

Promotional Writing Basics

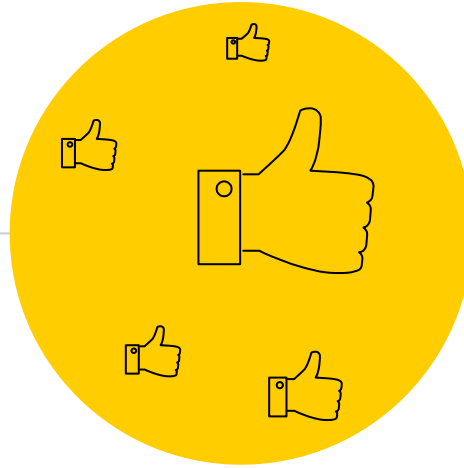




Hello!

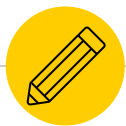
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Let's discuss!

At the end: Q&A • Share your own tips



Grammar Rules Guidelines

“The code is more what you’d call ‘guidelines’ than actual rules.”
– Captain Barbosa, *Pirates of the Caribbean*



Recent Dictionary Updates

They

Used to refer to a single person whose gender identity is nonbinary.

Adorkable

Socially awkward or quirky in a way that is endearing.

Cringe

So embarrassing, awkward, etc. as to cause one to cringe: cringeworthy.

Galentine's Day

A holiday observed on February 13th as a time to celebrate friendships especially among women.

MacGyver

To make, form, or repair (something) with what is conveniently on hand.

ICYMI

Abbreviation for “in case you missed it.”



RESULTS

Remember: Guidelines, not rules



Think different

Grammatically correct version: Think differently

Got milk?

Grammatically correct version: Do you have any milk?

I'm lovin' it

Grammatically correct version: I am loving it.





Rule-bending Examples

- **It's ok to end a sentence with a preposition.**
 - From where did this new display come?
 - Where did this new display come from?
- **Get rid of unneeded words.**
 - For many people, the reality of trying out a new technology like eBooks is cause for a host of anxieties.
 - Trying eBooks makes many people anxious.
- **Do we ever *really* need to use “that”?**
 - *Coyote Songs* is a book that we recommend for Hispanic Heritage Month.
 - *Coyote Songs* is a book we recommend for Hispanic Heritage Month.
 - This Hispanic Heritage Month, we recommend the book *Coyote Songs*.



More Rule-bending Examples

- **Contractions are ok.**
 - You are going to enjoy this hands-on exhibit.
 - You're going to enjoy this hands-on exhibit.
- **Oxford comma... or not.**
 - Join us for music, crafts, and a whole lot of fun.
 - Join us for music, crafts and a whole lot of fun.
- **Be consistent with capitalization.**
 - At our Library, you can try new tech before you buy it.
 - At our library, you can try new tech before you buy it.

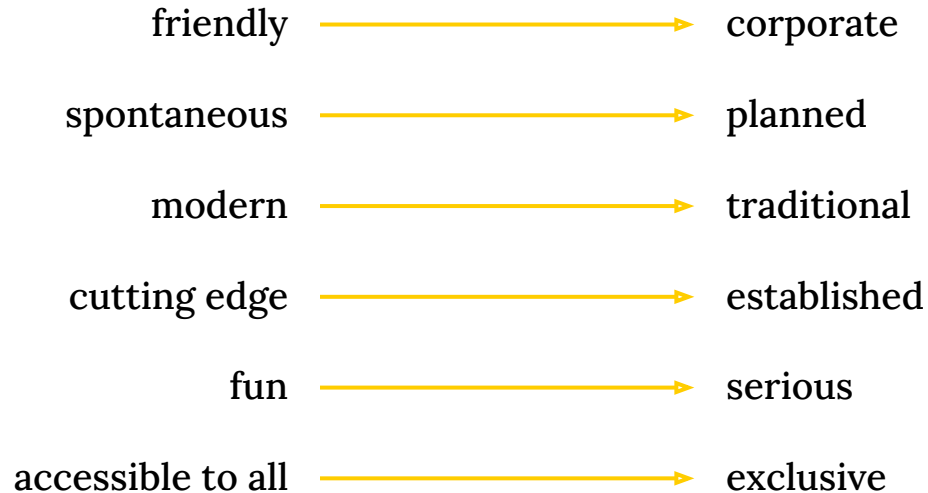


Finding Your Voice

“Is that my voice? Is that *my* voice? Oh, well.”
– Yzma, *The Emperor’s New Groove*



Brand Personality Spectrum





Airbnb Example

We debated countless words that could describe our voice, asking ourselves whether they sounded like us and whether they could be applied to every situation we write for, whether it's a moment of excitement or frustration. In the end, we decided our voice is **straightforward, inclusive, thoughtful** and **spirited**.



