

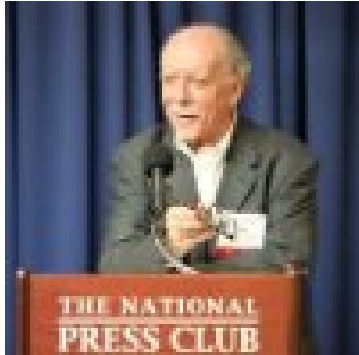
Write More Powerfully and Strategically in Social and Traditional Media for PR Purposes

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db155@nyu.edu

917-913-8940 U.S.

INSTRUCTOR, ENABLER



Don Bates, APR, Fellow PRSA, and Honorary Trustee of the Institute for Public Relations, teaches at New York University and is senior counselor at Gould Partners, PR agency M&A specialists and management consultants. He specializes in assisting social media and digital PR and marketing agencies to merge with larger companies. Don also runs private and public PR and business writing workshops in the U.S. and internationally.

- Writer, editor, professor, former reporter in suburban Boston.
- PR/marketing executive for corporations, charities, associations.
- Built international PR agency, sold after 12 years in business.
- Founding Director, Graduate Program in Strategic Public Relations, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
- Loves writing, training, consulting, PR, making things happen.

PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF
Name, Affiliation

PROGRAM GOALS

- Write more effectively and strategically for PR purposes.
- Become “new era” PR writer.
- Apply “new rules” writing formulary.
- Build on traditional writing concepts with new writing concepts.
- Take advantage of what social media offer for writing better.
- Use PR writing for greater gain internally and externally.
- Satisfy top management’s demands for better writing.
- Take control of your PR writing role, responsibility.
- Strengthen your PR writing leadership.
- Become a word-worker, not just a wordsmith.

PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE

- You'll learn about tried 'n true and tried 'n new rules, concepts and ideas.
- They're taught by all PR writing teachers and practiced by all the best PR writers.
- They're also ...
 - endorsed by management experts, managers and C-suite leaders.
 - based on 40 years as a reporter/freelance writer, and an equal number of years conducting corporate, government, nonprofit and agency PR programs.
 - supported by personal, academic and managerial PR research.
 - built on a foundation of scores of the best how-to writing books and guides published over the past 100 years.
- My mission is to make writing easier and more productive for PR practitioners.

PERSPECTIVE (continued)

- My delivery style is direct and assertive.
- You don't learn to write better by shucking and jiving.
- You learn by listening, sharing, doing and by repeating the process *ad nauseum*.
- Throughout, I urge you to weigh the implications of writing well, not only for yourself but also for your employers, staff, clients – for everyone you work with.
- Put away your predispositions for the day – but not your questions, suggestions, comments, principles.
- This program's content is not about who's right, but what's right.
- We're all in this together, even the best among us.
- I take an absolutist position in my teaching and training:
We can all become far better writers through practice, practice, practice.

PERSPECTIVE (continued)

- No one's born a good writer, although a few individuals have a knack for using words better than most. Like athletes, they have a "gift."
- No one, even those with a "gift," becomes a good writer without mastering the mechanics of grammar, punctuation, syntax, style – and having a big vocabulary.
- PR practitioners have special skills like doctors, lawyers, engineers.
- One PR skill is writing; we're generally better at it because of what we do.
 - We're wedded to the western world's rhetorical teaching and traditions.
 - We adhere to well-developed journalistic precepts and style.
 - We apply the best PR writing principles and practices to ensure success.
 - We're masters of our writing fate (at least we should be), not our bosses or clients.
 - We're obliged to improve our writing on behalf of our employers and profession.
- The next slide lists negative things we say about poor PR writing. It's a framework for concerted action leading to change.

PR WRITING WEAKNESSES

- No or insufficient research.
- Unsubstantiated statements.
- Indirect headlines.
- Weak leads (ledes).
- Complex sentences.
- Incomplete sentences.
- Strained logic.
- Self-absorbed focus.
- Bullet-list inconsistencies.
- Passive voice.
- Wordiness.
- Redundancy, repetition.
- Incorrect transitions.
- Pronoun confusion.
- Prepositional paralysis.
- Dangling modifiers.
- FYI, not FYA

TODAY'S PR WRITING ENVIRONMENT

- Intensely competitive business and social environment.
- Quick-step managerial decision making.
- Escalating C-Suite demands and expectations.
- Shock of social-media influence and engagement.
- Shifting PR writing ideas, e.g., traditional writing versus new writing approaches.
- What stakeholders expect more of from PR writing: **Two-way communication.**
- What media need more of from PR writers. **Honesty, access.**

CLARITY KILLERS

- **Jargon** = Language used in a particular context that may not be well understood outside of it. The context is usually an occupation (i.e., trade, profession or academic field), but any “in-group” may have jargon.
- **Gobbledygook** = Speech or any other use of language that is nonsense (gibberish, jibber-jabber) or appears to be nonsense.
- **Hyperbole** = Use of exaggeration as a rhetorical device or figure of speech. In poetry and oratory, it evokes strong feelings, and creates strong impressions. In PR prose, it’s considered flamboyant and untrustworthy.
- **Euphemism** = Inocuous word or expression used in place of one that may be offensive or suggest something unpleasant but is nevertheless more accurate and honest. E.g., “He passed away” instead of “He died,” or “She was downsized” instead of “She was fired.”

All four writing “sins” cloud message, logic, understanding.

SEE HANDOUT: GOBBLEDYGOOK

NEWSJACKING, HACKS

JETTISONING JARGON

Actual sample from a marketing firm [90 words].

- Marketing driven by strategic thinking, precision targeting and response building creativity... plus, performance enhanced through process efficiency, campaign management tools, and cost saving quality initiatives — XYZ Corporation impacts our clients' marketing success from both the topline and the bottomline. As a multi channel agency, XYZ Corporation plans, executes, and integrates successful response marketing programs. And as accomplished business and process consultants, we utilize a "best practices" methodology to enhance marketing services and operations for our clients. The results: an integrated and holistic marketing approach delivering maximum marketing ROI.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS LANGUAGE? WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY?
WHY DID THEY WRITE THIS WAY?

CORRECTED JARGON (AN ATTEMPT)

XYZ is an award-winning marketing agency. We specialize in strategic, cost-effective marketing programs for corporations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations. We design and deliver exceptional advertising, packaging, promotion, fundraising, and sales support programs. We follow best principles and practices to ensure a great R.O.I.

