

KV INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION STUDIES
BA5111 SPOKEN AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

UNIT V - WRITING FOR MEDIA AND CREATIVE WRITING

Features for Publication (Newspapers, Magazines, newsletters, notice-board), Case Studies, Short Stories, Travelogues, Writing for Children, Translation, Techniques of Writing

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NEWSPAPERS

A **newspaper** is a periodical publication containing news regarding current events, informative articles, diverse features, editorials, and advertising. It usually is printed on relatively inexpensive, low-grade paper such as newsprint. By 2007, there were 6,580 daily newspapers in the world selling 395 million copies a day. The late 2000s-early 2010s global recession, combined with the rapid growth of web-based alternatives, caused a serious decline in advertising and circulation, as many papers closed or sharply retrenched operations.

General-interest newspapers typically publish stories on local and national political events and personalities, crime, business, entertainment, society and sports. Most traditional papers also feature an editorial page containing editorials written by an editor and columns that express the personal opinions of writers. The newspaper is typically funded by paid subscriptions and advertising.

A wide variety of material has been published in newspapers, including editorial opinions, criticism, persuasion and op-ends; obituaries; entertainment features such as crosswords, Sudoku and horoscopes; weather news and forecasts; advice, food and other columns; reviews of radio, movies, television, plays and restaurants; classified ads; display ads, radio and television listings, inserts from local merchants, editorial cartoons, gag cartoons and comic strips

MAGAZINES

A "magazine" paginates with each issue starting at page one. Academic or professional publications that are not peer-reviewed are generally professional magazines. Magazines, periodicals, or serials are publications that are printed with ink on paper or distributed online (or other forms of electronic communication), and generally published on a regular schedule and containing a variety of content. They are generally financed by advertising, by a purchase price, by pre-paid magazine subscriptions, or all three. At its root, the word magazine refers to a collection or storage location. In the case of written publication, it is a collection of written articles. Magazines and newsletters are both serials and periodicals - publications that are published on a regular, recurring schedule for an indefinite period of time.

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THE MOST COMMON DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MAGAZINES AND NEWSLETTERS

Content: Magazine: a periodical publication with articles, stories, or pictures on multiple subjects by multiple authors
Newsletter: a periodical publication with articles about one main subject or topic by one or more authors

Audience Magazine: written for the general public | typically even special interest magazines are written with a general audience in mind - minimum technical jargon or specialized language
Newsletter: written for a group of people with a common interest | may contain more technical jargon or specialized language not readily understood by the general public that doesn't share the interest or common bonds of the newsletter audience

Distribution : Magazine: available by subscription or from newsstands | often heavily supported by advertising
Newsletter: available by subscription to interested parties or distributed to members of an organization | supported primarily by subscriptions, organizational membership fees (club dues), or paid for by the publishing authority (such as an employee newsletter or marketing) Some localities and organizations have their own specific definitions for magazines and newsletters based on readership, distribution, length, or format regardless of what the publication calls itself. Here are some of the criteria someone might use in deciding if a publication is a magazine, newsletter, or other periodical.

Size: Magazines come in a variety of sizes from digest to tabloid size. Newsletters do as well, although letter size is a typical newsletter format.

Length: Most magazines are significantly longer than a newsletter, from a few dozen pages to a few hundred. Newsletters are not generally more than 12-24 pages in length and some may be only 1-2 pages.

Binding: Magazines typically use saddle-stitching or perfect binding depending on the number of pages. Newsletters may not require binding or might use saddle-stitching or simply a staple in the corner.

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Layout: The most common, significant visual difference between a magazine and a newsletter is the cover. Magazines usually have a cover that includes the name of the publication, graphics, and perhaps headlines or teasers about what is inside that issue. Newsletters typically have the nameplate and one or more articles right on the front, no separate cover.

Color/Printing: There is no rule that newsletters can't be printed 4-color on glossy paper or that magazines have to be; however, newsletters are more likely to be black and white or spot color publications while magazines are frequently full color glossies.

