.

This uneasy sense of being out of place is also important during the planning stage. It is a way in to take an objective look at your own ideas. It's a place to think about what it was that made you feel uncomfortable. There you can find the answer to what you must do in the next step. Make the next plan so there are no feelings of unease. Then you will find something else that seems out of place. Make a plan to eliminate that. Repeat this process over and over again.

When you find that you are totally comfortable, then think about whether there is something that should be out of place — something that seems naturally out of place. This way of

thinking may seem like there is no end, but for some strange reason, at some point, an idea suddenly emerges, to solve all the unnatural things that you have encountered so far. You will ultimately end up with something that you know will work. So worry all you like without hesitation.

Perhaps ideas are things that cannot be created without a certain amount of restrictions. Because there is a condition that says, "You can't do this," you get an idea and think, "Then I'll do that." Give yourself a lot of restrictions. Ideas that overcome all the restrictions will be on a level that others cannot catch up with.

Choose the more difficult task

If something looks interesting but it seems like too much work, that's the one you should be creating now because there won't be many others who will do anything beyond that. Make something that other people won't. In order to do that, try to choose the more difficult project when you have a choice. Take risks and conquer them. By doing so, your expression will break out of the mundane.

Next you need to think of ideas and methods to make your delivery. Our ideas must not exist simply for making blue-prints. Pretending to be a creator and expecting someone else to work on the delivery will not accomplish anything. You must not avoid the hard work that is required to make your ideas take form. You should apply your creativity to make it happen. Show your expression with vigor. You need ideas to persuade, ideas to work efficiently within your budget, ideas of using media that will maximize your expression. There are tons of things to think about.

These days people are concerned about how the advertisement will be viewed. Creating the commercial is not the end,

but think further about how you want the commercial to be seen, and what sort of penetration you can expect by linking it with social media. In which order will the product be shown on what channel, and in what condition will the shop be when that happens? In this day and age, every form of media has a different relationship with the people who use it. Carefully consider every one of your expressions and keep a distance between the expression and the people. Make a commercial that functions universally. The desire for people to see your commercial as new and refreshing must be a part of your plan.

That is all included in the realm of planning and the realm of a professional's responsibility.

Advertisements tend to favor anything that is new. At times they are pampered because the advertisement looks new and that is what people see as refreshing. What was not considered media before is now taking form as the new media, or new ways of using media are taking shape. Some are treated as a new wave in the name of interactive advertising. But these are all nothing more than ideas on the surface. No matter how interesting the place where an advertisement is viewed, if the

content is nothing special, it ends up stirring only a very weak emotion of having seen something unusual.

 What is important is what is inside. And what is outside helps to maximize exposure. That is something that must not be forgotten.

Simple thought, big thought

When your storyboard gets complicated, or you end up getting yourself in trouble by trying to find a superficial solution to the client's requests, go back to the beginning. Who did you want to sell this product to? Who did you want to make happy with this advertisement? Think simple. Go back to your mission and organize. If the transmitter is mixed up, nobody will receive that information accurately.

If you find it difficult to find the plan, take a step back and look at the target and the problem from a distance. It is similar to the notion that ideas do not come from the products themselves, but from the relationship between the product and the people. Take the problem you have now and replace it with a big problem. If you are having trouble communicating the features of new and improved shampoo for women, reconsider that problem in an exaggerated manner and consider your challenge to be making all women beautiful or the pursuit of the meaning of beauty. This can lead you to an expression that includes the elements of the improved product without simply boasting its features.

Recently I've noticed that whenever there is a meeting with very talented people, they all start out voicing the same concern: Why is that advertisement necessary? They ask this question over and over again. Of course the advertisement is there to sell a product, and that is the absolute purpose, but on the other hand, it is also an element that makes up part of the scenery like a building in the city. If it is in bad taste, looks rowdy, or self-centered, it will upset the scenery. And when an atmosphere goes bad, people become desolate. An advertisement has that same responsibility. On the other hand, it can also make the present world a little bit brighter and more fun. We make things that have that power and influence. For that reason, the talented people in the meeting felt that we must seriously consider and understand what this thing we are making means to society and have the strong desire to create it.