[44 words from original 90]

76 words with the following “action” information added (original would be 122):

Visit our website for profiles of our recent successes. Download our free video presentation, “How to create marketing programs that never stop making a profit.”
[LINK] Call us for a free consultation. [PHONE]

QUESTION

What adjectives reflect good PR writing qualities, e.g., "simple."

QUALITIES OF GOOD PR WRITING

- Accurate
- Actionable
- AP-styled
- Audience-centric
- Benefits laden
- Clear
- Concise
- Credible
- Direct
- Factual
- Informative
- Insightful
- Logical
- Persuasive
- Researched
- Simple
- Storied
- Strategic
- Substantiated

QUESTION

Why are these terms so important?
Who cares? Who says they are?

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE WRITING

- Whom (or who) am I writing for, trying to influence?
- What special characteristics do they share?
- What form should I use? What length? What style?
- What should I say? What facts do I use? What arguments?
- Should I have a quote, why?
- Whom should I quote, what's his/her role?
- What does audience need to know? What do I want them to know?
- What do I want to happen, what action taken?
- What's happening "outside" that could affect content?
- Who needs to approve copy, by when?

WRITING ANALYSIS EXERCISE

Instructions

- Read Boomer news release
- Put your findings on flipcharts
- If what you discovered is already on the flipchart, put a check next to it.

CRITERIA TO CONSIDER

- Audience understanding
- Headline quality
- Lead/lede quality
- Quote relevance
- Content organization
- Other issues

Share findings

XYZ RELEASE CHALLENGES

- Boring text.
- Unclear message.
- No strategic focus.
- Too long by at least half.
- Gratuitous quotes.
- Overweight sentences.
- Over-long paragraphs.
- Excessive client mention.
- Advertorial, not news.
- Inner-directed.
- Too self-indulgent.
- Ego overwhelms substance.
- Duplicate hyperlinks.
- Imageless (no photo, graph).
- Tepid or no action request.

To make your writing better, reverse the logic of each deficiency.

Summation

The XYZ news release doesn't speak to the outside world. The source doesn't care about its audience (at least as expressed in this release).

How do we show the outside world in our writing that we care about them, that we're writing to assist them even as we're writing to help our clients and employers?

Language, focus, tools, tactics?

CONNECT, COMMUNICATE: A SAMPLER

- Write to “you,” the audience.
- Think “you,” not “we,” not “us.”
- Use everyday language, but don’t dumb it down inappropriately.
- Help them act on your behalf.
- Give how-to guidance, advice (download, write for).
- Engage with surveys, polls, requests, feedback requests.
- Tell stories related to your client’s interests, history.
- Show you’re human.
- Help people subscribe to a newsletter or blog.
- Use positive language.
- Share progress reports, maybe quarterly, twice yearly, annually (short, sweet, bulleted).
- Reflect audience characteristics in images and words.
- Foster two-way communication.

NEW FORMULARY, NEW RULES

- 'Snackable' brevity.
- BIG PICTURE focus.
- BIG PICTURE headline.
- BIG PICTURE lead.
- Incisively written.
- Strategically linked.
- Image-enhanced.
- Multi-media targeted.
- Merchandised.
- Immediately actionable.

NY Times interviews Guy Kawasaki

- **NYT:** "What should business schools teach more of, or less of?"
- **Kawasaki:** "They should teach students how to communicate in five-sentence e-mails and with 10-slide PowerPoint presentations. If they just taught every student that, American business would be much better off."
- **NYT:** "Why?"
- **Kawasaki:** "Because no one wants to read 'War and Peace' e-mails. Who has the time? Ditto with 60 Power Point slides for a one-hour meeting."

NEW RULES AMPLIFIED

1. **Write 'snackable' content** (shorter and sweeter than in past, and easier to read, understand, act on). Text more audience friendly.
2. **Focus on "big picture" meaning** (all-important news for the audience, not the sender). Cite facts and opinion that provide larger context.
3. **Create social-media style headlines** (more intriguing, enticing, engaging). Look at BuzzFeed, Upworthy, Copyblogger.com for examples. One-line headlines preferred, AP style, active voice.
4. **Use condensed leads/ledes** (sharply defined, credibly expressed). Synthesize newsworthy facts, information, meaning.
5. **Write direct and to the point.** Cut fluff, adjectives, prepositions.

NEW RULES AMPLIFIED

- 6. Link to related content, but judiciously** (news-jacked reports, studies, news stories, commentaries). Add value, 2 or 3 links at most.
- 7. Aim for concrete action** (FYA, For Your Action). Include information or create opportunities in the writing that make it easy for recipients to buy your products, take your surveys, subscribe to your blogs, etc.
- 8. Enhance with images to multiply readership.** Include photos, logos, charts, illustrations. You'll attract three or four times as many readers.
- 9. Disseminate via multi-media, both online and off.** Aim for "hits" in print, broadcast, social media (Twitter, Facebook, Linked In).
- 10. Repurpose and republish** as blogs, how-to advisories, editorials, newsletter news. Blogs can be repurposed many times.

SHORTCUTS FOR OBEYING THE RULES

- **Remove unneeded adjectives and adverbs** (most are superfluous).
- **Narrow the distance between subject, verb and object or action** by removing everything that gets in the way (this sharpens the relation of one word to another, and enforces more direct, energetic expression).
- **Reduce everything by at least half** in your first drafts.
- **Make verbosity and redundancy repugnant** (extra words and repetitive statements compromise meaning and turn readers off).
- **Use active voice**, which enforces immediacy/directness (passive voice, though useful in some circumstances, doesn't for PR purposes.)
- **Eliminate prepositions and "to-be" verbs** (they're the bane of clarity).
- **Understand the format you're working in.** Form follows function.

COPYWRITING (AS IN ADVERTISING)

By copywriting we mean writing that is:

- Built on selling psychology, selling style.
- Assertive, provocative, seductive (but not clickbait).
- Snappy, catchy, emotional.
- Compelling and uses engaging headlines.
- Designed (graphically appealing).
- Focused more on benefits than on features.
- Aimed to beget action first and foremost. Information is static. FYA (For Your Action), not FYI (For Your Information).
- Heavy on everyday language.
- Simple, clear, direct.

SEE DAVID OGILVY ON WRITING

BIG PICTURE EXAMPLE

- David Poulson at Michigan State University teaches academics how to write for the public. One example he shares is a scientific paper entitled, “Grasshopper and Locust Farming as a Sustainable Source of Protein for Non-Ruminant Livestock and Humans in Kenya.”

**What is this paper talking about in lay terms?
What would make more inviting title or headline?
His answer:**

The BIG PICTURE:

“Eating Bugs.”

