

Writing Champions: Editing and Proofreading for Better Proposals

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SMPS SRC

January 31, 2019

graceworks®



Writing Champions

We read. We read a lot. We read emails, letters, reports, proposals, books, programs and street signs. Heck, we even read the label on the back of the cereal box. How were all those words written? We spend a lot of time thinking about writers, but we spend very little time thinking about the behind-the-scenes champions of the writing process – editors and proofreaders.

Our writing champions are the front line of defense against ghastly errors that sneak into our proposals. Today, we're going to take a look at the basics of the editing and proofreading process, and we're going to have a conversation about how to undertake that process with a little (or a lot) of grace.

While the spell and grammar checks on your computer are helpful, they can't do what human beings can do: communicate clearly and effectively through writing. Even editing and proofreading are about making The Human Connection®.



Proofreading

Define it

Jot a few notes here:

Editing

Define it

Jot a few notes here:

The To-Do Lists

Editing and proofreading both focus on:

Mechanics

A large, empty rectangular box with an orange border, intended for notes or a checklist related to Mechanics.

Grammar and Usage

A large, empty rectangular box with an orange border, intended for notes or a checklist related to Grammar and Usage.

Consistency

A large, empty rectangular box with an orange border, intended for notes or a checklist related to Consistency.



Editing

Your goals

The six C's:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

How About a Little (or a lot) of Grace?

It's not about me!

You build goodwill with your readers in four ways: writing with You-Attitude, Positive Emphasis, Appropriate Tone and Bias-Free Language.

“You-Attitude*” is a style of communicating that:

1. Looks at things from the other person's _____ .
2. Emphasizes what the other person _____ .
3. Respects the other person's _____ .
4. Protects the other person's _____ .

How do I communicate with “You-Attitude”?

1. Focus on what the person receives or can do, NOT what _____ .

Lacks Grace: We have created a new program that allows full-time employees to volunteer one hour a week on company time.

Builds Goodwill: You can volunteer one hour a week on company time.

2. Emphasize what _____ wants to know.

Lacks Grace: The schedule is going to change.

Builds Goodwill: The proposed changes to the scope of work could delay the schedule by two months. Would you like to proceed?

3. Don't talk about _____ (unless you're sure the reader wants to know).

Lacks Grace: We are relieved the schedule delay will only last two months.

Builds Goodwill: The schedule delay is expected to last two months. In an attempt to recover time, we are exploring opportunities to sequence building activities during construction.

4. Don't tell people _____ or will react.

Lacks Grace: You will be pleased to learn Senator Nelson is working to have the regulations changed.

Builds Goodwill: Senator Nelson, ACEC Texas, and our legal team are working to have the regulations changed.

5. In positive situations, use _____ more often than "I."

Lacks Grace: I encourage you to widen the north opening of the bridge to accommodate the lane migration.

Builds Goodwill: You can accommodate the lane migration by widening the north bridge opening.

6. In negative situations, protect the receiver's _____.

Lacks Grace: Your change of scope is going to increase our price.

Builds Goodwill: The proposed adjustments to the scope of work will have an impact on the project fees. Prior to proceeding, how should we detail those changes?

7. Use _____ to create goodwill.

8. Use _____ to create goodwill.

Positive emphasis is a style that sees the proverbial glass as half full instead of half empty.

1. Avoid the use of _____ when you can.

Lacks Grace: Because you failed to pay your bill, your account is delinquent.

Builds Goodwill: A \$5,000 invoice is 30 days past due.

* Adapted from Locker, Kitty. *Business and Administrative Communication*. 2006.

2. Emphasize _____ to the receiver.

Lacks Grace: You will not get your expense check unless the form is properly completed.

Builds Goodwill: To receive your expense check promptly, submit a properly completed form.

Tone is the implied attitude of the sender toward the receiver. Tone is a difficult concept because it is contextual, cultural and generational. Here are a few goals for tone of voice:

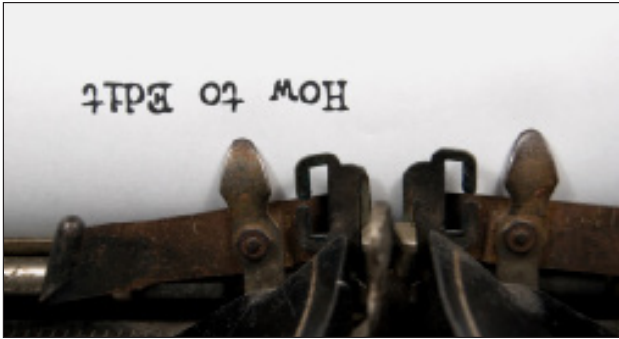
1. Businesslike but not _____.
2. Friendly but not _____.
3. Confident but not _____.
4. Polite but not _____.

