

Don's Home News

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Are Words Losing Their Magic?

The most powerful ideas in human history have one thing in common – they are all based on words. From religious doctrines to political constitutions to famous speeches that have broken down walls and created worlds, words have a long history of forging futures.

So, what is it about words that give them the ability to shape perspectives?

Rooted in oral tradition, words have always communicated importance. From oral traditions to the written word, words were luxuries available only to the elite. That is, until the printing press made it possible for them to be distributed almost as soon as they were written.

Today, words are shared as they are conceived, and technology has made it possible to fire these “thought-rockets” around the world at devastating speeds.

That same technology has quickened the pace of the world. We do more, say more, share more – but does that mean we are thinking more?

Among social media, digital media and broadcast media, words are hurled randomly into cyberspace with meanings twisted and distorted. Indeed, we are littered with words, but how many of them actually matter?

Ironically, even though we are exposed to more words today than ever before, fewer move us as did the words and works of the great orators of the past. Are words losing their magic?

Are You Searching for a New Home on line?

Now you can search Metro Atlanta listings in real time just as real estate agents do.

Due to recent changes in multiple listing service rules, I can now set you up with an account where you can search for properties just as I do. No more stale and out of date data like you get on the internet from web sites like Realtor.com, and Trulia.com.

Call or [email](mailto:donzahnle@gmail.com) me today to have me set up an account for you. There is NO obligation and takes only minutes for me to set it up.

Save Your Big Investment From Big Trouble

For six years, Sydney Walters wondered why his home was so hot in summer and so cold in winter; and, why his family developed allergies and asthma.

There was a reason for that: When Walters purchased the home from its original owners, he had not hired a home inspector. That home inspection could have revealed that the home's attic had no insulation – resulting in wild temperature fluctuations and mold.

Buying a home is often the biggest investment a family can make. While you may not want to spend extra money, a home inspection can reveal a host of problems needing repair. Without it, your big investment is vulnerable to big trouble.

According to associations of homebuilders, a typical home inspection will include examination of a home's heating and central air conditioning systems, plumbing and electrical systems, roof, attic and visible insulation, foundation, and structural components.

The inspection should be performed by a certified professional who can spot things an untrained eye may not.

When choosing among home inspectors, be sure to look at their credentials and certifications. They should be members of a professional association of home inspectors.

The cost of a home inspection varies and is normally based on the size and age of the house.

While incurring an additional cost during the home buying process is frustrating, it can save you thousands of dollars by alerting you to areas of concern and give you much needed peace of mind that your big investment won't cause you big trouble.

The Human Voice Wields Power: Even Today

The kids at camp who called their mothers nightly may have known more than their fellow campers thought. The human voice, like human touch, can act as a calming agent.

A 2011 University of Wisconsin study tested girls' ages 7 to 12 who were given public-speaking assignments. Those who spoke to their mothers by phone or in person before the event had lower stress hormones than those who received email or texts or had no communication with their mothers at all.

In today's hyper-communicating society, giving the human voice its due may seem counter intuitive. Though the keypad may be mighty, it is also a weak substitute for the voice.

Why? The study suggests that texting removes the elements of pacing, tone and volume from communication.

Emoticons are a poor substitute for the verbal cues that give words a meaning beyond the words themselves.

Unfortunately, many people spend the majority of their days communicating by computers and phones with little human interaction. Corporations have bought into the idea that regular tweets and status updates will build a support base among customers.

They may be rethinking that approach. According to a study out of the University of Missouri, adding a human voice element to an organization's website can increase consumer satisfaction, building trust and commitment. As a result, many forward-looking companies are combining their online presence with a vocal presence.

Good to know the human voice is still in business.

Worth Reading

Does Having Choice Make Us Happy? 6 Studies That Suggest It Doesn't Always

By TED blog

Making decisions for yourself might not be all it's cracked up to be. According to an amazing talk by marketing professor Baba Shiv, sometimes it's a good idea to give up the driver's seat. Shiv's seemingly counterintuitive thoughts have led to a number of studies and research on choice, all trying to answer the question "Does having choice *really* make us happy?"

More: <http://tinyurl.com/c3lwjwq>

True Secret to Success (It's Not What You Think)

By Geoffrey James

www.inc.com

Flexing this important emotional muscle is a key to lifelong success – but it is probably not what you're thinking. Gratitude is the answer to all your problems when it comes to success. It is important to program your brain to be grateful, even if you have had a bad day. That means training your brain to look for more reasons to feel grateful. Try flexing this muscle to see how it affects your life.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/cnzdxuy>

How Being Polite Can Hurt Your Health

By Leslie Quander Wooldridge

We have always been told by our parents to respect our elders, keep our elbows off the table, and most of all...to be polite! However, the final warning may not hold value any longer, at least not when it comes to our health. Being polite has been shown to cause harm in a number of ways – from forcing you to give in to peer pressure to overeating to please a host. Are you guilty of these polite faux-pas?

More: <http://tinyurl.com/cvmf6tu>

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Just email me at donzahnle@gmail.com for the answer.

