

Tobacco Industry Quotes on Nicotine Addiction

“The most direct solution to the problem of increasing nicotine delivery in the new product would be to add nicotine alkaloid directly to the tobaccos used in the new blend. The direct approach involved determining at which point in the manufacturing process the nicotine could be added, and secondly, determining where the necessary quantity of nicotine to support a major brand could be obtained. The direct approach involves some serious problems, mainly centering around the intensely poisonous nature of nicotine alkaloid...”

Lorillard official H.J. Minnemeyer, "Present Status of the Nicotine Enrichment Project," April 13, 1977.

“Very few consumers are aware of the effects of nicotine, i.e., its addictive nature and that nicotine is a poison.”

Brown & Williamson memo by H.D. Steele, 1978.

“Tobacco scientists know that physiological satisfaction is almost totally related to nicotine intake.”

Lorillard official H.J. Minnemeyer, "Present Status of the Nicotine Enrichment Project," April 13, 1977.

“Goal—Determine the minimum level of nicotine that will allow continued smoking. We hypothesize satisfaction cannot be compensated for by psychological satisfaction. At this point smokers will quit, or return to higher T&N brands.”

Lorillard memo from Richard E. Smith to Alexander Spears, concerning the RT Information Task Force, February 13, 1980, Minnesota Trial Exhibit #10170.

“Nicotine is the addicting agent in cigarettes.”

Brown & Williamson official A.J. Mellman, 1983.

“Let us provide the exquisiteness, and hope that they, our consumers, continue to remain unsatisfied. All we would want then is a larger bag to carry the money to the bank.”

Colin Greig, British American Tobacco, alluding to a quote in Oscar Wilde's 1891 novel The Picture of Dorian Gray, "A cigarette is the perfect type of a perfect pleasure. It is exquisite and it leaves one unsatisfied. What more can one want."

“I believe the thing we sell most is nicotine.”

Philip Morris memo, 1980.

“I believe that for the typical smoker nicotine satisfaction is the dominant desire, as opposed to flavor and other satisfactions.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. marketing memo, 1972.

“I don't know of any smoker who at some point hasn't wished he didn't smoke. If we could offer an acceptable alternative for providing nicotine, I am 100 percent sure we would have a gigantic brand.”

Lorillard letter discussing new products, 1977.

“The first is concerned with the ethical question: ‘Is it morally permissible to develop a safe method for administering a habit-forming drug when, in so doing, the number of addicts will increase?’”

Liggett Group memo about the problems in developing a less hazardous cigarette, 1978.

“The cigarette should not be construed as a product but a package. The product is nicotine. Think of a puff of smoke as the vehicle for nicotine.”

William L. Dunn Jr., Philip Morris researcher, after taking part in a 1972 Caribbean meeting held by the Council for Tobacco Research.

“We are basically in the nicotine business. . . . Effective control of nicotine in our products should equate to a significant product performance and cost advantage.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. report, May, 1991.

“We are searching explicitly for a socially acceptable addictive product. The essential constituent is most likely to be nicotine or a direct substitute for it.”

British American Tobacco Co. memo, August, 1979.

“Although more people talk about ‘taste,’ it is likely that greater numbers smoke for the narcotic value that comes from the nicotine.”

Philip Morris memo, 1972.

“Irrespective of the ethics involved, we should develop alternative designs (that do not invite obvious criticism) which will allow the smoker to obtain significant enhanced deliveries [of nicotine] should he so wish.”

British American Tobacco Co. memo, 1984.

“It may well be to remind you, however, that we have a research program in progress to obtain, by genetic means, any level of nicotine.”

Memo by Brown & Williamson researcher R.B. Griffith, 1963.

“The secret of Marlboro is ammonia.”

Brown & Williamson Tobacco Co. report, 1989.

“R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. introduced ammoniated sheet (processed tobacco) material in the Camel filter product in 1974. Better market performance was indicated in subsequent years.”

Undated R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. report.

“[A]ny desired additional nicotine ‘kick’ could be easily obtained through pH regulation.”

1973 R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. memo titled, "Cigarette concept to assure RJR a larger segment of the youth market."

“Let's face facts: Cigarette smoke is biologically active. Nicotine is a potent pharmacological agent. Every toxicologist, physiologist, medical doctor and most chemists know that. It's not a secret.”

Memo by Philip Morris researcher Thomas Osdene, 1982.

Tobacco Industry Quotes on Marketing

“To ensure increased and longer-term growth for Camel filter, the brand must increase its share penetration among the 14-24 age group, which have a new set of more liberal values and which represent tomorrow’s cigarette business.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. official J.W. Hind, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. internal memorandum, January 23, 1975.

“They represent tomorrow’s cigarette business. As this 14-24 age group matures, they will account for a key share of the total cigarette volume for at least the next 25 years.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. executive to Vice-President for Marketing C.A. Tucker, September 30, 1974.

“This suggests slow market share erosion for us in the years to come unless the situation is corrected.... Our strategy becomes clear for our established brands: 1. Direct advertising appeal to the younger smokers.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. executive to vice-president for marketing C.A. Tucker, September 30, 1974.

“If younger adults turn away from smoking, the industry must decline, just as a population which does not give birth will eventually dwindle.”

Memo from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. researcher Diane Burrows, February 29, 1984.

“Younger adult smokers have been the critical factor in the growth and decline of every major brand and company over the last 50 years. They will continue to be just as important to brands/companies in the future for two simple reasons: The renewal of the market stems almost entirely from 18-year-old smokers. No more than 5 percent of smokers start after age 24.”

Memo from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. researcher Diane Burrows, February 29, 1984.

“Brands/companies which fail to attract their fair share of younger adult smokers face an uphill battle.”

