

## MIKE RUSSELL'S WRITING SAMPLES (selected)

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# Alumni Magazine Article

(Feature article in the next issue of Willamette University's MBA alumni magazine.)

## THE INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS

Ask Jim Bernau, founder and owner of Willamette Valley Vineyards, about the smashing success of his wines and you will likely get a short language lesson.

"It's all thanks to the wine's *terroir*."

French for "of the earth", *terroir* (*TEH-wa*) describes the unique combination of factors that informs a grape's growth: starting with the soil, it includes slope, orientation to the sun, elevation, microclimate, wind velocity, and the millions of beneficial creatures thriving among the vine's roots. "The fruit takes on the character of the soil in which it grows; enhancing aroma and flavor. Consumers enjoy that uniqueness. They identify those qualities and distinguish it from other wines. That tickles the taste buds and also the intellect."

Nurturing nature's fragile balance has reaped Willamette Valley Vineyards some of the highest recognition among Oregon wines, including a spot on Wine Spectator Magazine's list "Top 100 in the World." "That's one of the nice things about doing the right thing," says Bernau. "It always seems like we're rewarded by better outcomes. It's an easy decision when the alternative -conventional farming techniques- essentially sterilizes the land and contaminates the ground water."

Environmental responsibility isn't just an ethical decision for Bernau; there are tangible business benefits, too: "Customers base choices not only on value, but also on *values*. Because companies are so thinly profitable, you don't need to change many minds to have an impact." Whether to anticipate consumer demand, or simply to do the right thing, Willamette Valley Vineyards is now investigating green energy, carbon offsets and other unique ways to address climate change.

Those 'unique ways' are as distinct as the vineyard's wines. On site, employees are offered 50 gallons of biofuel each month. "The biofuel gives them an opportunity to participate in societal change," say Bernau. "When they buy a diesel-powered vehicle to use the biofuel, they're doing the right thing for themselves, projecting their values and taking pride in their work." Farther afield, the vineyard's Cork ReHarvest program allows consumers to recycle the natural material into new products.

"Company income statements must take reasonable consideration of environmental outcomes," Bernau noted. "It's going to take a lot of innovation to re-invent

American business. The best place for this to occur is in graduate-level education.”

This reinvestment enriches the *terroir* of the broader community, yielding a bold bouquet of business practices with hints of sustainability, sensibility and success.

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# **Ghost-Blog Post for an Executive Recruiter**

## **THINK GLOBAL, RECRUIT LOCAL.**

**“Eat locally produced food.”**

**“Support the local economy.”**

**“Recruit from your local talent pool.”**

While ‘my’ quirky Portland may actively embody the first two statements, it -along with the rest of the country- could still learn from the third. Aside from the associated warm-n-fuzzy feelings, the slew of benefits from hiring locally just makes good business sense. Let’s take a look at what your company has to gain by recruiting locally. First thing’s first...

### **You have no alternative.**

Juuust joking.

Sure, you can recruit from across the country, but that quagmire of a housing market has many bright-n-shiny prospects shackled to their mortgages. Heck, even if ‘Mr. or Mrs. VP of Right’ could sell, will your budget cover their relocation costs? Many companies are starting to grow, even though their budgets are still ‘partying like it’s 2009’. Even if you can pay for relocation, what say the new recruit doesn’t work out? Hiring locally means lower relocation costs, less investment, and less obligation to the newbie. Oh, is that too cutthroat?

### **Hire locally. You’ll sleep better.**

Relax, I’m not making a moral argument here.

Talented people run in packs. More than likely, your current talent can refer more top talent (aka their buddies). To wit, ere.net [recently declared](#) that formally managed employee referral programs produce close to 50% of external hires for benchmarked organizations. Employee referrals are a great resource, so long as they’re vetted by a stringent competency assessment process. Skip the formal selection process, and you risk a costly hiring mistake that can seriously harm your bottom line.

Fact: your prospect’s competencies and performance must jive with your company’s needs and culture. Just because they did well ‘back there’ doesn’t mean they’ll excel ‘over here’. Likewise, a poor fit with a previous employer may be an outstanding player in your company. My regular readers may roll their eyes

at how I often return to the topic of [properly assessing competencies](#), but that's because it's pivotal to finding the right candidate.

### **Caution: Shallow waters. Dive with care.**

If you've limited your search to a specific type of industry experience or expertise, you've also limited the size of your prospecting pool. Not the end of the world. Consider my post '[Brave Hiring: No Guts, No Glory](#)'; your ideal candidate may be right around the corner and ready to switch from a different industry. Of course, your prospects will also have their own limits. A recent client's experience comes to mind: the *ideal* candidate (all the right experience, culture fit like a glove, etc.) withdrew from the hiring pool because of the 25-mile commute! Beware, my recruiting brethren of large metropolises!