Which city is known as the Halloween capital of the world?

Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you have enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send me an email!

Are You Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

Do you want to know how the price of your home has changed in today's market? Do you want to know for how much other homes in your neighborhood are selling?

If you are wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I can help.

Either call 404-939-1309 or [email](mailto:) me for a no-obligation, professional evaluation.

I will not pressure you into listing with me or waste your time. [Read about how I feel about pressure!](#) I will just give you the honest facts about your home and its value.

Five Design Trends That Will Help Sell Your Home

Are you getting your home ready to sell? These 2012 design favorites will give you that updated look buyers want...without the updated cost. Best of all, most of these ideas can go with you to your new home.

Colors

Paint is the least expensive and most effective way to update your home. Moreover, this year, it's all about bright colors. But, use them with care. Painting your family room tangerine is a spot-on trend, but it may alienate buyers who can't imagine living with it.

Instead go for neutrals – soft grays are very current – and add punches of color. Cushions, art and accessories in a bright color will pull your room together in a

very modern way. Be sparing; don't add more than two colors as accents, and make sure they play well together.

Pattern

Designers are using wallpaper in oversized paisleys and retro designs for accent walls, but even easily strippable wallpaper may turn off buyers. Demonstrate your pattern savvy in other ways. Try stapling wallpaper to a large frame and hang it to get the feel – but not the permanence – of an accent wall.

Lighting

Many buyers will probably tour your home in the evening. So play with different levels of lighting to pick up its best features. For example, highlight crown molding with uplights and update

the kitchen with trendy pendants. Bright white light works best for super-modern décor while yellow-based light makes traditional homes feel cozy.

Mirrors

Trendy mirrors add glamour to any room...and make it look larger. Hang a mirror opposite a window to bring the outdoors in.

Salvaged pieces

Reclaimed architectural pieces can make your home special. Visit salvage shops for old fluted columns to give a sense of separation to open concept spaces...without losing that open feeling. Or, use antique corbels as brackets to support a glass shelf.

YouTube Cats Help Computers Learn

Researchers at the Google X laboratory have unlocked a key that allows machines to teach themselves. And, it just happens to be everyone's favorite YouTube destination: cats.

To mimic the connections made in the human brain during the learning process, the researchers connected 16,000 computer processors, creating a neural network of more than one billion connections and let it run wild on the Internet.

The electronic "brain" was shown YouTube images of cats for a week. Without help from the researchers, it taught itself to recognize what a cat looked like through a process called "deep learning."

The discovery is linked to what takes place in the human brain's visual cortex where repetition of certain images leads to learning. Lead researchers admit there is still a long road ahead, since the adult human brain has roughly 100 trillion connections.

However in the future, this research could lead to improvements in machine vision and perception, language translation and speech recognition.

Hold Those Colas; Scrap the Sports Drinks

We all need our daily dose of caffeine to wake us up in the morning, but it turns out that, thanks to us, our kids may be getting a caffeine habit too.

Seventy-five percent of children surveyed consumed caffeine on a daily basis, and the more they consumed, the less they slept, according to a 2012 study published in the Journal of Pediatrics.

More reason for watching the kids'

caffeine intake:

- Caffeine blocks a calming chemical in the brain, heightening stress hormones, which can increase fat storage.
- Caffeine inhibits impulse control.
- Caffeine has no nutrients.
- 1,200 cases of caffeine poisoning were reported in kids under six in 2009.

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

Will energy upgrades help sell my home?

You have decided to renovate your house before selling. If it isn't already energy efficient, you might consider making energy efficiency a top priority. Here are some ideas for renovations that keep on giving:

Before you decide on renovations such as finishing the unfinished basement, ensure your home is already solid and energy efficient.

Remember the systems that make your whole house work. Focus on ventilation, heating systems and water management. It may be money well spent to switch your conventional furnace to a more efficient induced-draft condensing model.

If your home is older, your insulation probably is as well. Consider upgrading to highly efficient spray foam insulation.

Ensure future buyers know how much you have invested in energy efficient renovations. It will help sell your home.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

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Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9x9 grid so that each row, each column and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!

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Recipe: Halloween Hello Dolly Bars

Yields 24 Dracula bites

- 3 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 5 tablespoons butter, melted
- 3 tablespoons water
- 2/3 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 2/3 cup flaked unsweetened coconut
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted (optional)
- 1 (15 oz) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2/3 cup candy corn

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and lightly grease a 9x13 glass baking dish. Place graham cracker crumbs in a medium bowl and drizzle with butter and water. Toss with a fork until moist. Gently pat mixture into an even layer in dish. Sprinkle chocolate chips over crumb mixture. Top evenly with coconut and pecans. Drizzle condensed milk evenly on top and do not stir.

Bake for 20-25 minutes or until the bars are lightly browned and bubbly around the edges. Remove the dish from the oven and immediately sprinkle the candy corn on top. Lightly press into the bars with a spatula. Cool on wire rack, remove from dish and cut into squares.

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