**QUESTIONS to ask yourself WHEN YOU’RE WRITING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do I sound like a real person?</th>
<th>Is this context really necessary?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can I make my writing voice more natural?</td>
<td>What can I tell the reader that they don’t already know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I know what I know?</td>
<td>Why is it wrong?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why am I a credible source?</td>
<td>Could this [sentence, paragraph, chapter, book] be shorter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who am I writing to? Why should they care about my topic?</td>
<td>Can I relate what I’ve written to something urgent or newsy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s the most important point? Is it in the title and first paragraph?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AVOID clichés AND BUSINESS JARGON**

- Deep dive
- Drill down
- Core competency
- Leverage
- Buy-in
- Dog and pony show
- Reinvent the wheel
- Boil the ocean
- Robust

**MORE TIPS**

1. Get someone else to read it
2. Delete meaningless adjectives like “key,” “exciting,” or “leading”
3. Use active verbs
4. Read it out loud

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*By using stale metaphors, similes, and idioms, you save much mental effort, at the cost of leaving your meaning vague, not only for your reader but for yourself.*

George Orwell

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**SIMPLIFY phrases AND CUT UNNECESSARY WORDS**

- As a result of → Because
- Despite the fact that → Despite
- Due to the fact that → Due to, because
- Every single → Every
- For the purpose of → For, to
- In accordance with → By, under
- In addition → Also, too
- In advance of → Before
- In an effort to → To
- Inasmuch as → Since
- In a timely manner → Promptly, on time
- Incumbent upon → Must
- In order that → For, so
- In regard to → About, concerning
- In the event that → If
- It is requested that → Please
- Leverage → Use
- Limited number → Few
- Majority → Most
- Necessitate → Need
- Numerous → Many
- On a regular basis → Regularly
- Pertaining to → About
- Provided that → If
- Provides guidance for → Guides
- Time period → Time, period
- Utilize → Use
- With reference to → About
- With the exception of → Except for
- In order to → To

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