

**“...and you
can quote
me!”**

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Holland Cooke

(Merely compiling obvious stuff, as usual.)

Brain surgery: It's not rocket science.

Years ago, at a Washington cocktail party, I was chatting with a brain surgeon.

"So," I remarked, "you've got someone's head wide open. And you fix it. Then you put it back together again. Wow."

Seeming accustomed to people seeming impressed, the doctor shrugged, "Hey, it's not rocket science."

Ever since then, I've been...hearing things. Some profound, others elegantly simple. Some as funny as they are meaningful. Real words-of-wisdom.

So, in lieu of yet-another Christmas card that you'll toss when you're cleaning up on New Year's morning, I'm sending the sort of stocking stuffer that only a consultant could offer with a straight face.

Here's a pile of platitudes...a wad of wisdom...a fountain of factoids...a booklet of blah blah blah...that you can ponder and profit from all year long.

“If you can hear thunder, you could be struck by lightning.”

Robot voice on NOAA VHF marine weather channel.

A comforting thought I heard one August night, anchored off Block Island, as I lay beneath a 52 foot metal mast, in the proud sailing vessel Undaunted, during a fierce electrical storm.

This statement has more than literal value, as does much of what follows. It's a metaphor, like...

**Don't bring your
lunch to a banquet.**

**Entering a prize
drawing?**

**Wrinkle-up, then
smooth-out, your
entry blank.**

**You'll improve your
chances of winning.**

I speak from experience.

- If they'll be spinning the drum before drawing, your piece-of-paper will move around more than – and not adhere-to – other perfectly-flat entry forms.
- If they don't spin the drum, your entry blank will feel different than the others to whoever reaches in.

**ALWAYS split aces
and 8s, no matter
what the dealer is
showing.**

And, statistically, Insurance is a sucker bet.

“I could care less.”

Do you say this when you mean the opposite?

Don't swing at ball four.

Alternate pronunciation: "Don't break
into jail."

The most important piece of information in any negotiation is the other party's deadline.

Highly recommended reading, and solid advice for the dozens of negotiations you conduct every single day: "You Can Negotiate Anything," by Herb Cohen.

Read an excerpt online at www.AndYouCanQuoteMe.com

You should NOT use duct tape on ducts.

Duct tape has thousands of uses, but it's no good for ducts, according to AOL Home Improvement Editor and "Money Pit Home Improvement Radio Show" host Tom Kraeutler.

Yes, leaky heating ducts are a major cause of energy waste. But duct tape applied to those seams just dries out and falls off.

Why? Duct tape is basically adhesive-backed cloth. And heat evaporates the adhesive. Poof!

Instead: Use a high-tech tape called UL121 tape. It's metal and has a specially treated adhesive that isn't compromised by heat.

**“There are two
kinds of people in
the world:**

- 1. those who believe
there are two
kinds of people in
the world, and**
- 2. those who don't.”**

Robert Benchley

**Hand-written
Thank You notes
aren't just polite.**

They're smart.

The 5 Steps to Selling Anything to Anybody, in order:

- 1. Pre-Approach**
- 2. Approach**
- 3. Pitch**
- 4. Negotiate**
- 5. Close**

This proven strategy doesn't just apply to the sale of goods and services.

We're all selling, all day.

**“When you’ve made
the sale, stop
selling.”**

Bill Campbell

**Avoid drinking
anything containing
high-fructose corn
syrup.**

Instead, drink lots of water, with lemon.
In less than a week, you will feel better.

“Baseball is the only sport in which the defense controls the ball.”

Larry King

Yep, another metaphor.

Flying Southwest Airlines?

You want seat #12F.

On many planes, it's the only seat with no seat in front of it. On some aircraft, there's no seat in front of #11A .

And these seats don't just guarantee legroom. Because Southwest really packs 'em in, these are the only seats where you can count on using your laptop. Anywhere else, you're out of business if the person in front of you reclines.