### **Ready to hire locally? Here's what you do...**

Size up your hunting grounds. Establish that a sufficient talent pool exists in your market. If your candidate must have specific experience, list the local companies where your future employee may work or have worked recently. Don't forget to include on this list companies with satellite offices or telecommuting employees in your area. These folks may be ready for a greater sense of community. (In keeping with the whole 'local economy' thing.)

Let's say that your local talent pool looks more like a puddle. Keep hope in your recruiting heart! Consider broadening your horizons to include people with experience in parallel fields and transferable skills. While these folks may take longer to ramp up, they may also bring game-changing ideas and enthusiasm for fresh challenges. If you're still scraping bottom, expand your 'local' search to 'regional'. Don't let hot prospects get chilled by a long commute; let them work from home several days out of the week.

### **Finally, some crazy ideas for these crazy times.**

Let's say that local hiring just isn't working for you, but the relocation budget won't cover much more than the mail-forwarding notice. If you live in a truly desirable location or your prospect really wants the job, he or she might settle for the price of a moving truck and a plane ticket. Heck, they might be willing to pay for their own relocation. *The Ladders* recently posted [this very advice](#) to job seekers! Crazy talk? Maybe. But it's worth a try. If you choose this route, just be up front.

Love the candidate, but hate the relocation costs? Experiment with a virtual office environment. You'll make the hire and buy time to confirm that the prospect is in fact a good fit. Then, when the housing market improves (*ahem*. Any day now...), you can move the candidate to your locale.

And with that, I think I'd better get to my local Farmer's Market.  
It's my turn to make dinner tonight.

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# **Sustainable Enterprise Certificate Landing Page**

Three drafts from Willamette University's program: "Before", "During", and "Final"

*(BEFORE: ORIGINAL SITE CONTENT.)*

***Sustainability, in its simplest form, is the capacity to endure. This is predicated on communities and businesses - enterprises of all sizes - to operate not at the expense of this future, but in favor of the future.***

You probably recognize the recent buzz on sustainable processes and practices, corporate social responsibility, and "greening" within the larger global environment. Learn how your organization can channel that energy into coordinated action toward creating a more healthy and sustainable future.

Download the [Sustainable Enterprise Certificate brochure](#).

## **Why Willamette's Sustainable Enterprise Certificate?**

Willamette University is recognized for sustainability excellence in its programs, operations and strategic plan. The University's efforts are based in the [Center for Sustainable Communities](#), a collection of research, innovative thinking and learning. Recent accolades include:

- Sierra magazine naming Willamette University one of the nation's "Top 20 Green Schools." [Read more](#)
- The National Wildlife Federation naming Willamette #1 in the nation for sustainability activities. [Read more](#)
- Oregon Business Magazine naming Willamette University's Atkinson Graduate School of Management #15 among Oregon's 100 Best Green Companies. [Read more](#)
- The Aspen Institute's Beyond Grey Pinstripes Survey recognizing Willamette as #58 of 600 schools nationwide for incorporating ethical, social and environmental stewardship into the curriculum. [Read more](#)

**Willamette University's Sustainable Enterprise Certificate** program takes a unique approach to presenting the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental well-being. This is done in a way that will integrate all areas of sustainability by first focusing on the dynamics of complex systems, followed by a

practical look at social systems and how the expansion of social well-being ties directly to economic and environmental well-being.

*(DURING: FIRST DRAFT.)*

**Sustainability.**

**Triple Bottom Line.**

**Social Responsibility.**

**Environmental Stewardship.**

If you're tired of buzzwords and ready to effect real change, it's time...

- Time for a fresh perspective fueling action at the most advantageous leverage points.
- Time to couple theory with application, an open mind with a new paradigm, and clear planning with data-driven decision making.
- Time to advance your thought process with a Sustainable Enterprise Certificate (SEC) from Willamette University.

The SEC provides a space to challenge your assumptions, to cultivate your leadership capacity and to catalyze real change in your organization.

**How?**

We'll first focus on the dynamics of complex systems, then take a practical look at social systems before exploring the symbiotic relationship between social, economic, and environmental well-being. Along the way, you'll learn from the challenges and triumphs of peers and join a network of like-minded professionals in an intimate, interactive and engaging environment. At the end, you'll emerge with an integrated understanding of sustainable business practices and solutions customized for your organization and your career trajectory.