Print or Pixels Traditionally, magazines and newsletters were both print publications and most remain so. However, email newsletters are common, especially as a publication in support of a Web site. Print periodicals may also have an electronic version, usually in PDF format. There are also some periodicals that are available only in PDF electronic versions, not in print. With electronic publications there are no obvious visual clues from the layout and type of printing. The content and audience become the main criteria in determining if the publication is a magazine or a newsletter.

NEWSLETTERS

A newsletter is a regularly distributed publication that is generally about one main topic of interest to its subscribers. Newspapers and leaflets are types of newsletters. For example, newsletters are distributed at schools to inform parents about things that happen in that school.

Consider your audience. Before deciding on what content you need for your newsletter printing, take a moment to define your audience; gather demographics, and decide what topics will interest them. For instance, an audience of mostly middle-aged women probably won't be interested in a detailed article explaining a product. Instead, choose a topic that will connect with them--specifically on a personal level.

Choose your topic. Include a variety of topics and sections that will make your newsletter more interesting to a variety of audience. Just as a newspaper contains different sections, your newsletter should incorporate similar sections such as a response section, letters to the editor, industry news, and featured articles. Include tips or customer reviews within boxes to break up the layout

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Ask questions. Keep all information accurate. Use the six questions to give your newsletter a versatility: who, what, when, where, why and how. The best articles incorporate all six of these questions and answers, if applicable. This may require some research such as interviewing, but it is worth it if you want to make an effective newsletter with your audience's opinions expressed.

Research your topic. Writing subjectively can severely harm your credibility. Without proper research, you risk presenting incorrect or inaccurate information, which may offend or confuse your audience. Provide information such as statistics, expert opinions, and quotes to prove the validity of your research. Make sure to give the source (e.g., magazine, website, book) credit where credit is due

Make it understandable. Use concise and comprehensible vocabulary to ensure readability. Avoid verbose language. For instance, rather than using an adverb/verb combo, use a verb that denotes the same meaning.

Use interesting headlines. Write dynamic headlines by using action verbs that evokes curiosity. Without an interesting headline, readers may skim over your articles, because they find it uninteresting. Headlines are one of the keys to creating loyal readers, since a well-written headline means a well-read article means a well-read newsletter. Also, if any of your articles are more than a few paragraphs long, use subheadings to break up the text.

Proofread. After writing your articles, proofread for typos and then edit all articles for consistency of tone and voice. Never leave proofreading to your spell and grammar check tools. They are great for preliminary editing but poor substitutes for manual editing. Have someone else look over your newsletter for typos, since you can easily skip over them after staring at the text too long. And don't forget that you can't edit enough. Once you've thought you edited enough, go over it one more time. Even just a few typos will annoy readers enough for them to disregard you as a professional.

NOTICE BOARDS

Notice board is is board on which notices, advertisements, bulletins, etc, are displayed.

- **Where used :** Schools, Organizations, Government Bodies
- **Why used:** To inform people about various events or issue, public instructions etc.
- **Points to Remember:**
 - Box is mandatory.
 - Word limit: 50 words

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- Personal pronouns are not used
- Use passive form of voice. Write from a third person's perspective.
- Style & tone of the language should essentially be formal but a notice from an individual (like lost & found notice) can use informal style as well.
- Strictly follow the format

Value points for each type of notice:

1. Notice – Meeting/ Event

- Target Group
- Name of the event
- Date
- Time
- Venue
- Agenda/Purpose
- Specific instructions (if any)
- Contact Person

2. Notice – Tour/Camp/Fair/Exhibition

- Target Group
- Event
- Occasion (if any)
- Date/Time/Duration
- Venue/Place of visit
- Objective – information/appeal/awareness/invitation
- Fee/Expenses
- Activities
- Specific instructions – do's & don'ts/ things to carry/ visiting hours etc.

3. Notice- Lost/Found

- Article Lost/Found
- Date/Time/Place
- Identification mark
- Contents
- Whom to contact/when/where
- Promise of a reward

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CASE STUDIES

The case study is an account of an administrative problem or situation in a real or imagined organization. In addition to the description of a specific problem, a case study may include additional information necessary to place the scenario in context and an analysis of possible solutions or actions arising from the situation. One author of case studies, Paul R. Lawrence, defined the case study as follows: A good case is the vehicle by which a chunk of reality is brought into the classroom to be worked over by the class and the instructor. A good case keeps the class discussion grounded upon some of the stubborn facts that must be faced in real life situations. It is the anchor on academic flights of speculation. It is the record of complex situations that must be literally pulled apart and put together again before the situations can be understood. It is the target for the expression of attitudes or ways of thinking brought into the classroom.