Schaumburg Library Example

Let's be **innovative, honest, professional, reliable, friendly** and **helpful**. Let's let this show through every communication we have with each other and with our patrons and community.



Voice & Tone in a Style Guide

- **Our written communications should resemble the conversations we, as staff, have with our patrons:**
 - Professional
 - Friendly
 - Clear
 - Concise
 - Conversational
- **While it's not appropriate to write exactly how we speak, adopting a conversational tone allows us to:**
 - Address our patrons directly
 - Use first person
 - Use active voice
 - Avoid jargon and use terms our patrons understand



Audit EVERYTHING

- Website (and not just the homepage)
- Social media
- Marketing emails
- Printed materials (guide/newsletter, brochures, flyers, posters, bookmarks, etc.)
- Program descriptions (printed and digital)
- Internal documents (as appropriate)



Who's your editing buddy?





Marketing Writing Tips

“Like anything worth writing, it came inexplicably and without method.”

– Kay Eiffel, *Stranger Than Fiction*



Know your...

Goal

Awareness vs.
engagement vs.
action

Audience

What are their goals?
What frustrates
them? What
information do they
need?

Platform

For example, social
media wants to drive
engage with your
post *on their platform*
(likes, comments,
shares), not
necessarily drive
traffic to your website

Headlines

So few words, so much importance!





Writing Tips

- Use patron-focused language
- Evoke a scene people can picture in their heads
- Utilize the Curiosity Gap by asking questions you then answer
- Minimal copy, done well, can have a big impact



Writing Marketing Tips

- Add value with your marketing (and your copy)
- Images are what stops you from scrolling



Rewriting Examples

“Everything gets revised 4,000 times. There's no writing. There's only rewriting.” – Bruce Vilanch, *Get Bruce*



Example #1

Genealogy Program

Robin Seidenberg will present “Skeletons in Our Closet: Researching a Family Scandal.” Robin is a member of the Genealogical Speakers Guild and the Association of Professional Genealogists. Robin currently serves as executive vice president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois. Robin specializes in using historical newspapers to research family history. The room will open at 7 p.m. so participants can review materials. Tony Kierna, STDL genealogist, will start the program at 7:30 p.m., followed by the speaker at 8 p.m.



Example #1

Skeletons in Our Closet: Researching a Family Scandal

Join Robin Seidenberg, a member of the Genealogical Speakers Guild, to learn how you can uncover some of your family's scandalous secrets. Robin will also share helpful tips about using historical newspapers to research family history.

Come as early as 7 p.m. to review our genealogical materials. At 7:30 p.m., Tony Kierna, our resident genealogist, will welcome you. Then Robin will begin her presentation at 8 p.m.



Example #2

Don't forget to sign up for our Winter Reading Program! All ages apply, and there are prizes involved! Rewards for reading at any age here at STDL! You can come visit us in person or click here to sign up online:

<http://programs.stdl.org/evanced/sr/homepage.asp?ProgramID=4>



Example #2

Our Summer Challenge is here! Get inspired inside Kartoon Channel's Thomas Edison's Secret Lab™, all while earning badges and working to win a prize. Sign up today:
SchaumburgLibrary.org/read



Example #2

Congrats are in order for Noah (7) and Ellie (5) of Hoffman Estates – they completed our Summer Challenge this week! They loved exploring different kinds of books this summer, and playing around with the Thomas Edison's Secret Lab™ exhibit. Even though they've earned their prize, they plan to keep earning more badges for more rewards throughout the summer. Track your progress or get started with our Summer Challenge today (it's not to late!) at SchaumburgLibrary.org/read



Example #3

Holiday Clay Food Charms & Chocolate Fest

Wednesday, Dec. 21

7-8 p.m.

Youth Services Craft Room

Enjoy making clay holiday and winter shapes for earrings or key chains. Teens can enjoy some holiday treats as well. Registration required for teens in grades 7-12.



Example #3

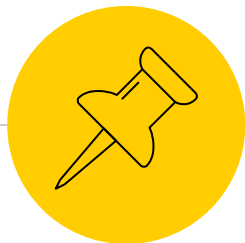
Charms & Chocolate

For grades 7-12 • Wednesday, Dec. 21 • 7-8 p.m. • Craft Room • Registration Required

Welcome winter with some crafting and snacking. Join us to make clay charms for earrings, key chains and more – all while enjoying tasty chocolate treats.



Questions?



Thanks!

Hollis Sienkiewicz

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