**Why?**

Tomorrow's challenges demand solutions today. With the busy professional in mind, the SEC was designed so you can test your learning in your work and return to share results and pose refined questions.

**Where?**

Only at the Atkinson Graduate School of Management, beyond the bounds of traditional thinking.

*(FINAL DRAFT. INTEGRATING CLIENT FEEDBACK AND REVISIONS.)*

Published here: <http://www.willamette.edu/agsm/sustainability/>

***Sustainability, in its simplest form, is the capacity to endure. This is predicated on communities and businesses - enterprises of all sizes - operating not at the expense of the future, but in favor of the future.***

**With a Sustainable Enterprise Certificate (SEC) from Atkinson Graduate School of Management, you'll help guide the 'sustainability conversation' beyond theory toward action and meaningful collaboration...**

You'll gain a fresh perspective on the most effective leverage points, and how best to move swiftly into action. You'll couple theory with application, an open mind with a new paradigm, and clear planning with data-driven decision making.

You'll advance your thought process while accelerating your career.

In short, the SEC provides a space to challenge your assumptions, to cultivate your leadership capacity, and to catalyze real change throughout your organization and entire value chain.

### **An Original Approach.**

The Sustainable Enterprise Certificate program takes a unique approach to presenting the interconnectedness of social well being, financial integrity, and environmental health. This is done in a way that will integrate all areas of sustainability: first, by focusing on the dynamics of complex systems, followed by a practical look at social systems and how the expansion of social well-being ties directly to economic and environmental well-being. At the end, you'll emerge with an integrated understanding of sustainable business practices, an invigorating paradigm shift, and a refined ability to contextualize challenges in their larger systems.

### **A Flexible Environment.**

With the time-challenged professional in mind, the SEC is structured to encourage you to apply each session's learning to your daily work. You'll then come to the next session with new questions, ready for new insight. Along with your cohort of experienced peers, you'll develop an adaptive perspective that will benefit your leadership capacity and propel your professional growth.

### **A Transformative Opportunity.**

Step outside the bounds of traditional thinking with the Atkinson Graduate School of Management's Sustainable Enterprise Certificate.

[Download the SEC's brochure.](#)

[Read this message on sustainability](#) from Anne Allen, Director of the Executive Development Center.

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# Life Coach Web Pages

*Published at: <http://www.wendyhupperich.com/home.html>*

## **(LANDING PAGE)**

Do you suspect there's more in store for your life?  
Maybe you know where you'd like to end up, but not how to get there.

Wouldn't it be useful to have a detailed plan, specifically personalized to your goals?

A road map to success already exists within you. It's just a matter of tapping into it. Once you've got it, you'll take your life wherever you want.

You're in the right place to get started.

As a credentialed Life Coach, I'm confident we can work together to create your personalized road map.

Contact me today for breakthrough results now and for years to come.

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## **(YOU' PAGE)**

Awareness without action is worthless.

You say you want greater consciousness and fulfillment, but what are you doing to achieve them? Just considering all your options may seem like an overwhelming obstacle. In our one-on-one sessions, we'll establish some perspective and identify the concrete steps to make lasting change.

You decide the direction and content of each session.  
You choose the topic.  
You're in control.

As a team, we'll explore self-imposed limits. We'll isolate what keeps you from fulfilling your ambition. We'll identify where you feel stopped, where you're succeeding, and how external circumstances affect your goals.

To capitalize on each session, I encourage you to keep the following in mind:

- Openness to trying new strategies.
- Acknowledgement that a greater good exists.
- Willingness to empower and leverage our partnership.
- Commitment to fulfilling your potential.
- Desire for personal growth and self-awareness.

Please note, coaching is not for everyone.

A coach is not the same as a psychologist. Some topics are more appropriate for a therapist, while others are apt for a coach. There are certain circumstances where I may recommend therapy. If I think you would be better served by another professional, I won't hesitate to speak up.

After all, your coach must be invested in your success!  
Contact me today if you're interested in designing the life you want.

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## **('ME' PAGE)**

I am constantly amazed at the power of the human mind.

Consider all the whimsical wisps of thought that have formed into reality.  
Invention. Achievement. Success.

We all possess enormous potential. Unfortunately, sometimes we use our energy to create a self-fulfilling cycle of doubt, uncertainty and powerlessness.

There is greatness within you patiently waiting to bloom. After we acknowledge its existence, we'll focus on nurturing its vast potential. In doing so, you'll foster greater choice, opportunity and possibility in your life. As a Life Coach, I'm dedicated to helping you fuel your potential; transforming your dreams into goals, and your goals into reality.