If a through passenger hasn't already grabbed your dream seat, you'll need to, pronto. That means you want to be as-early-as-possible in the "A" boarding group.

Hit www.IflySWA.com 23 hours, 59 minutes, and 59 seconds before scheduled departure, and check-in online.

The "C" in "C" boarding group stands for "center seat."

Renting a car?

**Reserve a
subcompact.**

Why: Often, they won't have one available; so they'll upgrade you.

If they do have a subcompact available, and you need something bigger, you can always upgrade on the spot.

“Fox News” is an oxymoron.

And it’s brilliant marketing.

Fox News architect Roger Ailes, the crafty longtime Republican strategist, realized that news had become a commodity, like bottled water. Many days, it seems like there are more news channels than news stories.

So Ailes created a channel that flavors the news. You don’t just get Aquafina. You get Aquafina Splash, news “with a splash of flavor.”

A number of independent content analyses demonstrate that Fox News is The Republican News Channel.

Ironically, slanting the news this way is precisely what Republican Vice President Spiro Agnew complained about when he criticized the media’s arched brow.

By pronouncing itself “FAIR AND BALANCED,” Fox News can do-the-opposite, and give like-minded viewers comfort that they’re watching an objective presentation.

Preaching-to-the-choir doesn’t get much more artful than telling viewers-who-have-already-decided that “WE REPORT, YOU DECIDE.”

**Nobody's guano is
Haagen Dazs.**

“Hanging your clothes in a hot shower takes out the wrinkles, but steam them for no more than five minutes, or they’ll develop water marks.”

Famous radio consultant Mike McVay, possibly the only person I know who travels more than I do.

Don't sign your credit cards.

Instead, print "Ask for ID."

And try not to USE credit cards unless you have a specific reason to.

And "I don't have enough money with me" isn't a valid reason. It's probably evidence that you can't afford what you're tempted to buy.

Most purchases end up costing you more than if you paid cash.

Cash is great. It doesn't come back to haunt you at the end of the month.

“Every time you reach for food, ask yourself, ‘Will this cleanse me...or clog me?’”

Anthony Robbins

“Pick your lane, and stay with it.”

Bob Marbourg, traffic reporter for WTOP Radio, Washington DC. Nobody else I have ever managed in radio cares more about the people listening.

And Bob’s advice doesn’t just apply to commuting.

Do you know the difference between “imply” and “infer?”

Only a speaker can imply.
Only a listener can infer.

Do you know the difference between “erudite” and “pedantic?”

If you do, you’re pedantic.

And a surprising number of erudite people mispronounce “erudite,” which has THREE syllables, not four.

“AIR-ooo-dite,” not “AIR-eee-ooo-dite.”

Never use a preposition to end a sentence with.

**“These are the good
old days.”**

Carly Simon

The slower you walk in the direction of a ringing phone, the less-stressful your day will be.

I learned this when I managed a big newsroom in Washington...WHILE I was a long-distance landlord.

One day, I came home and found 4 messages on my answering machine, in the following order, all from the same person:

1. Calm: "Hi, it's Jennifer, your tenant on Waterman Street. Please call me when you get a chance?" Beep.
2. Harried-sounding: "It's Jennifer again. PLEASE call me...as soon as you can???" Beep.
3. Sounding utterly frantic: "It's Jennifer. I need to talk with you RIGHT AWAY. It's REAL important!!!" Beep.
4. Calm: "Never mind. We fixed it."

Of my wireless phone's several dozen features, my favorite is still the Off switch. God gave us voicemail for a reason.

Wicker furniture made in Copenhagen?

There's something rattan in The State of Denmark.

If you THINK the market has bottomed-out, you're early.

If you KNOW the market has bottomed-out, you're late.

Dollar-cost averaging isn't sexy. But you'll end up buying more shares when the price is low, and fewer when the price is high.

But stock market profits are chump change compared to the return you will realize on another investment option: Pay off your credit cards.

**Don't touch the
hair.**

Ever.

The two happiest days of your life are the day you buy your boat and the day you sell your boat.