Finally, you can build goodwill by using bias-free language. By bias-free, we mean a style that doesn't discriminate against people based on sex, physical condition, race, age, or any other category.

1. Refer to a group by the name it _____.
2. Use _____ language.

A Few Examples:

| Lacks Grace | Builds Goodwill |
|---|--|
| I negotiated an agreement with Fancy Rent-a-Car that gives you a discount on Corvettes. | SMPS members receive a 20 percent discount on Corvettes at Fancy Rent-a-Car. |
| You'll be happy to hear that the new building meets OSHA requirements. | The new building meets OSHA requirements. |
| You made no allowance for inflation in your estimate. | This estimate doesn't allow for inflation. |
| We have failed to finish the project on schedule. | The project wasn't finished on schedule. |



Editing with Grace

Build goodwill with your team

The six biggies:

1. Help people save face.
2. Don't be arbitrary.
3. Use queries.
4. Be specific.
5. Ask how much editing is too much.
6. Offer honest, specific, positive feedback.



Accentuate the Positive

Build more goodwill with your team

If someone tells you 10 things you do well and one thing you could improve upon, what do you remember? We have been trained to hear only the critique. In fact, we live in a culture of critique – it's no wonder we're prone to only hear the negative.

Yet, people will naturally excel when they feel safe, believe they're on track, and know they're appreciated, respected and cared for. When we feel secure and can accept the fact we are successful, often the things that need some improvement will take care of themselves. So, when you're editing and proofreading, it's essential you tell your author what they are doing well.

The rules to praise?

- **Be honest.** You have to tell the truth. It's the basis for your success as an editor.
- **Be specific.** Otherwise, it may sound like you're "blowing smoke."

Practice

Be graceful

Use the Builds Goodwill boxes to write a revision of each Lacks Grace statement.

| Lacks Grace | Builds Goodwill |
|--|-----------------|
| This sentence makes no sense. | |
| Huh? | |
| Fix these numbers. | |
| Awkward. | |
| Offensive! | |
| This draft is a mess. | |
| These mistakes are obvious. | |
| Do your research! | |
| You can say it better. | |
| It's not my job to write your paper for you. | |

Proofreading Marks

| The mark | What it means | How to use it |
|---|--|--|
|  | Delete: take out something here. | car y mufflers should should |
|  | Insert: add something here. | You ^{are} afraid o ^f mice. |
|  | Add space here. | Jugglers buy a lot of eggs. |
|  | No space: close the gap. | some body |
|  | Delete and close the gap. | the gir affe |
|  | New paragraph here. | "Yes." said Jack. "All right." said Jill. |
|  | No paragraph: keep sentences together. | The meeting was brief. It lasted twenty minutes. |
|  | Transpose: switch these things. | fr ie nds/bo th were |
|  | Change or insert this letter. | l ⁱ ke s ^c uccess |
|  | Make this a capital letter. | old <u>dr.</u> <u>s</u> mith |
|  | Make this a small letter. | My U ncle lost a S hovel. |
|  | Spell it out. | His ² friends are Fido ^{&} Spot. |
|  | Insert a period. | It was raining. I got wet. |
|  | Insert a comma. | "London, England," he said. |
|  | Insert an apostrophe. | It's a dog's life. |
|  | Insert quotation marks. | "You're a pane," said the door. |
|  | Is this correct? Check it. | Columbus sailed in <u>1942</u> ? |

Proofreading Practice Test

Review your proofreading marks

Write the correct proofreading mark next to its meaning.

1. Capitalize:
2. Lowercase:
3. Insert comma:
4. Transpose:
5. Is this information correct? Check:
6. Spell:
7. Remove space:
8. New paragraph:
9. Insert period:
10. Delete:
11. Insert apostrophe:
12. No paragraph break:



Proofreading Tips

Check

Errors often are found:

- Near the beginning or ending of a line.
- In proper nouns (Stanford/Samford).
- In names.
- In titles (Mr. instead of Ms.).
- In long words (questionnaire).
- In number combinations.
- In headers and footers.
- Near the bottom of the page.
- Toward the end of a document.