Since I promote ongoing development, I practice it by constantly asking myself 'What can I learn here?' After earning my honors degree in Psychology from George Fox University, I was committed to expanding my view of the human experience by working with disadvantaged populations like at-risk youth, the homeless, and recovering addicts. In 2004, I focused my development in a yearlong intensive coach- and leadership-training course with [Accomplishment Coaching](#). Since then, I've supported hundreds of people to reinvigorate their ambition and rediscover themselves. There is nothing else I would rather do.

I credit my coaches, past and present, for my success and fortune. Thanks to their support, I have a loving, growing family, I'm an accomplished athlete, I've traveled to dozens of countries, and I have a life and schedule that work for me. I live the benefits of having a coach.

Even Olympians, presidents and CEOs use advisors, mentors and teachers to succeed. Don't you deserve a coach to meet and surpass your aspirations?

Contact me today if you're interested in designing the life you want.

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**(BONUS PIECE: NETWORKING PROFILE PARAGRAPH)**

**Wendy Hupperich** wonders whether you're living the life you want. Do you believe your dreams can become goals, and your goals, reality? As a certified Life Coach with [Accomplishment Coaching](#), Wendy will help you confront self-limiting beliefs and unlock your full potential. If Olympians, presidents and CEOs use advisors, mentors and teachers to succeed, don't you deserve a coach to meet and surpass your aspirations? Expect breakthrough results from your very first session. Start living the life you want, today. 503.244.7539, [Wendy.Hupperich@AccomplishmentCoaching.com](mailto:Wendy.Hupperich@AccomplishmentCoaching.com)

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## **Human Interest Story for Non-Profit Fundraising** **CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES HELPS YOUNG FATHERS REGAIN CONFIDENCE AND DIRECTION.**

"I never thought I'd make it this far."

A few years ago 'Levi' was more concerned with scoring his next fix than spending time with his baby son 'Tim'. Now, with Catholic Community Services' (CCS) help, he's stabilizing his life, and preparing to bring Tim back home.

Levi describes his childhood as "complete chaos" and marvels in disbelief at his audacious and dangerous past. To escape his impoverished upbringing, he dropped out of school and turned to dealing, believing that "drugs was a way up and out for me." Instead, drugs sucked away his aspirations, leaving a vacuous addiction. At Tim's birth, Levi was afraid that he would hurt his son just by holding him. "I had to be a Dad," he recounts. "I just didn't know how."

Tim's arrival spurred his father's grueling and earnest rehabilitation. Levi's drug recovery program cleansed him of his addiction, but did little to prepare him for responsible parenting. Grasping for the next step away from his past life, Levi called his friend Art for help.

Art Zamudio, coordinator of CCS's Young Father's Program, understood Levi's situation only too well. Only a few years earlier, he'd taken the path Levi now searched for. Art's personal history, combined with CCS's resources, provided Levi the understanding and support he needed to realize his desire for change. "Having Art as a case manager is pretty inspirational," Levi says. "When I came into treatment I was pretty messed up."

Levi enrolled in the 12-week program, where he learned the fundamentals of parenting. He also attended separate support group sessions to share successes, voice frustrations, and draw inspiration. Art helped Levi with daily living matters like keeping a stable job, paying rent on time, budgeting and getting a driver's license. Now that Levi has seen that he can succeed in day-to-day living, he is more confident about controlling his life. "Thanks to this program I have options these days," he says. "I can do things that before I could never do."

Levi is eager to give back. He knows that those struggling with addiction deserve a second chance. He sees "A lot of guys come [into the program] in one of those hopeless states like me" and wants to inspire and empower them to help themselves.

Your support will help Catholic Community Services to empower more clients like Levi to regain control over their lives.

## **Personal Statement**

### **Customer loyalty in one easy step. \***

\*Depending on the length of your stride.

You hear it all the time.

“People read less and less.”

Ba. Loney.

People read all the time.

Exhibits A, B & C: RSS feeds, blog followings and Google Reader.

Let’s rephrase: *“People read less and less generalized and irrelevant content.”*

Thus the Golden Rule of Marketing Writing, “Thou shall know thy audience and address its pains and pleasures accordingly.”

How did I acquire this simple principle?

Not from a book, course or fortune cookie, but by teaching in the classroom. Planning and executing an effective lesson is much like writing informative and engaging copy.

Rather than rely on gimmicks or volume, I hold my target reader’s interest by: crediting her for her intelligence, speaking to her pains and interests, and respecting her time with succinct writing.

“Not worth the time or effort,” you say?

