

Suck My Pen: How
to Gut Goliath by
Becoming an
Interactive Hub of
Dissent

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SUCK MY PEN

HOW TO GUT GOLIATH BY BECOMING AN INTERACTIVE HUB OF DISSENT

A Ten-by-Ten Book

The most you can know in the fewest words.

Ten-by-Ten books are crafted in ten chapters of ten sentences each.
They are concise, artful and extremely useful.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Has someone, or some entity, wronged you big-time—yet you feel helpless about striking back?
2. This book is your solution, for it has never been easier for the little guy to take on the big guy, for David to gut Goliath.
3. In the past, David needed a lot of money; even then, he would probably lose, because Goliath had a lot *more* money: for every lawyer David hired, with money he could ill afford, Goliath could hire *ten*, not miss a penny, and write it off as a business expense.
4. So our method is an alternative to the legal system—yet one that may lead to the legal settlement of your gripe without ever having to pay lawyers or court costs; one you can do all by yourself, inexpensively.
5. There is an old saying: *The bigger they are, the harder they fall.*
6. There is a good reason for this: In these hi-tech times when one can cultivate a global audience and play to it instantaneously, Goliath has more to lose than David.
7. Here is what you can potentially accomplish with very little money, effort and money:
8. Good therapy and stress relief; you'll feel better about yourself for taking action and striking back (which sure beats paying a therapist \$150 an hour to feel better about being a wimp); it is more intellectually stimulating than crossword puzzles or Sudoku...
9. And embarrass Goliath, sway public opinion against Goliath, cost Goliath money, dampen Goliath's business prospects, and potentially compel Goliath to settle your grievance in return for ceasing.
10. The Armenians in ancient times had a joke for it: *Groghe dani kez*, meaning, may the scribe take you away; we have our own moniker: *Suck my pen.*

II. WEBSITE/GRIPE SITE: DOMAIN NAME

1. A gripe site is a type of website used to mount a public campaign against an individual or business entity or organization as an alternative to traditional avenues of redress or if such traditional redress has not achieved a satisfactory outcome.
2. The Internet provides a low-cost platform for anyone to reach a global audience, providing ordinary people the opportunity to publicly criticize and embarrass the rich and powerful, including multinational corporations and ruling royal families.
3. A *domain name* is your address on the Internet and, along with your website, serves as your online identify, reflecting the content and purpose of your site; domain names are easy to set up and cost under \$20 a year to maintain.
4. If possible, take the name of the individual or entity you have targeted.
5. For instance, the most successful gripe site of all time, which targets Shell Oil, actually operates under the domain name royaldutchshellplc.com, Shell's legal trading name.
6. Not only does this provide easy recognition, but persons who are looking for the *real* Shell website find themselves reading *anti*-Shell material; Alfred and John Donovan, who run this website, routinely receive job applications, business proposals and even terrorist threats directed at Shell!
7. If you cannot adopt your target's name, create a derivative of it that best reflects your content e.g. shelloil.com or even shellsucks.com; your goal is to rank in the top ten hits of Google when your target's name is searched.
8. On your site's homepage, clearly describe who you are and the purpose of your site; choose colorful graphics; images "borrowed" from elsewhere can be enhanced, sharpened and brightened by iPhoto or other photographic software.
9. Choose a user-friendly font and point size.
10. Website/Internet writing is different from book and magazine writing; write in a concise, straightforward manner with a space between paragraphs; strive for brevity, hence, write what you are trying to convey in as few words as possible, without flowery description and clutter; do not be shy with punctuation, *italics* and **bold**; write as you would speak, and emphasize as such.

III. BLOG

1. Create a blog at blogspot.com or Wordpress.com; follow the same principles as above, and integrate your blog onto your website.
2. The blog becomes the platform for your daily rant.
3. If your blog remains static for many days or weeks, there is no incentive for visitors to return; hence, post a new story, with a grabbing graphic, at least three times a week.
4. Choose a title for each post with search engines in mind i.e. if the post is about a person or entity, ensure that the person/entity's name appears in the title.
5. In the substance of the piece, put all names in bold; again, this heightens recognition for search engine crawlers.
6. Graphics: find a local illustrator/graphic artist who can produce customized images for your content; or, with key words that best depict your subject, search Google Images for a selection of photos and graphics; some are protected by copyright, but do not be deterred; copyright owners will let you know if they feel infringed upon—and you can then replace the offending image with another.
7. Be funny; nothing conveys a point better than humor.
8. Include links to relevant or humorous Internet sites; for instance, if you are suggesting that someone has the manners of a mule, enter “mule sounds” in Google, find the appropriate site/sound, and link it to your post; even better, find a humorous YouTube about a mule and link it.
9. Determine your objective and choose content accordingly: is it to embarrass your target or to apply pressure in the court of public opinion or to warn the public about poor service/misdeeds, or all three?
10. Choose your content accordingly.