Boat ownership is a non-stop series of inconveniences, unexpected expenses, unforeseen turns-in-the-weather, and other calamities...all punctuated by brief moments of happiness.

When you pop the laundry and kill the engine and hear only the wind and those cool creaking sounds the rigging makes, it's almost worth it.

**“Ride the horse in
the direction that
it's going.”**

Werner Erhard

There is no perfect pickup line.

I've asked MANY fabulous babes, and experts agree:

- It's not WHAT you say.
- It's THAT you say something.
- Try "Hello," lookers advise.

**Dance with the girls
who'll dance.**

**Don't with those
who won't.**

This isn't just about dancing, or girls.

Spend more time at the Public Library.

When you get there, you'll know why.

**“Put it before them
briefly so they will
read it, clearly so
they will appreciate
it, picturesquely so
they will remember
it and, above all,
accurately so they
will be guided by its
light.”**

Joseph Pulitzer

Dogs really love us.

Cats love us when they hear a can opener.

**Defeat goes over
defense before
detail.**

DON'T recycle!
Instead, save money, by saving energy two ways, by giving plastic bottles a second life, in your freezer.

When you buy a soft drink, you're spending more on packaging than contents. Lots more if you're buying bottled water.

Making plastic bottles spends lots of energy. Thus recycling.

But before you toss empties into the bin, fill your freezer...with water. A-freezer-full-of-ice will consume less energy keeping c-c-c-cold.

If you get a big Omaha Steaks delivery, you can always thaw some frozen bottles to make room.

And if your power goes out, quickly pluck some frozen bottles from the freezer and toss 'em into the fridge.

Browse pawn shops.

You'd have to have your head examined to buy some things anywhere else.

Need an electric drill? Pay full retail at The Home Depot or Sears, and you'll get a shiny new one. Pay lots less at a pawn shop, and you'll get one that looks like you've been workin.'

Is your kid taking clarinet lessons? Before you spring for the Benny Goodman autograph model, see if he **LIKES** playing clarinet.

Shopping for a diamond? Head for the mall, and you'll be helping those national chain stores to pay their pricey rent, and to pay for all their TV advertising.

You'll pay lots less at a pawn shop. And, of course, you'll be getting the diamond appraised, so you'll know what you're buying.

What **ALL** diamonds have in common: They're millions of years old. Who cares if someone else owned it for 3 years before you?

Use a jeweler to make your diamond your-very-own, with the real nice setting you'll be able to afford because you bought the stone at a pawn shop.

I came by all-of-the-above knowledge by listening to radio talk host Dave Barber, who could sell ice cubes to Eskimos.

Don't fear the colonoscopy.

NOT-having-one is Russian Roulette.

The worst part is that stuff they make you chug the night before. It's like doing a Control-Alt-Delete on your body.

Keep washing your hands.

You'll be less susceptible to colds and flu.

When Emailing: Avoid the stimulus/response trap.

It's just too easy to hit Reply.
When-in-doubt, don't.
Unless you're on AOL, there's no Unsend.

**As the (second)
lobster scene in
“Annie Hall”
demonstrates, you
can’t re-enact
spontaneity.**

Watch it again, wistfully, at
www.AndYouCanQuoteMe.com

Should you be using plastic wrap instead of aluminum foil?

If you're wrapping leftovers for the fridge, use plastic wrap. Aluminum foil isn't airtight.

And aluminum foil is more expensive, and consumes more energy in manufacture, than plastic wrap.

Buy Christmas cards on December 26.

This isn't just about when-to-buy
Christmas cards.

Have a cool Yule.

**“Every day’s a
holiday. Every
meal’s a banquet.”**

Joe Zelle, Flint, Michigan

Each December, the timeless classic “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas” is sung in every nation on Earth...except one.

In Panama, they sing, “I’m dreaming of a wide isthmus.”

About the author:

YOU?

There are words YOU live by...quips and quotes and guiding principles ...which I haven't included here.

Let's hear 'em:

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