That was my focus when I did the Beams project. What is it that Beams ought to be telling the world? What should it be doing? After the big earthquake, the expression "kizuna (bonding)" echoed everywhere. Amidst that, I needed to find a place to establish a meaning for the advertisement to exist. It

was the first advertisement that I made after that earthquake. The 35th anniversary campaign "Let's Fall in Love" came from the thought of a light that people need in hard times and how the ad could help.

That was the same for JR East's "Let's Go to Tohoku." This project started with discussions about what was really necessary after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

What was really necessary was for people to actually go to the Tohoku area to shop, eat, and sleep over in order to activate the economy, so we needed something real that would work directly, not an image. The tone had to be proactive to make people look forward, not something that would make them feel pity. Our first step was to think about what the advertisement needed to do at that time.

We ended up making a ticket called the "Tohoku Support Pass" to move people, and decided to launch it with an expression that had a completely different tone from anything done before. It had the necessary power and cheerfulness. This project made me realize that you can propose an advertisement

that is not an image but one that has true meaning.

 By the way, someone once asked me, "How do you make a presentation go well?" My response was this:

"There is absolutely no need to do a presentation well. As long as you have a good plan, it will sound good, no matter how small your voice is. There is nothing sadder than trying to make a bad plan sound good."

 The only and best way to make a presentation is to have an idea that makes you want to give that presentation.

The science of multiple simultaneous thinking

On the job I often hear people say that they want to spend time thinking about one thing, but I don't think that leads to much progress.

Especially in my case, probably because I have always been working on several things all at once, my mind seems to be set for multitasking.

First I concentrate on one project and clearly imagine the things that I want to come up with. If that doesn't take me directly to the answer, I do the same thing with another project. I have a "wanting to come up with switch" in my brain and I always keep it ON for the first project. Then when I'm on a completely different project, the solution for the other job dawns on me. Perhaps it's the same as when ideas come to you when you least expect it, like when you are riding the train or using the toilet. It also has to do with the fact that whenever I want to come up with something for a project, my brain decides to relax and take a break. Ever since I became aware of this multitasking method, my ability to think about multiple projects simultaneously grew significantly and my

capacity expanded.

People in our profession obsess over new work. If a new offer comes our way, we need to naturally feel that we could create something amazing, no matter what the conditions are.

Do as much work as you can, even if it means pushing yourself a little. That extra push will show the way you should proceed. We can call ourselves professional only after we have exhausted our efforts and ingenuity. Doing just a certain amount of work with a few ideas here and there will make us only mediocre creators.

If you want to become a better writer, you need to write a lot. That also goes for planning. Over the years, how seriously and how deeply you involve yourself and how thoroughly you do your research will become the muscle in your brain that will make a difference in your planning power.

> An average person
> happened across a special job
> so he attempts to live a special life

while treasuring his average senses.

That's all it is.

Having no passion about a job that you love;

not making any effort;

blaming it all on the work environment

    or the lack of talent or opportunities;

just living day by day –

what a waste.

The thrill of being able to touch someone's heart

and the happiness of being able to make that your job;

the excitement of being able to stand

on ground that is called visual expression

that can forever be pioneered –

these are things we need to feel strongly about.

We need to be more infatuated.

Do what you like to your heart's content

You can make that your job.

It doesn't get better than that.

Epilogue

When I first started this job, I really spent day and night without any sleep, squeezing out copies and plans for every project until I was empty. I probably repeated that for nearly ten years. I believe that is when I built the basis of my present strength.

Each time, I would fill two or three notepads with copy. At meetings, I would be prepared with more plans than anyone else. I made it my rule to fill the room with my own ideas. The brain circuit that I created when thinking in volume coincidentally became the circuit to objectively reexamine my own expressions. When I think about it now, I can see that it was my method of brushing up. However, back then I was too busy working it out on my own.

Then after about ten years, I had a fateful encounter. If I had never met Yuya Furukawa, a senior planner at my company, I would not be where I am today. He looked at a plan of mine and at that very moment he said, "I can't believe how little you have learned," and continued, "I'm surprised you were able to live this long without learning anything. I admire you." Then he taught me the basics of syntax and patterns – most of what

I've written in this book. It was almost as though he taught me what it meant to think. For two years, we did a lot of work that we handled mostly by ourselves. During that time, I learned all about planning, as well as direction, staging, budgeting, writing project proposals, and building relationships with clients. He was the one who taught me how to understand things structurally, to brush up my own skills, and to expand myself.