The purpose of using a case study in a teaching environment is to present the student with a scenario as close to that which he or she may encounter in subsequent work, in order that the student may be able to work through the problem and devise reasonable and workable solutions.

The case study does not provide answers. Rather, it raises questions and allows the student to work through the decision-making process and find his or her preferred solution. The case study generates an action-oriented teaching environment; the student must actively participate in the process in order to meet the learning objectives. Through this process, much of the responsibility for learning is naturally transferred to the student.

ELEMENTS OF A CASE STUDY

Introduction The introduction defines the problem to be examined and explains the parameters or limitations of the situation.

Overview/Analysis The overview/analysis provides a scenario of the situation and offers more detail about the various players in the scenario, including the organization, its employees or other people involved with the issue in question. It may also mention professional, technical or theoretical issues that arise from the situation. It might also include graphic or visual aids such as budgets, organizational charts, mission statements or technical specifications, as relevant. In complex case studies, the overview and analysis may be presented separately.

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Status report the status report describes the organization's actions, on the matter. It may include statements from managers or employees about their intentions for resolving the issue. Case problems in many case studies, the status report may end with one or two case problems, which require the learner to analyse or solve a particular question.

Case problems generally take one of three forms:

1. Give a situation and ask learners what they would do next.
2. Set a task, such as asking learners to prepare a report recommending an action for review by a key official.
3. Illustrate a scenario and ask learners to analyse the faults and recommend how it should have been handled.

Appendices The case study may include as many appendices as necessary to ensure learners understand the case scenario and have the necessary information to solve the case problems, including exhibit copies of documents, charts, technical specifications and so on.

SHORT STORY GUIDELINES

Identify The Heart Of Your Story. Explore your motivations; determine what you want your story to do, then stick to your core message. Considering that the most marketable short stories tend to be 3,500 words or less, you'll need to make every sentence count. If you over-stuff your plot by including too many distractions, your story will feel overloaded and underdeveloped.

See Things Differently. Experiment with your short story's POV. A unique, unexpected voice can provide the most compelling, focused experience of the central story. Just be careful that you don't inadvertently give the story to a nonessential character. Narrating the story line through a character who's not central to the action is a common mistake many new authors make, often with confusing or convoluted results.

Opposites Attract. Elements that work against your character's central desire will keep the reader intrigued and prevent your story from getting stuck. You can also try approaching your core idea from an unusual direction. Dialogue, setting, and characterization are all areas that will benefit from an unexpected twist.

Craft A Strong Title. This can be one of the most difficult—but one of the most important—parts of writing your story. How do you find inspiration for a great title? Have friends read your story and note which words or phrases strike them or stand out. These excerpts from your text

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just might hold the perfect title. Try to stay away from one- or two-word titles, which can seem to editors as taking the easy way out.

Shorter Is Sweeter. Resist the urge to go on and on. With a shorter short story, you will have more markets available to you and thus a better chance of getting published. Here at Writer's Relief, our submission strategists and clients have noticed that editors consistently prefer short stories that are under 3,500 words over longer ones.

TRAVELOGUE

Travelogue is a film, book, or illustrated lecture about the places visited by or experiences of a traveler.

SAMPLE

Landing at Incheon Airport, maybe the most surprising impression for a Westerner on his first trip to Asia is the lack of surprise. Modern airports are similar all over the industrialized world and it was perhaps a first indicator of South Korea's remarkable economic success and rapid modernization that I could immediately feel at home in Korea's gateway to the world.

