

SNAKE OIL CURES ALL

"Snake oil" is used in the sense of any product, idea or policy rejected by conventional science or prevailing ideology as having little or no worth, but which has radical value to those who understand human weakness and plan to disrupt business as usual in every sphere.

WHY EVIDENCE IS UNDER THREAT AND SELLING SNAKE OIL IS EASY

BRUCE HUGMAN

The ultimate go-to guide for snake oil to conquer the world READ THIS, FELLOW QUACKS AND MOUNTEBANKS!

Today, you can be famous and rich on the back of wild or dangerous products or ideas that appeal to people's disenchantment, alienation, narcissism and insecurity. Don't miss this unique period in history when anything goes; when language is in decay; when facts, reason and evidence have lost their kudos and their power. **Snake oil sellers, this is your time!**

1. Find sick babies

Save your baby: join us and stay safe!

Showcase just one outraged parent and one sick baby, and an explosion of emotion and a million stories will follow. Call up the Mommy-instinct*. Go viral. Entertain! Stories knock data out any day. *Old élites have no idea how to tell stories or to reach and influence us at this visceral level.*

2. Simplify! Simplify! Make bold claims

This is the answer for real people like you; a miracle that changes lives

The world wants cures for illness, ugliness, unhappiness, old age. Promise miracles! Invoke the wisdom of nature; co-opt self-seeking celebrities, rebel scientists and silly journalists; infect the insecure and the disaffected. In a data-weary world, don't worry about figures. *Old élites love data but know nothing about backfire effects or emotional intelligence and how to infiltrate the human heart; the field is yours.*

3. Stick to black and white

Raise the flag of your identity. Don't trust smart-asses and their tricks!

Stick your neck out; ridicule ambiguity and complexity. Offer simple choices: yes or no? Black or white? With us or against us? Connect with dissatisfaction: offer validation, status and identity. *Old élites have no idea how to provide answers or foster tribal confidence.*

4. Debunk the enterprise of science

While science and medicine fail, we have the answers!

Dubious methods, conflicts of interest, political interference, manipulation of data, reproducibility issues, fraud, reversals, disagreements, war-gaming issues: highlight and exploit the shortcomings of science and scientific medicine. Raise doubts, nurture cynicism, show you are the safe alternative. *The scientific community has no idea how to heal itself and is useless at speaking to real people.*

5. They're out to get us: play up the conspiracies

Mark your territory, raise the flag; don't fall for the lies

The world is run by powerful conspiracies of bankers, politicians, pharma companies, big business, media, the rich, homosexuals, black people, foreign powers, priests, immigrants. Exploit anxieties and paranoia; debunk authorities who let it happen. *Old élites have no idea how to operate ethically and transparently as they claim they do or to dismantle conspiracies; they will constantly play into your hands with their foolishness.*

6. Identify the enemy

They really are out to get us; declare war!

Old élites are the enemy (duplicitous politicians, self-seeking professionals, leftie academics, smug experts, greedy capitalists) whose wealth and power enslave us. The populist backlash will grow; exploit the chaos and define our new reality. Old institutions are crumbling. Facts, evidence and truth are dead. We can sell anything we choose. *Old élites have no idea of the firestorm ahead; they are sheltered by the remoteness of their mansions and institutions; they are deluded by their wealth and sense of invulnerable entitlement.*

7. Lavish attention on your audience

You are unique and special; we are family and can conquer the world. Sign up!

The world starves us of love and attention. Failing medical systems; alienating bureaucracies and oppressive officials; automated and inhumane services; politicians in their parallel worlds. Make people feel noticed and valued, real and alive, and they'll turn to you like flowers to the sun; nourish them and they will follow you. Capture the massive reach and energy of social media. *Old élites have no idea how to touch and warm the soul, to connect and engage, to uplift and inspire.*

8. Learn from the enemy's errors

Be true to your emotions and your tribe; no half measures or split loyalties

The Enlightenment was a blanket laid on the seething reality of humanity. Trust your instincts. We don't need academics and philosophers and scientists to tell us how to live our lives. Appeal to emotions: fear, anxiety, insecurity, anger; promote the new world of powerful real people where deviants are outlawed. Don't preach and hassle and argue; connect with dissatisfaction, spread the scent of victory, name and validate individual and group identity. Exclude those who won't sign up; vilify and exile them. *Old élites cannot escape the chains of their limitations to compete with us.*