IV. CONTENT

1. Your greatest source of information is known as *Open Source* i.e. that which can be found in newspapers, magazines, books, and on Internet websites and blogs; deep searches will produce much material through which you can sift content for posts; link the site at the end of your post as a kind of citation so a) readers can see that what you are posting is authoritative and b) readers can delve more deeply into the topic if they choose.
2. The best information will come from sources that know something previously undisclosed about your target and are willing to share with you and your readers.
3. You may cultivate these sources yourself; some may speak to you, some may not, but nothing ventured, nothing gained; it often takes persistence to get potential sources to open up, so persevere—and always strive to protect their identities.
4. Once your campaign has begun, you will naturally attract whistleblowers i.e. potential sources that once worked for your target or still do.
5. Such whistleblowers need to be vetted and their information validated before their content is used, lest they be acting for the target, luring you to post false information over which the target can then initiate a libel lawsuit and win.
6. A news article on your target is an excellent peg on which to hang a post, slanting it your way; set up a Google Alert that will immediately notify you by e-mail of any news on your target.
7. Transform a positive news story into a negative by focusing on some negative aspect within the piece; celebrate a negative news story to the hilt.
8. Images are a crucial component of content; sometimes, a strong or funny image with a caption and/or link is all that is needed for a post; indeed, the *less is more* rule particularly applies to the Internet, whose surfers are impatient to keep surfing if not instantaneously satiated.
9. During a lull in news stories, probe your target's history, and from it mine gems that can be cut and polished into sparkling posts.
10. Create interactive contests for readers, either by allowing them to comment on your blog or by creating a dedicated *question and answer* site, such as formspring.com.

V. FORMSPRING

1. The key to success is involving your audience; this is what makes your hub of dissent *interactive*; the more people can feel apart of what you are doing, the more they will return and clue others into your cause and your site.
2. Many people wish to remain anonymous, especially potential sources.
3. To that end, create an account with formspring.com and integrate it into your website and blog.
4. The Formspring concept is simple and straightforward: Formspring enables anyone, anywhere in the world, to send you questions, or perhaps merely a statement; they may do so anonymously or through a user-name, and the decision is yours whether to respond and post, or not.
5. Devise your own style, unique to yourself, for responding.
6. The author uses a number of one-word responses for the variety of messages that arrive daily, and which have become his signature of sorts; these include... *noted, indeed, concurred, cute, funny, perhaps* and *huh?*
7. When answering questions, link relevant posts from your blog; or choose other links from the Internet, such as photos or a YouTube, preferably something humorous, like a cartoon, to compliment your response; sometimes, a link can be your sole response.
8. Approach your correspondents with an air of whimsy, thereby demonstrating that you are not *obsessed* with your target, but *determined* in your mission.
9. Respond promptly; certainly, do not let days and days pass in between responding otherwise readers will grow bored and not return; never allow a questioner to anger you, nor should you respond in anger; conversely, do not tolerate abuse; block cranks and bullies; time is too short to engage fools.
10. But most of all enjoy the repartee; remember, this is partly therapy, for stress relief.

VI. BUILDING READERSHIP

1. Make your website and blog known through social networking: Create a Facebook account and start with all your friends and acquaintances; every time you post something new on your blog, immediately share the link with Facebook; encourage your friends to share your link with *their* friends.
2. Advertise on Facebook Ads; choose countries or specific cities whose population are most likely to take an interest in your target; you can also be selective with other aspects of demographics, including gender, age and level of education.
3. Create a Twitter account so that readers can *follow* you and be alerted to every new post; share every Formspring question/statement and response with your Twitter audience.
4. Create a list of media publications and individual reporters that are interested in your target; make them aware of your existence; reporters may use your material to expose your target while simultaneously bringing attention, and thus new readers, to your site.
5. If other websites or blogs exist that overlap, even slightly, with your subject matter, provide them with material that includes a link back to your website/blog; they may even create a permanent link on their site to yours.
6. Make yourself available to local television programs, such as community access stations, to discuss your target—and ensure that they display your site coordinates; do the same with local radio stations, remembering to announce your site details every few minutes.
7. Print a card with your site coordinates and hand it out liberally wherever you go: coffee emporiums, restaurants, shops and bars; you are the best spokesperson for your site—so speak out.
8. Do not be shy about provoking your target to threaten to sue you or actually file suit; the resulting publicity will bring you a windfall of new readers; if you receive warning letters from lawyers, post them for all to see; most aspects of any actual legal proceedings should be posted to your blog; deconstruct the words of your adversary with your own annotated commentary; people love legal dramas.
9. Initiate your own lawsuit against your target; it serves as a great peg on which media can hang a news story.
10. You are building a library; in time, once you become a comprehensive source of information on your target; after very many posts, readers interested in your target will *find you*; they will be steered to your site by search engines.

