

# Seven rules and seven tools for effective business writing

## Rule 1: write for your reader

- Identify and picture your reader.
- Uncover their motivations AND reservations.
- Remember, they're human, especially if you're B2B.

## Tool 1: The rule of three and the magic word

Use "you" three times as often as "I".

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## Rule 2: Always have a plan

- State your goals.
- Brainstorm all relevant ideas.
- Create a logical structure.

## Tool 2: KFC.

Start your plan by stating what you want your reader to Know, Feel and Commit (KFC).

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## Rule 3: grab them from the off

- Get to the point straight away.
- Don't send your reader to sleep.
- Focus on what interests them.

## Tool 3: Three tried and tested openings.

Opening 1 Ask them open questions.

Opening 2 State your main benefit.

Opening 3 State an unlikely or controversial fact.

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## Rule 4: write a great headline

- Headlines are where you grab attention.
- See document titles as headlines.
- Benefit headlines are best.

## Tool 4: Start with "How..." or Now..."

How to improve your ROI by 33% this year

Now, a new way to better health

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## Rule 5: talk benefits

- Benefits make your reader's life easier.
- Answer the question, "What's in it for me?"
- Short of space? Stick to benefits.

## Tool 5: The "So what?" test

If your copy elicits a "So what?", it's not talking benefits.

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## Rule 6: Keep 'em reading

- Keep your writing tight and focused.
- Write short sentences.
- Break up overlong paragraphs.

## Tool 6: Writing short sentences

Keep your average sentence length to 15-17 words.

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## Rule 7: Have a strong call to action

- Keep language short, simple, clear and direct.
- Use the imperative mood.
- Be creative with the headline.

## Tool 7: Make people jump.

Get people to respond on time by including a deadline.