9. Enlist your people: build an irresistible force

Spread the word; recruit an army

People will volunteer as your agents and ambassadors if you capture their hearts and minds. Inspire them; give purpose and belonging and they'll do your work for you, they'll follow you and spread your word – they'll make the world your oyster. *Old élites have no idea how to nurture loyalty and to reach out from remote enclaves to touch the lives of real people. This is their fatal tragedy.*

10. Follow your leader

Follow the rumpus; support disruptors

A new wave of leaders are rejecting Enlightenment restraints, the pursuit of truth, secular reason and the scientific method. Everywhere, they are creating more extravagant and wonderful fictions, building a world where raw emotion, exclusive identities, binary thinking, fake news, lies and disinformation can be deployed for any purpose on a whim. *Old élites have no idea how to react to this tsunami of change, even as the foundations of their power are dissolving, and unstoppable, radical new élites are emerging.*

11. Colluding pharmacists and medics

Push boundaries and widen cracks; infiltrate and undermine ivory towers

Pharmacies, medical clinics and health ministries are seduced by snake oil; they are keen allies in the muddying of scientific waters and rational thinking: admire the hybrid policies and treatments; the glorious alternative remedies, homeopathic nostrums, unproven herbal and traditional products, the amazing skin-whitening products, the insidious cosmetics; rejoice that the enemy has been so thoroughly infiltrated. Notions of scientific medicine and patient safety are overwhelmed by the lure of popularity and profit by peddling nothing but – snake oil! Wow! Could we ever have hoped for such allies and such wonderfully chaotic mixed messages? *Old élites have no idea of the extent of their corruption and the depth to which they are in hock to big business and daft ideas – accelerating our cause at every turn.*

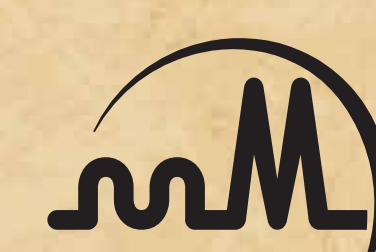
A recipe for success!

These guidelines have been followed successfully by homeopaths, naturopaths, practitioners of alternative medicines, ministers of health; climate change, vaccination and Holocaust deniers; UFO enthusiasts and alien abduction theorists; creationists and religious fanatics; attention-seeking scientists and deranged politicians; by the tobacco, fossil fuel, mining and mobile phone industries. Politicians rise by espousing these principles: fires have been lit under immigration, national sovereignty, human rights, HIV/AIDS, gun control, abortion, ethnic and religious superiority. Public discourse has been transformed and old truth lies bleeding; there's a new currency. Divisiveness – the key to dominance - has replaced inclusivity. The time for snake oil in all its wondrous variety has truly come.

Forecast

There is no sign of backlash or coherent resistance to the magnificent disorder of this counter-revolution. Enlightenment values and their followers do persist and they will take a stand where they can. Be vigilant! Isolate and cut them down wherever they raise their heads. A tipping point is in our grasp; do not flinch or weaken.

Bruce Hugman
Communications specialist
brucehugman@hotmail.com



Uppsala
Monitoring
Centre

Uppsala Monitoring Centre (UMC)
Box 1051, SE-751 40 Uppsala, Sweden
+46 18 65 60 60 www.who-umc.org

Design: UMC Global Communications

The content of this poster is perversely derived from a range of eclectic resources, including:

Julian Baggini, The Edge of Reason; Any Chua, Political Tribes; Evan Davis, Post Truth; Michiko Kakutani, The death of truth: how we gave up on facts and ended up with Trump; Brian King, The Lying Ape; Hector Macdonald, Truth; Jan-Werner Müller, What is Populism?; Tom Nicholls, The Death of Expertise; Peter Osborne, The Rise of Political Lying; Nassim Nicholas Taleb, Skin in the game, and from an extensive examination of journalism in The Guardian and other major media.

*This was the term the great Jenny McCarthy used as evidence of her child's damage by the MMR vaccination.