I met him just when I needed to, and that encounter dramatically changed my creative life for the better. Meanwhile, I witnessed how a number of my colleagues who had much more interesting and richer senses of imagination struggling to grow. The difference was simply that they didn't have the opportunity to meet someone special like I did. They never got to know how to "distress properly." Life is cruel. A simple matter of knowing or not knowing how to "distress properly" can ramify the future possibilities of your work.

This may not come close to what made up the two fruitful years that Yuya Furukawa gave to me, but I'm hoping that this book can be to readers what he was to me. Use this book as a guide to find your own way to "distress properly" and use

your creativity to recreate the world into something brighter and more fun. If the book could be of use to someone who can create such ideas, I couldn't be happier.

I thought, "Hmm, that's kind of nice."
Later when I looked back,
I saw it was an advertisement.
That's cool.

Mr. Tainaka of Osaka said these words to me, and I clearly understood what I had to do. For a long time, I had felt extremely uneasy about the world today where words like "social" or "communication design" are casually used to throw existing media into a corner as something outdated, or people scrounging for a new means of using media just so they could dub it "the advertisement of the future."

I had plenty of objections like, "Is that really interesting?" "Isn't that just a device to make people look twice when the really important substance comes after they take a second look?"

What we should create are things that make people say, "That's kind of nice." If it only looks unique on the outside but doesn't make people think, "That's kind of nice," it cannot be called "the advertisement of the future." The words of Mr. Tainaka made me aware of this.

Advertising is cruel. It always wants to metabolize. It always wants people to think that capturing the new age is proof

that the world of advertising is bursting with energy. Most of today's popular ways of thinking will become old in a matter of years and without a doubt will be replaced with something new.

It's about time that we start looking more closely at the nature of it all. We should embrace the fact that if it is not interesting, it is meaningless. We need to see the futility in referring to superficial novelty as something interesting.

It is a fact that what people tell others makes up the center of communication. This means that we need to create something people want to tell others about, something that people long to see, even if they have to search for it. You can create that something if you can make people think, "That's kind of nice." Creativity in advertising is a compilation of excellent methods of expression that compares equally to movies, drama, music, and novels.

Future advertisements will not only compete in the world of advertising. This is the nature of what the so-called social wave delivers to us. In order to become something that people

want to tell others about and long to see, even if they have to search for it, it has to be something that is not inferior to movies, television, videos on the Internet, novels, or even incidents that happen in real life. In other words, it must compete with everything as entertainment content, and must become something that people want to tell others about and something people long to see, even if they have to search for it. How do you do that?

It's easy. Create something more interesting. It is not that difficult to do. All that is required is to create something more interesting, so the difficulty in that is genuine. We are only being asked to confront a task that we are supposed to be tackling in the first place.

Now, create something that's going to make someone say, "That's kind of nice."
That is the only place you'll find the future of advertising.

Lastly, I would like to sincerely thank all of my comrades at Dentsu who helped me with this book, many of my seniors, my juniors at the Teragoya learning center, Mitsuhiro Matsunaga

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Recent advertisements:

   Suntory: Orangina

              All-Free

              Nichirei Acerola

              Shiroi Kinmugi

   JR East Japan: Shin-Aomori Station opening

                     "MY FIRST AOMORI"

                     "Let's Go to Aomori" campaign

Intel:	Corporate advertisement series
Meiji Seika:	Xylish (Masaharu Fukuyama series)
BEAMS:	"Let's Fall in Love" campaign
Toshiba:	REGZA campaign
Advertising Council: Imagination / A whale	

Movies: "Honokaa Boy" (screenplay and production)

Drama: "Aoi Yu no Yottsu no Uso" (screenplay)

"Ueno Juri no Itsutsu no Kaban"

(direction and screenplay)

Literary works: "Haruka Kakera"

(novel) Chuokoron-Shinsha

"Ueno Juri to Nanika wo Tsukuru Tabi"

(co-author) Magazine house

So, is that thing in front of you interesting after all?