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Creating “Goodwill” in Written Documents

Writers often overlook the importance of creating goodwill in their documents. In other words, ensuring that when your readers finish reading your document, they are satisfied with the content of the document and that it's met their needs. The goal for most readers is to quickly and easily get through the document with a minimum amount of stress and hassle. So, as writers, how do we ensure a readable, usable document that creates goodwill? The first thing we have to do is to ensure that we understand our audience and their needs: why they're reading the document and what they hope to get out of it. In other words, we have to create reader-, not writer-, centered documents. For any document you write, you should be able to list several attributes and needs of your readers and then explain what role these attributes play in terms of how you write the document and what strategy you're going to use to meet their needs. For instance, how will you organize the document, what language choices will you make, how will you prioritize information? Asking yourself these questions in the prewriting stages will help you create a document that creates goodwill because readers will have little difficulty reading and understanding it.

Thanks to Our Alert Readers...

We're always very appreciative when readers let us know that we've goofed. You may have thought that we were perfect, but sad to say, we're not. Jim Billups, Vice President of Anderson and Associates in Greensboro, NC, wrote to scold us for writing about SOPs in the last newsletter without defining SOPs (standard operating procedures). We were chagrined, for we broke one of our rules and one that we discuss in almost every workshop! So, thanks, Jim, for setting us straight—you are absolutely right: acronyms should be defined before the acronym is used.

Technical Writing Course

We've revamped our technical writing course—it's now six weeks instead of four. [Click here](#) to see the exciting new format!

What's New

Hurley Write, Inc. is being featured in Business Leader magazine for being one of the Top 100 small businesses of NC. [Read the article >](#)

Customized Online Courses

We're very excited about our new ability to create customized online courses! We can quickly and easily create online courses that include the content that your writers need, and we can change these modules as your needs change! Like our other online courses, these new courses provide written feedback on work submitted and supplements that include writing options, a writing/job aid, and discussion and examples. Want more info? Call us at 877-24WRITE (877-249-7483) or email us at pam@hurleywrite.com.

Congrats to America Reads—Mississippi grads!

Just flew in from Jackson, Mississippi, where I'd attended the graduation ceremony for America Reads—Mississippi members. This is the group (350 members) that we developed an online writing workshop for, complete with writing assignments, quizzes, and resources. The new group of members is coming on board this fall, and Hurley Write will again be offering a writing course for them. Congrats, grads!

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