That is, at least at first glance; amidst all the recognizable normality, the bookstores and overpriced souvenir shops one finds at every airport was a special counter for American soldiers arriving in Korea. Indeed, the somewhat anachronistic ghost of the Cold War was a rather unpleasant reminder of things I had perhaps too easily forgotten. Having grown up in Northern Norway not far from the border with what was then still the Soviet Union, I can remember the military security and the sense of alertness omnipresent in my early childhood. Traveling from the bustling modernity of Seoul and the tension by the Demilitarized Zone was very much like traveling 15 years back in time and space to the only border between the Soviet Union and a NATO country. The contrast between modern Korea and what I thought of as a relic of the past was the most startling experience I had in Korea. Fortunately I can also remember the fall of the Soviet Union when Northern Norway was flooded with Russians selling everything from babushka dolls to red star medals and we again could have some contact with our neighboring people. It all happened suddenly and seemingly without any warning; perhaps change will happen as suddenly on the Korean peninsula.

For similar reasons I preferred the other traditional aspects of the trip to the more modern ones.

The tea ceremony probably seems slow, boring and impractical to many Westerners and indeed

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to many modern Koreans. But there is something refreshing in its slowness. In today's fast-paced world, we seldom have the time to do something leisurely. Everything must be fast, efficient and convenient; for some reason more convenient has become synonymous with better. As a result of this pursuit of expediency, the graceful, elaborate movements of a really traditional tea ceremony is soothing just because it stubbornly refuses the demand for more in less time. There is an almost guilty pleasure and a certain luxury in taking more time than needed.

This is not to say that all aspects of genuine Korean were equally appealing. There bound to be a few cultural clashes. For me, that cultural clash came at an unexpected moment. Visiting the memorial cemetery of those who died heroically fighting for democracy in Kwangju, I suddenly felt ill at ease. Not because of those who died, whom I admire, or the fact that Korea has chosen to commemorate them as any respectable nation would. Rather, it was the manner in which they were commemorated that left me as a Westerner and perhaps especially as a Scandinavian uncomfortable. The bleak architecture, the vast concrete memorial, the sheer grandeur of the cemetery left me for some reason I cannot quite identify extremely uncomfortable. It may have been because I come from an intensely egalitarian culture where the dead may be treated with respect but never reverence, where cemeteries are always green and lush, as to remind us that from death springs new life, and where even heroes are never commemorated with any more than a simple statue and an approving nod in history books. Koreans may be right in celebrating those who died for a worthy cause but I could not help being profoundly disturbed by the cemetery in Kwangju. That is perhaps an interesting reminder that despite globalization, cultural differences persist for better and for worse.

However, the trip to Korea was perhaps the most interesting trip I have ever been on. It takes time to digest as many impressions as we got in just two weeks. Korea seems like a country of contrasts both between peaceful prosperity and the tense border and between tradition and modernity, especially Western values. Naturally, what impressed me the most was everything that was different, all the traditions intertwined with modern Korea. That might be because of a natural curiosity for what is different, another explanation is the one offered by the film professor in Busan who claimed that Westerners prefer an idealized version of Asia's past. Regardless, it was fascinating to experience what remains of a radically different worldview.

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WRITING FOR CHILDREN GUIDELINES

1. Remember your child-self, your feelings, childhood memories, worries and pleasures.
(Most picture books are for 3-10 year olds.)
2. Create your writing time and mull–about what to write, about how to write it, about how to be daring. Among your key resources are your love of stories and language, your spirit, imagination and persistence.
3. Be welcoming of your writing. Welcome your ideas as you would welcome a guest. Resist thinking negatively about your work.
4. Read picture books both old and new.
5. Visit bookstores and libraries. Become acquainted with the person in charge of children’s books who may know about workshops, writing groups, school visit opportunities.
6. Create systems for jotting ideas and images.
7. Consider taking writing workshops, attending conferences, joining the **Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI)**.
8. Many books are available about writing children’s books. Read at least one and read books on **creativity**.
9. Start or join a writing group.
10. Cultivate the habit of revision. The many books about writing help this essential habit.
11. Know your goal. If publication is important to you, learn about the field. Some writers find it helpful to know what’s being published. They read reviews of picture books and browse in bookstores.
12. Understand that picture book publishing is a collaborative process. The collaborators are the author, the illustrator, the editor, the art director, and sometimes the editor-in-chief and marketing staff. If you need total control of the of the process, best publish your own manuscript.
13. Know that publishing is a business. Wonderful books get published; wonderful manuscripts don’t. A publisher has to believe that a manuscript will sell when it competes with 5,000 other books.
14. Be prepared for rejection. Editors receive thousands of unsolicited manuscripts. Have I ever gotten used to the rejection? NO.
15. Know the advantages and disadvantages of small and large presses.