CALL TO ACTION VERBS

- Apply
- Ask
- Assemble
- Attend
- Buy
- Call
- Click
- Complete
- Contribute
- Create
- Demand
- Demonstrate
- Donate
- Download
- Draft
- Fight
- Fund
- Give
- Help
- Invest
- Invite
- Join
- Lend
- Mobilize
- Order
- Organize
- Participate
- Petition
- Play
- Print
- Read
- Recommend
- Report
- Request
- Sell
- Send
- Share
- Sign up
- Speak
- Subscribe
- Suggest
- Support
- Urge
- Volunteer
- Vote
- Watch
- Win
- Write

HEADLINES

David Ogilvy's Famous Observation:

“Eight out of 10 people will read your headline. Two out of 10 will read the rest of what you wrote.”

REVIEW GUIDELINES

HEADLINE GUIDE

- Identify BIG PICTURE subject.
- Focus on reader, not sender
- Use organization name, only if well known, e.g., IBM, Alibaba.
- Give concise, direct impression.
- One line, to the point.
- Follow AP, other common style.
- Don't repeat story lead.
- Avoid articles "a, an, the."
- Avoid "to be" verbs.
- Don't be witty unless appropriate, well done.
- Don't use "clickbait" headlines.
- Use active voice, active verbs.

Email subject lines same as headlines.

EXERCISE

- What are the BIG PICTURES your employer's or client's products, services, programs, activities address?
- What benefits do your employer's or client's offerings deliver that go beyond their features?

VERBS TO DEFINE ACTIVITIES

Assists

Builds

Constructs

Consults

Contributes

Creates

Delivers

Designs

Educates

Enables

Funds

Gives

Helps

- Improves

- Makes

- Manages

- Manufactures

- Offers

- Provides

- Researches

- Serves

- Studies

- Supplies

- Supports

- Trains

- Underwrites

AP STYLE HEADLINE REQUIREMENTS

- First word, proper nouns capitalized except 1st word after colon.
- Follow story style in spelling
- Use numerals for numbers and single quotes for quotation marks. Exception: US, UK and UN (no periods, but not in text).
- Acronyms. Acceptable for well-known entities such as IRS, FBI, IBM
- Co. Try not to use this or co's. to abbreviate company or companies.
- Federal Reserve. Fed is acceptable in headlines.
- Millions, billions. These figures can be abbreviated. For example, \$45 million as \$45M, and \$5 billion as \$5B.
- Government. Can be abbreviated to Govt or govt (no period), but preferable to list specific entity, e.g., Congress, Senate, SEC, FTC, FCC.

AP STYLE (continued)

- Percent. Write out. Don't abbreviate. If necessary, use pct., not %.
- Use %, not percent, in charts/graphs.
- Use locators as required, spelled out if there is room or abbreviated per AP style. For U.S. states, no periods for those abbreviated with two capital letters, e.g., NY, NJ, NH, NM. Also DC. Other states keep periods, e.g., Ga., Ky., Mont. No postal abbreviations.
- Numerals. Use numerals; do not spell out numbers except in casual uses: "hundreds" instead of "100s."
- Quarters. Use Q₄, not 4Q.
- Quotes. Always use single quotation marks

BIG PICTURE EXAMPLE

Script writer and novelist Nora Ephron had a favorite teacher, Charles Simms, who taught journalism at Beverly Hills High School in Los Angeles. The first day of his journalism class, he taught students how to write a headline and lead. And he had them write their own for a news story in the high school's newspaper, which went to more than 1,000 students. These were the facts he provided:

- "Kenneth L. Peters, principal of Beverly Hills High School, announced today that the faculty of the high school will travel to Sacramento on Thursday for a colloquium on new teaching methods. Speaking there will be anthropologist Margaret Mead, educator Robert Maynard Hutchins, and several others."
- WHAT SHOULD THE HEADLINE BE?

HIGH SCHOOL HEADLINE

No school next Thursday!

HEADLINE FORMULAS

1. **Who else wants** to write better for business goals than PR pros? *65 characters*
2. **The secrets of** business writing you know but seldom reveal. *61 characters*
3. **Little known ways to** write better if you want to influence people. *68 characters*
4. **Build a** PR writing reputation you can be proud of. *52 characters*
5. **What you should know about** PR writing that's new, different. *62 characters*
6. **Lessons I learned from** teaching PR writing in China's gem city. *65 characters*
7. **How to survive your first** job interview when they ask what good writing is. *77 characters.*

Use one of these as a headline for something your company or organization produces or does.

SEE HANDOUT: 10 SURE-FIRE HEADLINE FORMULAS

POWER OF 3 < > 3

- [KISSmetrics](#) reports readers tend to absorb first three words and last three words of a headline, making [six-word headlines ideal](#).
- But how often do we write six-word headlines? Whenever we write longer, remember which words carry most weight — those at the start, those at the end.
- Tweet examples:
 1. **Headline study says first 3, last 3 words 'most absorbed'**
 2. **Headline's first 3, last 3 words most important**
 3. **Study says first 3, last 3 words make 'most absorbed' headlines**

HEADLINE REWRITE

- Write 10- or fewer-word alternative for the following:

XYZ launches 50-million-dollar college scholarship program for low-income high school students throughout US as part of its 2018 social responsibility goals

HEADLINE REWRITE

- Rewrite options:
 - **XYZ funds \$50M (millions) in scholarships for low-income high schoolers**
[not for poor students].
 - **\$50M in new scholarships targets low-income US high schoolers**
 - **Low-income US high schoolers can apply for (get?) \$50 million in new scholarships**
 - **Low-income US high school students hit \$50-million scholarship jackpot**
- Remember, other facts are in text.
- Headline also helps focus story before you write [book title example].

EMOTIONAL HEADLINE MAKEOVERS

How to add or adjust headline language to make it more positive and emotional. EMV (Emotional Marketing Value) score for each is in parentheses. <http://www.aminstitute.com/headline/>

Existing Headline: Calculating retail prices (EMV 0%)

- **New Headline:** Calculating retail prices can be hard work (EMV 42%)
- **Why Better:** It validates something the reader is already feeling, and it offers a promised (and positive) solution.

Existing Headline: The importance of setting goals and not reaching them (EMV 22%)

- **New Headline:** You shouldn't always reach your goals (EMV 50%)
- **Why Better:** It helps the reader feel better about occasionally falling short. it validates them.

EXERCISE: Write Headline

Existing Headline: Tips for keeping your taxes organized all year round (11%)

- **New Headline:** Super easy ways to keep your taxes organized all year (40%)
- **Why It's Better:** The new headlines promise simple and easy advice.

