



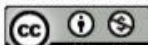
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## Ten writing tips and the psychology behind them

Tip	Why it matters	Why you fail	How to fix
Write shorter.	Readers are impatient.	You just keep typing; it's easier than editing.	Edit out extraneous text.
Shorten your sentences.	Long sentences puzzle readers.	You tack on ideas as you're writing.	Break into shorter sentences.
Rewrite passive voice.	Passive hides true meaning.	You're insecure about what you're saying.	Make the actor the sentence's subject.
Eliminate weasel words.	Weasel words make statements wimpy.	You're afraid to be bold.	Cut weasel words; if you can't, cut the sentence.
Replace jargon with clarity.	Jargon makes readers feel stupid.	You think jargon sounds sophisticated.	Replace with plain English.
Cite numbers effectively.	Stats back up your point.	You think any number adds credibility.	Include both context and source for stats.
Use "I," "we," and "you."	Pronouns invite the reader to relate.	You're afraid of sounding informal.	Imagine the reader; write directly to her.
Move key insights up.	Bold statements retain attention.	You feel the need to "warm up" first.	Write bold openers; rewrite with each draft.
Cite examples.	Text without examples is boring.	You're too busy to do the research.	Plan to spend half your time on research.
Give us some signposts.	Readers want to know what's coming.	You're afraid of sounding pedantic.	After stating thesis, explain what's coming.

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