VII. WIKIPEDIA

1. Wikipedia has become the first source of information Internet users consult when researching a subject or an individual; it always ranks within the first five hits of a Google search.
2. Create a Wiki account; study its rules, its writing style and its tools for creating and editing Wiki pages.
3. Create a Wiki page for yourself; provide all the basics (view Wiki pages about other persons to get a feel for how it should be organized and formatted, including citations); add a paragraph about your Internet campaign that exposes all that is bad about your target.
4. No doubt, a Wiki page already exists on your target; chances are, they wrote it themselves.
5. Jot down a list of points you would like to see made about your target on their own Wiki page.
6. Utilizing great subtlety and, more important, citations, tweak your target's Wiki page to include those elements you believe everyone should know about your target.
7. You may even use your own website/blog as a citation to establish veracity.
8. Certainly, add any and all negative news articles about your target that your target, of course, chose to ignore when writing their Wiki page.
9. Monitor your Wiki page regularly; gremlins from your adversary may attack yours and make subtle changes of their own; edit them out.
10. Monitor your target's Wiki page regularly; when they notice your changes, they will edit them out; put them back in, and complain to Wiki administrators that genuine information properly cited was willfully removed.

VIII. SECURITY AND LEGAL ISSUES

1. Private investigators working for your target may try to hack into your Internet accounts, including e-mail, a prime technique for uncovering your insider sources; hence, for all Internet accounts, including e-mail, choose passwords that are nonsensical with at least fifteen digits and which include letters and numbers; do not use maiden names or pets names or anything that can be discovered through a simple investigation of your background; delete communications from insider sources soon after receiving.
2. You will no doubt receive email from fans; you may also receive email from foes *pretending* to be fans; always assume whoever contacts you is working for your target and that anything you tell them will be known by your target; be polite and friendly, but firm; do not reveal anything you wouldn't want to see in a newspaper about yourself; you can use such approaches to your advantage by supplying disinformation—and send your target on wild goose chases.
3. You may receive pretext approaches from your target's private investigators that pretend to be something else, such as a freelance reporter; such persons will want access to your sources; never reveal your sources to anyone.
4. Deploy operational security: keep confidential source documents locked inside a safe; use an accommodation address—such as a UPS store—for receiving mail; do not answer *blocked* telephone calls.
5. In advance of creating your campaign, seek legal guidance with regard to criminal and civil laws and statutes covering jurisdiction, copyright, libel, defamation and invasion of privacy; keep a lawyer on retainer for consultation on various issues, and for dealing with any threat of legal action from your target.
6. If your target is a public company or a public figure, do not be concerned about invasion of privacy; they are fair game.
7. *Always* be concerned about libel; be prepared to prove in a court of law that everything you have written is true or that you had good reason to believe, based on evidence (documents and source testimony), it is true, to the best of your knowledge.
8. If you are a U.S. citizen and you are resident inside the United States, your right to free speech is protected by the U.S. Constitution.
9. If your target is outside the United States, it may try to sue you in a foreign jurisdiction on the basis that your writing is available to Internet users in a country that inhibits freedom of speech and has strict libel or invasion of privacy laws; a law passed

by Congress and signed by the U.S. President in January 2011—The Free Speech Act—prohibits U.S. courts from recognizing foreign libel judgments; do not engage your target on a battlefield of its choosing; make it come to your battlefield, if it dares.

10. Copyright: The U.S. *Fair Use* doctrine allows you to publish brief extracts from third-party copyrighted material; be courteous and give credit by way of a link to such source material; graphic images are fair game if altered at least 20 percent through Photoshop or other means.