Existing Headline: 12 Top tips for excellent business writing (14%)

- **New Headline:** 12 easy-to-follow tips for better business writing (33%)
- **Why It's Better:** These tips will make my business writing better, but they're also easy to follow.

Existing Headline: 7 ways your brand can benefit from content curation (12%)

- **New Headline:** 7 ways you will benefit through content curation (38%)
- **Why It's Better:** Replace 'can' with 'will' adds confidence. Replacing 'your brand' with 'you' adds a personal connection. 'Through' adds a level of emotion.

EXERCISE: Write Headline

- **Some of these headlines** didn't change that much to more emotional.
- **Emotional headlines don't always equal the overly sensational headlines** we see on Upworthy or BuzzFeed. We don't need to oversell our content to write a better headline.

My EMV Attempts for today's workshop:

- Prof. teaches how to write better for business purposes. 22.2%
- Writing is a helluva lot easier than you think. 44.4%
- You can write better. You absolutely can. 57.4%
- If you write on the job, you need to know 10 new rules. 61.54%
- If you want your employees to write better, you need to share these new rules. 66.67%

EXERCISE: Write Headline

- So, how should you go about writing more emotional headlines?
- Start by understanding what words are emotional.

SEE GUIDELINES

EXERCISE: Write Headline

Headline Guidelines

- Identify underlying subject of what you've written. Focus on meaning to the reader, not to organization. E.g., instead of "XYX COMPANY launches \$50 million college scholarship program as part of its 2012 social responsibility goals," say "XYZ COMPANY funds \$50 million for college scholarships." Mention other facts in the written piece.
- Give enough [information](#) so reader has a strong, incisive impression of the entire story.
- Keep it simple. A headline is short, direct sentence as are subsidiary headlines if you use them.
- Don't repeat the first sentence or lead.
- Express headline in active voice and with as few words as possible. Active verbs lend immediacy to a story.
- Don't use articles "a, an, the."
- Avoid "to be" verb forms.

Adhering to these guidelines, here are options for:

The New York Times says 2022 presidential election will be a nail biter based on new poll with CBS of American voters.

- New York Times and CBS poll says 2022 presidential election will be nail biter
- Joint NY Times and CBS poll says 2022 presidential election anyone's guess
- NY Times-CBS poll says 2022 election up in the air
- Times-CBS poll says 2022 election no shoe-in for Dems (if published in the NYT)

Other advice:

- Don't be overly witty or clever.
- Don't misrepresent the story with a headline that doesn't cover the main subject.
- Lead with the latest information, even if the story happened yesterday. This lends greater immediacy to the story.

EXERCISE: Write Headline

Write BIG PICTURE headline for XYZ news release.

One line, 10-12 words.

Make it emotional.

Put on flip charts.

Reread original XYZ release

SHARE HEADLINES
[put on the flipcharts]

LEADS/LEDES

SEE HANDOUT: "WRITING BETTER LEADS/LEDES"

ESSENTIALS

Leads are considered the most important part of most news stories, feature articles, business documents. They play an important role and are written in a particular way.

- Give readers critical information (in context).
- Are written clearly, concisely with compelling content.
- Typically cover the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, why).
- Often called “nut graph,” which may refer to second paragraph, as well.
- Establish voice and direction of what’s written.
- Should be specific as possible, not too broad.
- Are usually one or two sentences, 20-30 words, rarely more than 40-50.
- Built on active verbs.
- Written to satisfy target audience needs and interests.
- Must be honest, credible.

AVOIDANCES

- Flowery language.
- Unnecessary words.
- Formulaic angles.
- Pronoun “it” as in
 - *It was revealed today by the SEC that XYZ stole competitor’s secrets.*
- Clearer, to the point alternatives:
 - *XYZ was accused by the SEC today of stealing competitor trade secrets.*
 - *The SEC today accused XYZ of stealing competitor trade secrets.*

SEE “IT IS A ZIT”

3 TYPES OF LEADS/LEDES

News (5 W's, direct, to the point)

- At XYZ's annual meeting today in Boston, John Doe, president and CEO, reported the company's sales of sugar were up X million pounds over 2017 because of a 10 percent surge in consumer demand in China and India. Doe expects sales to increase again this year as the populations of both countries ~~continue to grow~~.

Feature (5 W's, longer, colorful, feature-oriented)

- When John Doe was 20, he ran a candy store in the Bronx, but as hard as he tried he could barely make ends meet. Fast forward 30 years and there's John worth tens of millions and head of XYZ, the world's largest sugar conglomerate. On Friday, at XYZ's annual meeting at the Hyatt Waterfront Hotel in Boston, John announced sales were up X million pounds over last year because of a 10 percent surge in consumer demand in China and India, with more demand to come. Since YEAR?, XYZ has grown into one of the most profitable sugar companies on earth, selling billions of pounds of the sweet stuff globally. "People can't live without it," Doe explained. "The food and beverage industry can't live without it, either."

3 TYPES OF LEADS/LEDES

Opinion (5 W's, lengthy, "colorful" with enticing or provocative angle)

- Sugar strengthens brains. Sugar heals wounds. Sugar prevents mold. In fact, sugar is one of the world's best foods. It's certainly one of the most popular. Last year, my company, XYZ, the third largest sugar company on earth, sold X million pounds. That's a 10 percent increase over 2016. And judging by the latest estimates, the market will only grow larger as the world's population expands, especially in China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria and the U.S. But despite its popularity, sugar is still a lightning rod for doctors, nutritionists and public officials. A growing chorus of critics say sugar is bad for our health. Are they correct? Or are they knee-jerk alarmists whose opinion is informed by politics rather than reason? In my view, they're both correct and incorrect. Here's why.

SAMPLE: Independent consulting booms for [boomers?] 50-70 year olds

- **HERNDON**, Va. (April 2, 2012) – Good news for baby boomers. They’re finding lots of jobs in the independent consulting industry. Their numbers will increase 1.2 million over the next two years. Born 1945-1964, boomers make up roughly one third of the country’s current five million independent consultants.
- The big reasons behind this specialty job growth are technology, tenacity and timing, said Sijia Wang, CEO of New Jersey-based XYZ Partners, experts in business services for the \$250-billion independent consulting sector. These findings are from XYZ’s national survey, conducted in cooperation with ? and ?. “Because of computers, PDAs and mobile phones, boomers can set up consultancies easily,” Wang stressed. “They can work on the fly or from home. They’re also highly motivated. They know what it takes to succeed after years in the trenches. And the time is right. Potential clients run leaner than ever and need what independent consultants offer.”
- XYZ’s research also revealed that boomers are discovering that working on their own is more satisfying than conventional jobs. Plus, they earn more than their younger counterparts, and they have more control over their work lives.
- Wang said that as a result of the survey, XYZ is developing a pro-bono program to assist baby boomers in becoming career independents. For more information on this program and a free copy of the boomer study, visit <http://newcareer.XYZpartners.com>, or call XXX-XXX-XXXX.