“The average attention span precludes such lofty ambitions,” you scoff?

Yes, our collective attention span dwindles at a precarious rate. But our expectation that information should be accessible and free grows just as quickly.

Therein lies opportunity for the quick of wit and precise of word.

I say, “Welcome and capitalize on this shift!”

Give good, free advice. Shower the reader with useful ideas she can’t find anywhere else. Overwhelm her with generous helpings of “How to...”

Inform the reader.  
Edify her.  
Empower.

She will reward you with her attention, her trust and, eventually, her buying power.

What's that?  
Sounds great, but you don't have the time or energy to go to the trouble?

Wondering where to begin?

Your first step: contact me.

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*As a freelance copywriter, Mike Russell defends the reader's intelligence, champions his client's message, and conspires to propel the sustainability movement into the mainstream dialogue.*

# **Resumé**

Full portfolio: <http://www.pivotalwriting.com/portfolio/>

Long-form writer: blog posts, e-books, reports, professional biographies, etc.

Mike relishes large writing projects that require independent research, messaging strategy, and a fresh perspective. He engages the reader and earns her trust by writing 'to' her, not 'about' the topic. Contact Mike today, and declare your message with a potent, informative, and conversational style.

## **DISTILLER OF IDEAS**

- Freelance Writer – Refine clients' raw ideas into absorbing and professional messages.
- Langports English Language College – Crafted lesson plans to appeal to a diverse array of nationalities, interests, and motivations.
- Oregon Social Learning Center (OSLC) – Facilitated surveys in Spanish in a world-class social research center where most study participants had little education, and needed measured, neutral assistance.
- College Thesis – Conducted interviews, collected secondary research, and compiled qualitative results into a polished publication.

## **ATTENTIVE LISTENER**

- Writing – Absorb goals and needs without bias or assumption before asserting client's message with style and confidence.
- Teaching – Modified teaching strategy to accommodate students' abilities.
- OSLC – Adapted interview approach to meet participants' needs.
- REI – Clarified and surpassed customers' needs to ensure they left smiling.

## **CREATIVE, INDEPENDENT THINKER**

- Writing – Act as the bridge between clients' messages and their audiences' needs. Contribute fresh ideas without ego to clarify the ideal tone and goal.
- Teaching – Electrified the learning experience with on-the-fly adaptation.
- OSLC – Conducted surveys according to needs and schedules of participants.

## **COLLABORATOR EXTRAORDINAIRE**

- Writing – Guarantee enthusiastic engagement for every client.
- Teaching – Regularly met with co-workers to discuss students' progress and ways to accelerate individuals whom needed an extra push.
- OSLC – Regularly 'covered' interviews for associates and supported them to succeed.

## SELECTED CLIENTS

Darcy Winslow (DSW Collective), Roy Notowitz (NotoGroup), Emerge Interactive, Willamette University, Pivot Group, City of Eugene – Recreation Services, American Marketing Association – PDX chapter, LT Public Relations, TriLibrium Business Consultants, Fumarelli Associates.

## EDUCATION

- Sustainable Enterprise Certificate (anticipated completion: May 2011) Atkinson Graduate School of Management – Willamette University.
- University of Oregon B.A. with Honors (2005)  
Thesis published by the University of Oregon Press.
- Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (May 2006)  
Top 20<sup>th</sup> percentile worldwide.
- Extended international travel: New Zealand/Australia, 10/2005 – 6/2007; Chile, 9/2003-6/2004; Argentina, 8/2000 – 6/2001.

## WORK HISTORY

- Freelance Writer – Pivotal Writing, LLC (Portland, OR) 2008 - Present
- Freelance Translator (Eugene, OR) 2007-2008
- Bilingual Research Assistant – Oregon Social Learning Center (Eugene, OR) 2007-2008
- English Language Teacher – Langports English Language College (Brisbane, Australia) 2006
- Customer Service Representative – REI (Eugene, OR) 2004 - 2005

## REFERENCES

### **Roy Notowitz**

Founder of NotoGroup, an executive recruitment firm.  
*“Mike is a great listener, creative, and fast.”*

### **Darcy Winslow**

Principal Consultant for DSW Collective, an organization that helps to develop and implement aggressive sustainable design strategies.  
*“Mike brings a level of creativity and freshness to his work.”*

### **Russell Yost**

Director of Marketing for the Atkinson Graduate School of Management, Willamette University.  
*“Timely, responsive and detail-oriented are all words I would use to describe Mike’s work.”*

### **Craig Smith**

Recreation Services Director for the City of Eugene.  
*“Mike saved me hours of time, and created a more powerful proposal.”*