



Hurley Write, inc.

Visit www.hurleywrite.com

Empowering professionals to write with skill and confidence

April 2007, Newsletter

Tips on Becoming a More Effective Writer (part 2)

In the last newsletter, we began by discussing what some studies suggest is necessary to become a more effective writer. Surprisingly (!), research suggest that writing, and writing a lot, goes a long way toward making writers more effective.

The second component of becoming a more effective writer is to...wait for it...read! Yes, reading has been shown to increase writer's effectiveness. Why? Consider that those who read, and read a lot, are not only potentially opening themselves up to new ideas, but are also, in the reading process, picking up the nuances of others' writing. A reader may learn new words, learn how to use words differently, and learn that there's more than one way to write about any given topic

The key here, however, is not only to read a lot, but to read a variety of documents. If you're used to reading scientific reports, read the magazine Nature for a different perspective. Some great books (both fiction and non-fiction) about scientific topics have been written. The goal here is get out your rut and to read newspapers, magazines, and books. Read often, read a lot, and you'll find that your writing improves.

Let Hurley Write help your organization save money and time by creating cost-effective, customized writing courses! [Email us.](#)

Writing Question

Q: Could you please address how to make writing more concise? We struggle with wordiness in our office, and I'm curious how you teach writers to cut it down without losing meaning. Any suggestions?

A: Well, that's an entire topic in and of itself! First, some writers confuse brevity with being concise, and the two just simply aren't the same. I can be brief, but that doesn't mean I'm being concise, which means getting to the point. We'll make this an ongoing discussion, and I'll start with one point that we can take off on in future newsletters.

One issue that many readers have is to use far too many pronouns in their writing that have no noun referents. As you remember from seventh grade grammar class, pronouns take the place of nouns, and so when readers see a pronoun, they immediately look for the noun that the pronoun replaces. Look at this example:

- There is a reason that the lab has closed.
The pronoun that lacks a noun in this case is "there." Not only does it lack a noun referent, but it adds no value and makes the reader work harder to figure out the meaning and the emphasis of the sentence (we'll discuss emphasis in a future newsletter). We

Offsite Workshop on March 1, 2007

The offsite workshop held in RTP, NC, on March 1 was very successful. We had folks attending from various companies in the area, and the evaluations were very positive. Thanks to all who attended!

Keynote Speaker at the Atlanta ACRP Chapter Meeting

I was asked to be the keynote speaker at this local chapter meeting and discuss publishing. The presentation was well-attended and focused on publishing basics, such as understanding where to publish, what to publish, and other fundamentals. The crowd at this workshop was great-I had a good time and think that they did, too!

What's Next?

We're developing an online course in business writing to complement the two online courses we offer in technical and scientific writing. The new six-week course will focus on writing fundamentals; writing letters, emails, and other brief messages; writing good news/bad news messages; and writing short reports. We hope to launch the course by the end of June.

If you'd like to be notified of our launch date, send us an email pam@hurleywrite.com

Online Courses



- Scientific Writing
- Technical Writing

[Click here to view an introductory video!](#)

[Contact us today](#) to learn more about our **customized onsite writing courses** or to get additional information about our online technical and scientific writing courses!

can rewrite the sentence so that it's more concise, or to the point:

- The lab has closed for a reason.
In the rewrite, I've used fewer words and made the sentence more concise. The idea here is to ensure that you're not using pronouns with no noun referent ("it," "there" and beginning sentences with "this" when "this" could refer to several things already discussed.

Is there a specific question you would like to have answered?

[Email Us!](#)

TOLL FREE: 877-24-WRITE (877-249-7483)

Raleigh phone: 919.816.6547 | email: pam@hurleywrite.com