216 WORDS WITHOUT HEADLINE AND QUOTE

QUOTES

QUOTE ESSENTIALS

- Quotes are intended to explain or amplify something about topic.
- When spoken by expert sources, most quotes feel genuine. When written for experts by someone else, they often feel stiff, even lifeless.
- Try not to make up quotes. Pull them from phone or in-person interviews. Use one or two at most in a news release. Too many are a turn off for audience and editors.
- Don't use throwaways; e.g., "We're delighted John XXX will be joining our management team. He'll bring new ideas and energy to our marketing efforts."
- What kind of quote would be more effective?

ESSENTIALS (continued)

- Instead, say something that adds insight to your story:
“With his 20 years of experience marketing toys for Mattel, Joe is the perfect fit to help us reach our goal of becoming the number one toy manufacturer in the world by 2021.”
- Don't back into quotes with introductory phrases. E.g., “In thinking about this product, it's clear that...” Get to the point:
“This product is...” or “I believe this product is...”
- Train management and clients in speaking and writing good quotes. Develop a process that assures you obtain the best from them.

THE BENEFIT OF QUOTES

Editors will almost never edit quotes except to correct obvious errors and usually after they ask the writer if they can.

Quotes should:

- Be pithy, informative, insightful.
- Add a human touch.
- Be as “alive” as possible.
- Personalize the story, enhance its meaning.
- Be conversational, not “jargony.”
- Add credibility, authenticity.

SEE HANDOUTS: “WRITING PUBLISHABLE QUOTES”

EXERCISE

WRITE INSIGHTFUL QUOTE

DISCUSS SELECTED QUOTES

QUOTE EXAMPLES FOR XYZ RELEASE

“Boomers are showing young and old how to build and rebuild careers,” explained X. “They’re also creating thousands of jobs for others. They deserve a medal.”

“Boomers are doing an amazing job of creating jobs for themselves as independent consultants,” stressed X. “To give a serious boost to their efforts, XYZ has created a free program to help other boomers do the same. We want to jump start dreams.” The program’s called, “You’re never too old to start over again.” Click [here](#) for information.

PREPOSITIONAL PARALYSIS

Read handout "Eliminating Prepositions the Paramedic Way"

EXERCISE: ELIMINATING PESKY PREPOSITIONS

- **The point I wish to make is that the employees working at this company are in need of a much better manager of their money.**

Word count: 25

Eliminating Prepositions

- **Employees at this company need a better money manager.**
 - *(Now 9 words from 25, 1 preposition from 5, no "is" verb.)*
 - *Here are shorter alternatives with no prepositions:*
- **This company's employees need a better money manager.**
 - *Word count: 8*
- **Our employees need a better money manager.**
 - *Word count: 7*
- **We need a better money manager.**
 - *Word count: 6*

Eliminating Prepositions

- **It is widely known that the engineers at Sandia Labs have become active participants in the Search and Rescue operations in most years.**
 - *Word count: 23*

Eliminating Prepositions

- **Sandia Lab engineers have participated in recent annual Search and Rescue operations.**
 - *(Now 12 words from 23, 1 preposition from 3, no "is" verb.) [MAKE VERB MORE ACTIVE]*
- **Sandia Lab engineers participate* in annual Search and Rescue operations.**
 - *Word count: 10 (9?), 1 preposition, no "is" verb.*
 - **Alternative verbs: take part in, volunteer in, assist in, help in, lead annual.*

Eliminating Prepositions

- **After reviewing the results of your previous research, and in light of the relevant information found within the context of the study, there is ample evidence for making important, significant changes to our operating procedures.**
 - *Word count: 35*

Eliminating Prepositions

- **Your research results provide ample evidence for changing our operating procedures.**
 - *(Now, 11 words from 35, 1 preposition from 7, no "to-be" verb.)*
 - *A shorter alternative with 10 words, 1 preposition:*
- **Your research offers ample evidence for changing our operations procedures.**
 - *Even shorter at 9 words, 1 preposition:*
- **Your research proves we need to change operating procedures.**

Eliminating Prepositions

When you see prepositions or prepositional phrases, ask yourself if you can eliminate all or part of them and thereby make what you've written clearer.

- **The agenda for the tonight's program.**
 - *Tonight's program agenda. 3 words from 6, no preposition.*
- **The need for doing good to help people and to make society a better place.**
 - *The need to help people and society. 15 words to 7, 1 preposition from 3.*
- **In keeping with this PR plan's goal of gaining significant coverage in the mainstream media, we will send news releases and pitch stories to editors and to reporters who handle particular "beats" that relate to your [client] priority interests. 38 words, 8 prepositions.**
 - *Since significant mainstream media coverage is a plan goal, we will send news releases and story pitches to top journalists who handle "beats" related to your priorities. 27 words from 37, 2 prepositions from 8.*

25 EMOTIONAL TERMS

1. Better/Best
2. Confidential
3. Easy/Easiest
4. Expert
5. Free
6. Genuine
7. Great/Greatest
8. Guarantee/Guarantees
9. How to
10. Hurry
11. Love/Loves
12. Outstanding

13. Powerful
14. Profitable
15. Reliable
16. Secret/Secrets
17. Success/Successful
18. Suddenly
19. Superior
20. Sure fire
21. Ultimate
22. Unlock/Unlocks
23. Urgent
24. Wealth
25. Zinger

EXERCISE: Activating Active Voice

1. The boy was bitten by the dog.
2. Experiments were conducted by the scientists.
3. The exam was failed by over one-third of the applicants
4. The brakes were slammed by her as the car sped downhill.
5. Your bicycle has been damaged.
6. Action on the bill is being considered by the committee.
7. By then, the soundtrack will have been completely remixed by the sound engineers.
8. The book was read by most of the class.
9. The results of the research will be published in the next issue of the journal.
10. A policy of whitewashing and cover-up has been pursued by the CIA director and his close advisors.