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16. Submit your best work intelligently. Know the submission process.
17. Be welcoming of your writing. Welcome your ideas as you would welcome a guest. Resist thinking negatively about your work.
18. Read picture books both old and new.
19. Visit bookstores and libraries. Become acquainted with the person in charge of children's books who may know about workshops, writing groups, school visit opportunities.
20. Create systems for jotting ideas and images.
21. Consider taking writing workshops, attending conferences, joining the **Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI)**.
22. Many books are available about writing children's books. Read at least one and read books on **creativity**.
23. Start or join a writing group.
24. Cultivate the habit of revision. The many books about writing help this essential habit.
25. Know your goal. If publication is important to you, learn about the field. Some writers find it helpful to know what's being published. They read reviews of picture books and browse in bookstores.
26. Understand that picture book publishing is a collaborative process. The collaborators are the author, the illustrator, the editor, the art director, and sometimes the editor-in-chief and marketing staff. If you need total control of the of the process, best publish your own manuscript.
27. Know that publishing is a business. Wonderful books get published; wonderful manuscripts don't. A publisher has to believe that a manuscript will sell when it competes with 5,000 other books.
28. Be prepared for rejection. Editors receive thousands of unsolicited manuscripts. Have I ever gotten used to the rejection? NO.
29. Know the advantages and disadvantages of small and large presses.
30. Submit your best work intelligently. Know the submission process.

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17. Be persistent. It is not easy to have a manuscript accepted.
18. Never underestimate the importance of supportive friends and family.
19. Share your work. This will give you and others pleasure and will encourage you to write more.
20. Love your work. Care about the process of writing and the honor of writing for children. Be committed to that. Having a book published probably won't change your life, but being committed to writing and children can change your life and the life of your readers.
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Translation: 10 Expert Tips to Boost Content Quality

1. Keep sentences brief.

For increased comprehension and simpler translations, aim for about 20 words or less. And boost readability. I often ask myself, what's truly important? How can I simplify what I want to say? Reading sentences aloud helps to keep them short and sweet.

2. Use Standard English word order whenever possible.

This generally means a subject, verb, and object with associated modifiers. Ensure correct grammatical structure and proper punctuation.

This includes checking the basics, because mistakes can travel across source and target languages. Translators often find and flag source errors, but that shouldn't replace proofreading your source text.

3. Avoid long noun strings.

When connecting elements are omitted from noun strings, readers must infer the relationship between the words. If you have to read a sentence several times to understand it, chances are that there will be further complications when it's translated into a different language. When this happens, we tend to see misinterpretations of the original meaning—or a translation that appears too literal.

4. Use just one term to identify a single concept

Synonyms get in the way of clarity. Write the same thing, the same way, every time you write it. Finding different ways to write a single concept will not only affect the overall consistency of translation, but it will also reduce the related translation memory leverage. This can lead to decreased quality, increased cost, and increased turnaround.

Translation memories leverage words in segments, so changing even a minor word has an impact. Always consider re-using existing content that has already been translated—don't write from scratch if you don't need to.

5. Avoid humor.

It rarely translates with equivalency. The same goes for jargon, regional phrases, or metaphors. True story: I didn't know what "knocking it out of the park" or a "grand slam" was until I moved

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to Boston in 2004 and got pulled into watching the Red Sox World Series. Now I get it, but chances are that many translators are as clueless as I am when it comes to American sports. Expressions are not always universally understood or appreciated—they just don't translate.

6. Be clear with international dates.

Style guides should document the handling of large numerals, measurements of weight, height, width, temperature, time, phone numbers, currency, etc. for each language pair.

For example: 09/07/2015. Is that September, or July? It depends where I am. In Switzerland, it reads as July, but in the U.S., it's September. The safest choice is to spell out the name of the month. Using an abbreviation for the month is fine if space is tight.

7. Use relative pronouns like “that” and “which.”

Even if you don't need them, they may improve understanding. “The software that he licensed expires tomorrow” is clearer than “The software he licensed expires tomorrow.” It's good to check that pronouns have been included rather than assumed.