Memo from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. researcher Diane Burrows, February 29, 1984.

“Younger adult smokers are the only source of replacement smokers.”

Memo from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. researcher Diane Burrows, February 29, 1984.

“[The report on Teenage Smokers (14-17)] indicates that RJR continues to gradually decline and between the spring and fall 1979 periods, RJR's total share declined from 21.3 [percent] to 19.9 [percent]. Hopefully, our various planned activities that will be implemented this fall will aid in some way in reducing or correcting these trends.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. inter-office correspondence, July 22, 1980.

“It’s a well known fact that teenagers like sweet products. Honey might be considered.”

Brown & Williamson memo from consultants recommending that the company consider Coca-Cola or other sweet-flavored cigarettes, 1972.

“Kool has shown little or no growth in share of users in the 26 [plus] age group. . . . Growth is from 16-25-year-olds. At the present rate, a smoker in the 16-25 year age group will soon be three times as important to Kool as a prospect in any other broad age category.”

Brown & Williamson memo, 1973.

“Kool’s stake in the 16- to 25-year-old population segment is such that the value of this audience should be accurately weighted and reflected in current media programs. As a result, all magazines will be reviewed to see how efficiently they reach this group and other groups as well.”

Brown & Williamson memo, by brand manager R. L. Johnson, to executive V.P. Pittman, 1973, Minnesota Trial Exhibit #13820.

“We are not sure that anything can be done to halt a major exodus if one gets going among the young. This group follows the crowd, and we don’t pretend to know what gets them going for one thing or another. . . . Certainly Philip Morris should continue efforts for Marlboro in the youth market, but perhaps as strongly as possible aimed at the white market rather than attempting to encompass blacks as well.”

Philip Morris document, 1974.

“We will no longer be able to rely on a rapidly increasing pool of teenagers from which to replace smokers through lost normal attrition. . . Because of our high share of the market among the youngest smokers Philip Morris will suffer more than the other companies from the decline in the number of teenage smokers.”

Philip Morris report sent from researcher Myron E. Johnston to Robert B. Seligman, then Vice President of Research and Development, 1981.

“Today’s teen-ager is tomorrow’s potential regular customer. . . The smoking patterns of teenagers are particularly important to Philip Morris. . . the share index is highest in the youngest group for all Marlboro and Virginia Slims packings.”

Philip Morris report sent from researcher Myron E. Johnston to Robert B. Seligman, then Vice President of Research and Development, 1981.

“Marlboro’s phenomenal growth rate in the past has been attributable in large part to our high market penetration among young smokers. . . 15 to 19 years old. . . my own data, which includes younger teenagers, shows even higher Marlboro market penetration among 15-17-year-olds.”

Philip Morris report sent from researcher Myron E. Johnston to Robert B. Seligman, then Vice President of Research and Development, 1975.

“You may recall from the article I sent you that Jeffrey Harris of MIT calculated. . . the 1982-1983 round of price increases caused two million adults to quit smoking and prevented 600,000 teenagers from starting to smoke. Those teenagers are now 18-21 years old, and since about 70 percent of 18-20 year-olds and 35 percent of older smokers smoke a PM brand, this means that 700,000 of those adult quitters had been PM smokers and 420,000 of the non-starters would have been PM smokers. Thus, if Harris is right, we were hit disproportionately hard. We don’t need this to happen again.”

Philip Morris internal document, "Handling an excise tax increase," 1987, Minnesota Trial Exhibit #11591 [emphasis in original].

“The teenage years are also important because those are the years during which most smokers begin to smoke, the years in which initial brand selections are made, and the period in the life cycle in which conformity to peer group norms is greatest.”

Philip Morris memo, "The Decline in the Rate of Growth of Marlboro Red," 1975.

“Winston, of course, faces one unique challenge. . . . It's what we've been calling the 'doomsday scenario': an acute deficiency of young adult smokers, apparently implying Marlboro's final domination and our utter demise within a generation.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. marketing report on the future of Winston cigarettes, 1990.

“Smoking a cigarette for the beginner is a symbolic act. . . . ‘I am no longer my mother's child, I'm tough, I am an adventurer, I'm not square.’ . . . As the force from the psychological symbolism subsides, the pharmacological effect takes over to sustain the habit. . . .”

1969 draft report to the Philip Morris Board of Directors.

“The base of our business is the high-school student.”

Memo from a Lorillard executive, 1978.

“Overall, Camel advertising will be directed toward using peer acceptance/influence to provide the motivation for target smokers to select Camel.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. document, 1986.

“[Camel advertising will create] the perception that Camel smokers are non-conformist, self-confident and project a cool attitude, which is admired by their peers. . . . Aspiration to be perceived as a cool member of the in-group is one of the strongest influences affecting the behavior of younger adult smokers.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. memo, 1986.

“I have just received data on the graduating class of 1982 and the results are much more encouraging, and corroborate the Roper data [a survey that tracked smoking trends]. . . . These data show that smoking prevalence among these 18-year-old high school seniors has increased from 1981 to 1982.”

Philip Morris memo, February 18, 1983.

“[Project LF is a] wider-circumference nonmenthol cigarette targeted at young adult male smokers (primarily 13-24-year-old male Marlboro smokers).”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. memo describing the Camel Wides brand, under the code name Project LF, 1987.

Tobacco Industry Quotes – Corporate Deceit

“We all prefer to have a young franchise, and we are working to accomplish this.”

Lorillard Tobacco Company, June 7, 1973.

“Contact leading firms in terms of children research...contact Sesame Street, Gerber, Schwinn, Matel...”
Determine why these young people were not becoming smokers.”

Brown and Williamson Tobacco Co Memo., April 27, 1977.

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