Active Voice Corrections

1. The dog bit the boy.
2. Scientists conducted the experiments.
3. Over one-third of the applicants to the school failed the entrance exam.
4. She slammed on the brakes as the car sped downhill.
5. Your bicycle was damaged.
6. The committee considered action on the bill.
7. By then, the sound engineers will have completely remixed the sound track.
8. Most of the class read the book.
9. The researchers will publish the results in the next issue of the journal.
10. The CIA director and his close advisors pursued a policy of whitewashing and cover-up.

EXERCISE: Pinning Down Proper Pronouns

1. If a student parks a car on campus, they have to buy a parking sticker.
2. Everybody ought to do their best.
3. Neither of the girls brought their umbrellas.
4. When a person comes to class, they should have their homework ready.
5. Although the motorcycle hit the tree, it was not damaged.
6. I don't think they should show violence on TV.
7. Vacation is coming soon, which is nice.
8. George worked in a national forest last summer. This may be his life's work.
9. If you put this sheet in your notebook, you can refer to it.
10. I love my students' love of writing well. This is what excites me.

Pronoun Corrections

1. If a student parks a car on campus, he or she has to buy a parking sticker. If students park ..., they have
2. Everybody ought to do his or her best. All should do their best.
3. Neither of the girls brought her umbrellas. Neither girl brought her umbrella.
4. When people come to class, they should have their homework ready.
5. Although it hit the tree, the motorcycle was not [~~wasn't~~] damaged.
6. I don't think ~~they TV~~ should show violence ~~on TV~~.
7. Vacation is coming-~~soon~~, which is nice. Vacation is soon, which...
8. Last summer, George worked in a national forest. This may be his life's work.
9. You can refer to this sheet if you put it in your notebook.
10. ~~I love~~ My students' love of writing well ~~This is what~~ excites me.

EXERCISE: Dangling Modifiers

- A dangling modifier is a word or phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence. Correct these sentences as simply as possible. Don't re-word except incidentally. Transpositions are permissible. Keep the meaning intact.
- 1. Without knowing his name, it was difficult to introduce him.
- 2. To improve his results, the experiment was done again.
- 3. After reading the study, the findings remained unconvincing.
- 4. Relieved of your responsibilities at your job, your home should be a place to relax. (Eliminate the euphemism in the sentence.)
- 5. Thankful the day was over, home seemed like a wonderful idea.

Dangler Corrections

1. Without knowing his name, it was difficult to introduce him.
It was difficult to introduce him without knowing his name.
2. To improve his results, the experiment was done again.
The experiment was done again to improve his results.
He did the experiment again to improve his results.
3. After reading the original study, the findings remained unconvincing.
After I read the original study, the findings remained unconvincing.
4. Relieved of your responsibilities at your job, your home should be a place to relax.
Your home should be a place to relax now that you've been relieved of your job responsibilities [euphemism for fired, laid off, retired, let go].
Now that you've been fired, your home should be a place to relax.
5. Thankful that the day was over, home seemed like a wonderful idea.
Thankful the day was over, I thought home seemed like a wonderful idea.

WRITING IN & FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

WHAT IS/ARE SOCIAL MEDIA?

You tell me first.

WHAT IS/ARE SOCIAL MEDIA?

- **Interactive online platforms**

- Facilitate creation and sharing of content via computers, smartphones, tablets and other digital devices.
- Content includes text posts, commentary, photos, videos, graphs, charts (virtually anything that can communicate a message digitally). User-generated content is SM's lifeblood.

- **Multiple forms and purposes**

- Blogs, forums, microblogs, product/service reviews, social games, image-sharing/video-sharing sites, augmented reality/virtual reality.

...continued

WHAT IS/ARE SOCIAL MEDIA?

- **Ad hoc/formal networks of like-interested individuals** or groups who “bond” together around common needs and desires.
 - Networks can be for business, entertainment, personal development, whatever individuals or groups decide.
- **Two-way, viral communications.**
 - Major challenge for corporations and government agencies, which favor more traditional one-way, controllable communications.
- **Driven by ideas of online community**, cooperation, competition, content marketing, more.

PR SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS

- Remind customers/prospects your company is active, engaged, of service. Otherwise, you're out of sight, out of mind.
- Build and extend your company's brand, vision, mission, influence.
- Spotlight your company's products, services, research, expertise, value, profitability, success.
- Share your company's societal concerns, engagements, contributions.
- Put a face on your company's people, offerings, operations, issues.

But not the end-all, be-all. Needs to be planned, targeted, focused, measured. Who do you want to reach, why, message, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRODUCTS/IDEAS (SAMPLER)

Products

- Blogs
- Surveys
- Research reports
- Educational games
- How-to guidelines
- Online contests
- Professional webinars
- Employee recognition
- Customer profiles
- Facility profiles
- Giveaways
- Videos, podcasts
- Image, photos, charts
- Inspirational quotes
- Virtual reality
- Augmented reality

Content Ideas

- New products, services, facilities
- New regulations, rules, requirements
- New technologies
- New partners, logos, programs
- Historical personalities, events
- Birthdays, anniversaries
- Executive achievements
- Awards, recognition
- National celebrations
- New technologies
- Fees, charges
- Book reviews
- Business tips
- Economic issues
- Financial risk
- Industry terminology

BILLIONS OF USERS AND COUNTING*

1.	Facebook:	1,968,000,000
2.	WhatsApp:	1,200,000,000
3.	YouTube:	1,000,000,000
4.	FB Messenger:	1,000,000,000
5.	WeChat:	889,000,000
6.	Tencent QQ:	868,000,000
7.	Instagram:	600,000,000
8.	Qzone:	595,000,000
9.	Tumblr:	550,000,000
10.	Twitter:	319,000,000
11.	Sina Weibo:	313,000,000
12.	Baidu Tieba:	300,000,000

13.	Snapchat:	300,000,000
14.	Skype:	300,000,000
15.	Viber:	260,000,000
16.	Line:	220,000,000
17.	Pinterest:	150,000,000
18.	YY:	120,000,000
19.	LinkedIn:	106,000,000
20.	Vkontakte:	95,000,000
21.	Kakaotalk:	49,000,000

*Ranked by number of active users (in millions)

SOURCE: Statista, April, 2017

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>

IDEAL SOCIAL MEDIA LENGTHS

- **Facebook:** FB posts perform best when extremely brief – 40 or fewer characters for headlines. Pithy posts receive 86% more engagement despite fact that only 5% of brand posts conform to this standard.
- **Twitter:** User engagement increases along with tweet length. Extremely short tweets (0-40 characters) have very low engagement in terms of retweets. Sweet spot is 70-110 characters, long enough for complete thoughts, short enough to allow re-tweeters to add own comments. Tweets of 100 characters or so got 17% higher engagement. With a link included, re-tweet rate was 86% higher.
- **Blog posts:** Ideal length is measured in minutes, not words, and number is higher than we might imagine. Ideally, blog posts should take 7 minutes to read. This works out to some 1,600 words. Articles heavy on images can be considerably shorter – maybe 1,000 words. Blog headlines should be 6 words or so.