8. Use the active voice rather than the passive.

It's more direct, better understood, and easier to translate. Words like “was” and “by” may indicate that a passive voice is used. For example: The software was upgraded by the user = passive. The user upgraded the software = active.

9. Avoid phrasal verbs (containing a verb form with one or more articles).

They tend to complicate translations. For example, use “met” rather than “ran into.” Phrasal verbs often have multiple meanings and are less formal. Be on the lookout for two- or three-word verbs. I was trying to think of this in relation to German, but guess what: a “phrasal verb” as such doesn't exist in German.

10. Make sure it fits.

English text is often shorter than other languages, which means sufficient space is needed for expansion (up to 35%!). This is particularly important for software interfaces and graphics. Differences exist not only in sentence length, but also in individual word length—as some languages use large compound words.

Creative writing is any writing that goes outside the bounds of normal professional, journalistic, academic, or technical forms of literature, typically identified by an emphasis on narrative craft, character development, and the use of literary tropes. Due to the looseness of the definition, it is possible for writing such as feature stories to be considered creative writing, even though they fall under journalism, because the content of features is specifically focused on narrative and character development. Both fictional and nonfictional works fall into this category, including such forms as novels, biographies, short stories, and poems. In the academic setting, creative writing is typically separated into fiction and poetry classes, with a focus on writing in an original style, as opposed to imitating pre-existing genres such as crime or horror. Writing for the screen and stage—screenwriting and playwriting—are often taught separately, but fit under the creative writing category as well.

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STEPS INVOLVED

STEP 1 – GATHER YOUR INFORMATION

Information is the raw material from which ideas are born. There are two types of relevant information, specific and general. General information includes just about anything and everything, and gathering it is a lifelong exercise. It basically comes down to general knowledge and education, and can be cultivated through the usual channels: reading widely and having an active interest in life and the world around you, and in particular in people, how they live, what they think and how they behave. Specific information is directly relevant to the topic in hand. You clearly need to get all the specific information you can lay your hands on. If you're writing an advert for a product or service, you would expect the client to come up with most of it, although you'll probably want to do some of your own research as well. If you're writing a blog post on a topic, you'll need to gather your information from far and wide. These days, gathering information is a much faster process thanks to the internet. The down side to that is you'll need to be judicious, and discard that which isn't really relevant.

STEP 2 – SIFT THE INFORMATION

Work over the information, turning it over and around until you see how it all fits together. A direct pursuit of 'meaning' might be counterproductive. You may need to try a subtle approach, and sneak up on the topic, looking at things from various angles. If small snippets of ideas start coming to you at this stage, write them down, even if they seem crazy. The more you turn and sift the information, the better you understand it, the easier it will be to see and really understand the relationships. And the more ideas you will have.

STEP 3 – LET THE INFORMATION BUBBLE

The next stage is to let the information bubble away for a while, keep it on simmer in your mind. You need to let your unconscious mind work on it for a time. It's a good idea to do something else for a while, to stimulate your imagination and emotions. Try reading, listening to music, meditating, going for a walk, while your mind digests the facts. Or you could try the traditional approach – take a warm bath and wait for the eureka moment.

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STEP 4 – EUREKA! LET THE IDEAS FLOW

It's at this stage that ideas should start to appear, as if from 'nowhere'. This is where you hope for a 'Eureka' moment. The answer to your problem may appear to leap into your mind for no apparent reason.

STEP 5 – SHAPE AND DEVELOP YOUR IDEA

Now your idea needs to be shaped and molded, turned into something real. This where your writing skills come to the force.

STEP 6 – SHARE YOUR IDEA

Now show your idea to others and see what they think. They may be able to add to it and make it better. That may spark new ideas, and so the process becomes ever more creative.

STEP 7 – RINSE AND REPEAT

If necessary, use the feedback you got in step 6, and add that to the information you gathered in step 1. Now repeat step 2, sifting the new information with the existing facts. Then repeat steps 3, 4, 5 and 6. Keeps it going, until you have the best idea you can come up with, or you hit the deadline, and have to go with what you have developed so far.