IX. CASE STUDY: SHELL OIL

1. Royal Dutch Shell Plc is a multinational goliath that makes billions of dollars annually in profits from high oil prices and employs 100,000 persons in over a hundred countries; but if you go to royaldutchshellplc.com you will *not* find Shell Oil; you will find a gripe site operated by father and son Alfred and John Donovan.
2. In 1993, Shell allegedly stole promotional ideas disclosed to it in confidence by the Donovans; they resorted to legal means to remedy their predicament, resulting in many court battles; in the midst of litigation, the Donovans created an anti-Shell gripe site; Shell eventually paid to settle all court actions.
3. Nonetheless, the Donovans continued to use their site to hold Shell accountable whenever Shell's policies did not correlate to their public relations and advertising rhetoric.
4. In March 2005, Shell initiated legal action to try to stop the Donovans from using royaldutchshellplc.com as their domain name; Shell lost.
5. Over time, the Donovans constructed the most comprehensive Shell-related news service on the Internet, gathering and publishing many news stories on Shell each day on a 24/7 basis; additionally, the Donovans write and publish an outspoken blog about Shell on which they discuss various news stories while voicing their expert opinions; if you Google "Royal Dutch Shell," there are approximately of 1,120,000 results; the Donovan site consistently ranks number four.
6. Visitors to royaldutchshellplc.com site can post comments on its *Live Chat* feature without having to register, thereby allowing anonymous offerings; thus it attracts Shell insiders who reveal confidential information about Shell without them having to give up their identities; some such insiders graduated to leaking Shell internal correspondence documents to the Donovans.
7. royaldutchshellplc.com receives several million hits monthly and has become an interactive hub of dissent, attracting whistleblowers who use the Donovan site as a means to leak numerous Shell secrets to the media, resulting in huge embarrassment to Shell's senior management and even the resignation of a Shell senior executive.
8. A confidential Shell memo leaked to the Donovans tabled strategies for combatting the Donovan site; Shell conducted surveillance and deployed dirty tricks against the Donovans, including the use of an undercover agent who presented false credentials from a company that did not exist and was subsequently caught examining private mail inside the Donovans office.

9. The significance of the Donovan website has been acknowledged by mainstream media; One World Trust, an independent research organization, announced that the Donovan site has had a “profound” impact on Shell.

10. Profound, indeed; revelations published on royaldutchshellplc.com have cost Shell billions of dollars; as such, David gutted Goliath.

X. CASE STUDY: MONACO

1. Monaco is a glamorous principality and the world's second smallest country near France's border with Italy on the French Riviera; for five-and-a-half-years the author was spymaster to its ruling prince, Albert II; their relationship ended badly after the prince distanced himself without explanation and failed to pay a final invoice.
2. The author attempted to bring accounts current with the help of a lawyer, but the prince ignored legal overtures; eventually the author initiated a lawsuit in a U.S. court, and also created a gripe site, eringer33.com.
3. At first the author's claims were received with skepticism, but the author soon produced material on his blog that dispelled any doubt about the veracity of his claims.
4. The author's lawsuit attracted mainstream media attention, which led to increased traffic for the author's blog; meantime, Prince Albert spent over a million dollars on legal costs to hide behind a veil of "sovereign immunity"—twenty-five times the unpaid invoice.
5. When Prince Albert got married in July 2011, the author's blog received 60,000 hits a day for a whole week, not least because the wedding became a fiasco and the author's blog a clearing house for information; at this writing, the blog has been visited almost a million times by persons in all parts of the world, but most especially by Monegasques, who read with interest the truth about their incompetent ruler.
6. The author's blog itself became the subject of feature stories in the *Wall Street Journal* and *Forbes* magazine, bringing more bad publicity to Monaco from highly respected publications.
7. The author has fielded almost 20,000 anonymous questions/statements on formspring.com; the author's Formspring site has become an interactive hub of dissent.
8. The truth about Prince Albert being an emperor with no clothes has been aired—and continues to be aired—for all to see; the world now knows that the prince's supposed stance against money laundering and corruption was a sham.
9. Knowing he could not sue for libel the United States (truth being the best defense against libel), Prince Albert attempted, at huge financial cost, to sue the author in France; the author refused to submit his U.S. first amendment free speech rights to a French court, and though default judgments were awarded, U.S. courts are prohibited by U.S. law—The Free Speech Act—from upholding judgments from abroad on free speech issues.

10, All told, Prince Albert and Monaco have spent vast sums on lawyers and have accomplished virtually nothing in their quest to prevent the author from embarrassing the prince and his principality on a daily basis; as such, David gutted Goliath.