IDEAL SOCIAL MEDIA LENGTHS

- **Google+ headlines:** Ideally, headline should be brief – no more than 60 characters. Otherwise, the headline jumps to two lines, taking valuable real estate away from the post itself. If you can't summarize idea of your post in 60 characters, you can add context in post's first sentence. With one-line headline, Google+'s display includes about three lines of copy before "Read more" link.
- **Email subject lines:** Study by MailChimp found subject line length was generally irrelevant in terms of open rates, but a study by MailerMailer argued that 28-39 characters was sweet spot. This study supported generally accepted rule that subject lines should not exceed 50 characters, showing marked decline in opens past the 40-character mark.

IDEAL SOCIAL MEDIA LENGTHS

- Blog headlines 6 words
- Blog posts 1,600 words
- Domain names 8 characters
- Email subj. lines 28-39 characters
- Facebook headers 40 characters
- Google+ posts 60 words
- Hashtags 6 characters
- Linked In 16-25 words
- Paragraphs 40-55 words
- Podcasts 22 minutes
- SlideShare 6 minutes
- TED Talk 18 minutes
- Tweets 71-100 characters
- You Tube 3 minutes.
- **These are a guide, not a guarantee.**

- Domain names 8 characters
- Facebook 60-200 characters
- Hashtags 6 characters
- Instagram No limits
- Linked In 15-25 words
- Paragraph 40-55 words
- Pinterest 500 characters
- Podcast 15-20 minutes
- SlideShare 5-10 minutes
- TED Talk 15-20 minutes
- Tweets 70-100 characters
- You Tube 3 minutes

OTHER IDEAL SOCIAL MEDIA LENGTHS

"What counts is what works in the social media you target and write for. Research what their ideal or average lengths are. Use lengths and other measures as a template, not rigid rule."

--Don Bates



USE OF HASHTAGS

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| ■ Facebook | Not welcome |
| ■ Google+ | Not welcome |
| ■ Instagram | Up to 11 if relevant |
| ■ Linked In | Not popular |
| ■ Pinterest | 2 maximum per pin |
| ■ Twitter | 3 maximum |

"Use each social medium's features cautiously until you know what works best for your messages and audiences. Approaching social media with a cookie cutter mentality is guaranteed to create problems for the delivery and acceptance of what you want to say and why.

--Don Bates

WHAT USERS WANT US TO DO AS WRITERS

- **Provide “snackable” text.** Put additional longer text in hyperlinks.
- **Get to the point quickly.** Avoid distractions. Users don’t have time for lengthy digressions. They want what they want and now. They’re impatient.
- **Write simply, directly.** Use active verbs, active voice. Strip unneeded adjectives, adverbs.
- **Use plain language,** no jargon, gobbledegook, hyperbole, euphemism.
- **Use spirited language.** No-frills copywriting rather than fluffy narrative writing.
- **Enhance with images.** Use photos, charts, illustrations.
- **Avoid acronyms, technical terms.** Spell out names. Speak plainly.
- **Encourage dialogues,** not one-way conversations. Be cordial, credible, helpful, cooperative.
- **Take care of user concerns first.** They are social media savvy. They’ve been conditioned by website designers, content marketers, copywriters, PR practitioners. They know they’re in charge.
- **Give them useful ideas, information.** They want actionable content.

NEWS EXAMPLE

BNP PARIBAS, ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT AND LEAD BANK FOR THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' FIRST PAY-FOR-SUCCESS CONTRACT ("SOCIAL IMPACT BOND")

- BNP Paribas, as Administrative Agent and lead bank, recently closed a credit facility for the State of Connecticut's first Pay-for-Success Project (the "Connecticut Family Stability Pay for Success Project"), launched by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. BNP Paribas is supporting this project in partnership with Social Finance Inc., Family-Based Recovery at the Yale Child Study Center, University of Connecticut Health Center, the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab, White & Case, Jones Day, and other participating lenders.
- Pay-for-Success contracts, also known as "Social Impact Bonds," are innovative public-private partnerships that combine nonprofit expertise, private sector funding, and independent evaluation to transform the way governments respond to chronic social problems. Through this model, private capital is raised to cover upfront costs for high impact programs while repayment to private investors only occurs if the program meets predetermined performance outcomes. Independent evaluators measure the effects of the program based on specific metrics that benefit both individuals and society.
- The Connecticut Family Stability Pay for Success Project provides \$11.2 million of private capital to support new intervention teams delivering "Family-Based Recovery" treatment to families with children aged six years or younger. Each team will visit a client's home several times per week to promote positive parent-child interactions, increase parental understanding of child development, and assist parents on their path to substance use recovery. The project is designed to help ensure family stability and keep children with their parents.

NEWS EXAMPLE (CONTINUED)

- Jean-Yves Fillion, CEO of BNP Paribas USA and Head of the Americas, Corporate & Institutional Banking said, “Our aim is to drive social change by creating well-structured and targeted investments as solutions to pressing social, economic and environmental issues. This innovative pay-for-success model demonstrates our ability to impact local communities and underscores our mission as a sustainable and responsible financial institution.”
- In addition to BNP Paribas, participating lenders include QBE Insurance Group Limited, The Reinvestment Fund, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Laura and John Arnold Foundation, Nonprofit Finance Fund, and two anonymous family foundations.
- BNP Paribas is committed to financing sectors that have significant positive impacts on local job creation and the strengthening of society. As of June 30, 2016, BNP Paribas had €840 million of commitments in support of social entrepreneurship and microfinance, serving approximately 900 clients and partners. In 2015, BNP Paribas also provided 470,900 people with access to financial education programs,
- [About BNP Paribas Group](#) ABBREVIATED FOR PURPOSES OF THIS EXERCISE
BNP Paribas is a leading bank in Europe with an international reach. It has a presence in 75 countries, with more than 189,000 employees, including more than 146,000 in Europe. The Group has key positions in its three main activities: Domestic Markets and International Financial Services (whose retail-banking networks and financial services are covered by Retail Banking & Services) and Corporate & Institutional Banking, which serves two client franchises: corporate clients and institutional investors.