More Proofreading Tips

And double check

In addition to traditional grammar mistakes, check for the following errors:

- Doubling small words (an, as, at, be, by, if, to).
- Substituting one small word for another (an for on, by for be).
- Omitting one of a pair of double letters (omision instead of omission).
- Transposing letters within words (form instead of from).
- Watch for “ie” and “ei” words (relieve, relief, conceit, deceive, eight, weight, friend, financier).
- Confusing or omitting suffixes (fasten/faster, typed/types, former/formed, care/careful).
- Confusion with homonyms: words that sound the same but have different meanings (affect/effect, principal/principle, to/too, there/their).
- Skipping numbers or letters in a sequence (A, B, D, E or 10, 12, 13).
- Incorrect totals and misplaced decimals or commas in numbers or number columns.
- Incorrect phone numbers.
- Omitting closing punctuation or a bracket, parenthesis or quotation mark.
- Mistakes in headers and footers.
- Inconsistencies with line spacing, font sizes, and italicized or bolded text.

Ten Proofreading Techniques

Take a few notes

1. Take
2. Plan
3. Proof
4. Distance
5. Read
6. Check
7. Use
8. Ask
9. Personalize
10. Remember



Tactics for Better Proofreading

Plan to proof

- Determine when you're most alert.
- Remove distractions.
- Have your references handy.
- Budget your time.
- Be comfortable.
 - Take breaks.
 - Rest your eyes.
 - Exercise regularly.
 - Eat light.
- But not too comfortable.
- Change activities.

The State of Your Proofreading

Self-assessment

Rate to what extent or how often each statement is true of your proofreading habits.

| | Rarely | Seldom | At Times | Often | Mostly |
|---|--------|--------|----------|-------|--------|
| 1. Accuracy is my top priority when I'm proofreading, even when I'm in a hurry. | | | | | |
| 2. I proofread a document at least three times. | | | | | |
| 3. I proof a printed version of the document. | | | | | |
| 4. I put time between the writing and proofreading stages. | | | | | |
| 5. I read my work out loud the first time through. | | | | | |
| 6. I check the text backwards, word by word. | | | | | |
| 7. I use a straight edge. | | | | | |
| 8. I keep my references handy. | | | | | |
| 9. Before my final draft, I ask a friend to proofread my work. | | | | | |
| 10. I use my personalized proofreading checklist. | | | | | |
| 11. I treat proofreading as an opportunity to learn, not to show off. | | | | | |

Let's Proofread

Practice

Find and correct the 13 errors in the passage below. There is one error for each of the bullet points listed under More Proofreading Tips on Page 13.

10 Reasons to Join SMPS

Learn more about SMPS and how we can help you market smarter.

Why do professionals join SMPS? SMPS can help you build your business and advance your career. SMPS membership gives you access to:

1. Networking Opportunities

Make local, regional and international business contacts through SMPS to build your business. At the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year, SMPS had 57 chapters and 6904 members. Here are a few networking suggestions: Attend chapter meetings and programs. Volunteer for a chapter or Society committee. Learn more about your fellow members in the directory on MySMPS. Participate in the MySMPS community, where you can share files, ask questions, and create a blog using your own experience and knowledge. Don't forget to get the MySMPS app so you can access the member directory when you are on the go!

2. Publications

Read up on trends, best practices and relevant issues impacting professional services marketing and business development. SMPS membership includes subscriptions to the Marketer, our award-winning journal, and to Marketer QuickLook, our e-newsletter; access to research and white papers funded by the SMPS Foundation; and discounts on industry publications from SMPS.

3. Marketing Resource Center

Take network to another level with MySMPS, the award-winning online community designed exclusively for SMPS members. The mission of MySMPS is simple: to connect you online 24/7/365 with people, information and opportunities to make building business easier. Visit the Marketing Resource Center any time for access to industry and job-related information.

4. Certified Professional Services Marketer Program

Earn professional credentials via the Certified Professional Services Marketer program. In an industry that values certification, the CPSM program can help you build your personal brand as an expert in marketing and business development, increasing your credibility with employers, coworkers and peers.

5. programs and Conferences

Attend programs and conferences to explore how other professional services firms are tackling the business challenges you and your colleagues face every day. You will return to the office with innovative solutions and fresh ideas your company can put to work immediately.