Techniques for Writing

10 Writing Techniques: Anyone Can

Write! 1 The Enemy: The Blank Page

If you're like many people, you start a writing task by sitting down with a pad and pen, or at your computer and stare at the blank page, not knowing where to begin. You may take a stab at writing a few words or a sentence or two, but soon get frustrated because you are trying to write to a blank page, with no cues or guidance at all. Most artists don't start painting their masterpieces without first thinking about what they want the final result to look like, and first creating some sketches. Don't write to a blank page.

2 Write by Example

Of course, as publishers and published writers, we would never advocate plagiarizing another writer's work, ever! However, there is nothing wrong with 'borrowing' ideas. For example, if you have to write a press release, look through sites that publish press releases and start reading. Find a format that you like, and create your own outline (title, sub-heading, titled paragraphs, boilerplate etc.) to work from. If you have to write a compelling email to partners, review effective emails you have received from other companies and model your communication to

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theirs. Again, the blank page is your enemy so writing a document that is organized and gives you ‘prompts’ along the way will make your task much easier. You can ‘borrow’ formatting and outline ideas for any type of document that you want to create.

3 Speak Before you Write

Okay, now you have decided what you want to write, and have researched other pieces of similar writing. You have ‘borrowed’ some ideas and created an outline and are ready to write. But you are still finding it difficult. The best thing to do is speak out loud what it is you need to write. Call a friend and ask them if you can run something by them. In your normal conversational tone, tell them the gist of what it is you need to convey in your writing. Did they understand what you are trying to get across? If not, tell it again until they get it. Then simply write on paper what you had told your friend. Don’t have anyone to talk to? Tell your story to your fish, your dog or even to the fridge.

4 Write in a Conversational Tone

The most powerful and effective form of writing is written in a conversational tone. It’s as though a friend is telling you about something and automatically, that puts you on a higher level of trust and authority with your readers. Conversational writing can elicit strong emotional impulses that sizzle and get results.

5 Be Precise with Details

So often, the writer leaves out pertinent details for the reader. Write exactly what you intend or want to convey. For example, if you were talking to a friend on the phone to ask them to attend an event with you, you would provide all the pertinent details that your friend needed to make a decision to join you. Be specific in your communications.

6 Elicit Emotions

Let’s talk about emotion again, as this is the most powerful physiological response that you can hope to elicit from your readers. Emotion is what makes a reader decide to buy your book, come to your seminar, attend your party, or buy your product. Emotions such as these are usually linked to solving a problem for your readers. Write with passion to trigger powerful responses and you will attain the results you set out to achieve.

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7 Write It and Leave It

Let's review so far. You have outlined your work and started filling in the blanks with copy. You are working in the emotion aspect by demonstrating how the reader can benefit from your copy. Now leave it. That's right. Flip over your notepad, or turn off your computer and forget about this piece of writing for an hour or a day or two, or even a week (if deadlines allow). Revisit the piece again and you will be amazed at the parts that jump out immediately that require fixing. Read your copy again for clarity. Does it all make sense and will the reader get it? Forward to a friend or two for a sanity check if required and have a professional editor give it a once over if possible.

8 Spellcheck and Editing Tips

Don't forget your most basic yet necessary tool, the spellchecker! Here are two quick editing techniques that work. First, print out your document and place a ruler or paper underneath each line as you read down the page to catch errors more easily. Next, turn the page upside down to view. Editing and formatting errors can jump right out at you by looking at your writing in this unique way.

9 Book Writing Number 1 Tip

Writing a book or ebook? The place to start is from the end by writing your book jacket copy first. This technique helps you clarify your story to pave the way for outlining and writing your manuscript. From your own library, or at a bookstore, pick up a number of books and read the book jackets that describe the contents of the book and the story. Effective book jacket copy entices the reader to want to read the whole book and buy it immediately! Look at books that are similar to the subject you plan to write about.

10 Change of Scenery + Rituals

Now for my final writing technique. I often do my best writing in cafés; preferably Parisian cafés and other exotic locations (wink). Sometimes a simple thing like a change in scenery can stimulate the creative juices to allow the words to flow. Some people use rituals such as putting on a special hat or using a beautiful pen for editing only.

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