6. Leadership Opportunities

Develop and practice your leadership skills by getting involved in SMPS: Volunteer to serve on chapter committees, your chapter's board of directors, regional conference planning committees, and Society task forces and committees.

7. Career and Recruitment Resources

Plan your career, gain access to advancement tools, and search for job opportunities through the SMPS Career Center.

If your firm is seeking candidates to fill an open position, you can post that position in the Career Center and review the résumé bank to identify marketers and business developers with experience in the A/E/C industry. (SMPS members and their firms enjoy a discount on employment ads posted in the Career Center.

8. International and Regional Contacts

SMPS also supports the growth of A/E/C companies by providing members with contacts made through the powerful SMPS network to facilitate teaming opportunities, business referrals, and knowledge of A/E/C business practices, trends and successes.

10. Professional Development Opportunities

Opportunities to present programs, write articles and white papers, and conduct funded research are available at the local, regional and Society levels of SMPS. Through involvement in SMPS, your employees can demonstrate the thought leadership and expertise your firm has to offer clients and teaming partners.

11. A Community for Emerging Leaders

SMPS offers the emerging leaders in your organization access to the greater A/E/C community, introducing them to community leaders, exposing them to big-picture perspectives, and fueling their passion for the industry and their professions — all elements in retaining the brightest and best talent for your company. The connections made in SMPS lead directly to business opportunities with clients and teaming partners.

Heard enough? Join SMPS today! For more information, contact Mary Cruz with SMPS Headquarters at 999.292.7677 or mary@smps.org.

About Some of Our Trainers



Jennifer Hebblethwaite, Senior Vice President & Champion of All Things Grace, heads up our Atlanta office. From commercial real estate to coaching Atlanta's finest Men in Blue at the Forest Park Police Department, Jennifer is an experienced corporate trainer. She's spent 10 years as a Teaching

Artist for a Tony Award-winning theatre and has taught everything from playwriting to MBA Leadership/Communication on an undergraduate and graduate level. She is foremost a compassionate coach and trainer, but as our rogue academic, Jennifer also gets excited about things like semantics and semicolons. She leads our Gracewriting® program and is trained in Whole Brain® Thinking, which is designed to use every last brain cell. Jennifer's teaching style is big and bold, and she can't wait to help you help your listeners!



Carol Doscher, President & CEO (Chief Encouragement Officer) has been captivating audiences since she performed in Broadway's "Sweeney Todd." For this former actress turned trainer and coach, it's not so far from the boards of Broadway to the boardrooms of America.

Since founding Graceworks in 1995, she's trained thousands of professionals globally to make that vital human connection in sales presentations, client meetings and lectures. Featured in The New York Times and on "Bloomberg Television," Carol also has published numerous articles on presentation and communication skills. Prior to her current work, she marketed design and construction services for many years.

Responding to the growing need for the human connection in the corporate world, Carol is a certified practitioner of Whole Brain® Thinking – a great tool to help people understand and leverage their own thinking preferences.

Graceworks in a Nutshell

Headquartered in New York with offices in Atlanta and Cleveland and trainers stationed as far west as Portland, Oregon, the Graceworks team travels globally helping corporate professionals become more effective presenters, leaders and communicators.

For us, **Big Bold Choices** represent vision, growth and expansion! We share this idea with you as an encouragement to hold fast to your visions and dreams.

In addition to our flagship **presentation and communication training**, we are excited about our **Gracewriting®** and **leadership communication programs**. People connecting with people is the heart of any business. So whether you're writing a proposal, leading a team or giving a presentation, our goal is to free you to make The Human Connection® with colleagues, clients and associates. We customize all our in-house training and coaching to meet your goals.

Also, check out our **Train-the-Coach workshops**. Learn to coach The Graceworks Way®. Our fun, interactive style helps you think in new ways, brings your team together, and – most importantly – produces measurable results!

A powerful tool we use throughout our programs is Herrmann International's **Whole Brain® Thinking**. By helping individuals and teams leverage their thinking preferences, we improve their problem solving, decision making, creativity, communications and teamwork.

Finally, there's **Graceworks With Kids** and **Graceworks Goes to College**. From elementary school kids to post grads, we love helping our leaders of tomorrow make "big bold choices."

If you have any questions, would like additional information on our training and coaching services, or just want to call and say, "hi" (please do!), you can reach us at:

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