'SNACKABLE' VERSION

- Banking giant **BNP Paribas U.S.A.** has taken a big step to make money for its investors by solving social problems.
- Partnering with Yale University, Harvard and the U. of Connecticut, the bank has invested \$11.2 million in Connecticut's Department of Children and Families "pay-for-success" contracts, which aim to help poor families stay together and get off welfare. If the program succeeds, investors make money. Independent evaluators measure the results.
- Called "Connecticut Family Stability Pay for Success Project," the program supports outreach by family-care professionals who visit client homes several times a week to see how parents and their children six or younger are faring.
- Jean-Yves Fillion, CEO of BNP Paribas USA, and Head of the Americas, Corporate & Institutional Banking, said: "This is something BNP wants to do and knows has to be done. As a global bank, we want to help solve local social, economic and environmental problems through investment solutions rather than government grants. We want to make money for investors by doing good for their neighbors and their country."

'SNACKABLE' VERSION

- To ensure the Connecticut program's success, BNP Paribas USA is working with Social Finance Inc.; Family-Based Recovery at Yale Child Study Center; U. of Connecticut Health Center; Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab; White & Case; and Jones Day. Besides BNP Paribas, participating lenders include QBE Insurance Group Limited; The Reinvestment Fund; Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; Laura and John Arnold Foundation; Nonprofit Finance Fund; and two anonymous family foundations.
- As of June 30, 2016, BNP Paribas had €840 million committed to social entrepreneurship and microfinance, serving some 900 clients and partners. In 2015, BNP Paribas provided 470,900 people with access to financial education programs.

SOCIAL MEDIA VERSION

Release on previous two slides is shorter by 42% (247 vs. 481 words), more direct, more publicly focused, clearer. Text is condensed, tighter, logically sorted. More can be deleted, assuming that for many social media the story should be shorter with links to the longer text.

SHORTENED EVEN MORE:

- Banking giant BNP Paribas U.S.A. has taken a big step to make money for its investors by solving social problems. [LINK TO LONG RELEASE AND OTHER PROGRAM INFORMATION]
- Partnering with Yale University, Harvard and the U. of Connecticut, the bank has invested \$11.2 million in Connecticut's Department of Children and Families "pay-for-success" contracts, which aim to help poor families stay together and get off welfare. If the program succeeds, investors make money. If it fails, they don't.
- Jean-Yves Fillion, CEO of BNP Paribas USA, and Head of the Americas, Corporate & Institutional Banking, said: "This is something BNP knows has to be done. We want to make money for investors by doing good for their neighbors and country." [How about, "As the bank for a changing world, BNP Paribas knows this has to be done. We want..."]

This release is shorter by almost 78%. Now has 109 words vs. original 481.

HEADLINE ANALYSIS

BNP Paribas, Administrative Agent and Lead Bank for the Connecticut Department of Children and Families' First Pay-for-Success Contract ("Social Impact Bond")

Is this a strong or weak headline based on SM headline guide and why?

AP Style version of this headline:

BNP Paribas, administrative agent and lead bank for Connecticut Dept. of Children and Families' first Pay-for-Success Contract ('Social Impact Bond')

HEADLINE COMMENTARY/EXERCISE

Original is OK in context (i.e., as financial or market news release), but not for social media because it's...

- Not sufficiently customer-focused
- Jargon heavy
- Too long: 21 words, 158 characters
- No active verb, e.g., appointed, becomes, wins role as...

Write two SM headlines for story; focus on big picture and the public.

HEADLINE COMMENTARY/EXERCISE

BNP Paribas, administrative agent and lead bank for the Conn. Dept. of Children and Families' first Pay-for-Success Contract ('Social Impact Bond')

SOCIAL MEDIA HEADLINES

- **Top 10 bank BNP Paribas fights Connecticut [US?] poverty with profit idea**
11 words, 68 characters
- **Banking giant BNP Paribas invests millions in for-profit program to help welfare families**
14 words, 91 characters
- **BNP Paribas bank sees way to make money, solve social problems at same time**
14 words, 75 characters
- **BNP Paribas banking on profit for ending Connecticut families' poverty**
10 words, 67 characters
- **BNP Paribas teams with Yale, Harvard to get moms, kids off welfare at a profit**
15 words, 80 characters

2016 BNP PARIBAS GLOBAL REPORT



NEWS EXAMPLE

BNP Paribas Global Entrepreneurs Report 2016

- Conducted among 2,600 entrepreneurs based in 18 countries, in Asia, Europe, and the United States, **the study led by Scorpio Partnership reveals the emergence of a new generation of entrepreneurs under 35, "The Millennialpreneurs"**. From Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1995, **they stand out by creating an increased number of companies, both in the new economy and traditional sectors. They average launched about 8 companies, against 3.5 for their elders**, and have a turnover of more than 43% that of the baby boomer generation. Among them, women are more successful than men. Providing a profit margin of 35%, they are most active in Poland, Spain and China, in sectors such as trade, professional services and fashion.
- **This study indicates that the most attractive regions are the United States, China and Germany**, entrepreneurs based in China, India and Turkey, achieving a better year. **It appears that investment volumes increased by 12% throughout the last 12 months**, with a significant increase in investments abroad. Similarly, portfolio diversification stands out as a major trend for these entrepreneurs, although respondents allocate 20% of their investments in their own business and 17% in real estate.
- The [full report of the study](#) is available in the new [BNP Paribas Ipad application, "Voice of Wealth."](#)

227 words, excluding headline (boldface included in the original)

WORDINESS/CLARITY CHALLENGES

- Conducted among 2,600 entrepreneurs based in 18 countries, in Asia, Europe, and the United States, the study led by Scorpio Partnership reveals the emergence of a new generation of entrepreneurs under 35, "The Millennipreneurs".
- From Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1995, they stand out by creating an increased number of companies, both in the new economy and traditional sectors. They average launched about 8 companies, against 3.5 for their elders, and have a turnover of more than 43% that of the baby boomer generation. Among them, women are more successful than men. Providing a profit margin of 35%, they are most active in Poland, Spain and China, in sectors such as trade, professional services and fashion.
- This study indicates that the most attractive regions are the United States, China and Germany, entrepreneurs based in China, India and Turkey, achieving a better year.
- It appears that investment volumes increased by 12% throughout the last 12 months, with a significant increase in investments abroad. Similarly, portfolio diversification stands out as a major trend for these entrepreneurs, although respondents allocate 20% of their investments in their own business and 17% in real estate.
- The full report of the study is available in the new BNP Paribas iPad application, "Voice of Wealth."

ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

- What's the "big picture" message?
- What does the bank want readers to know about how this generation relates to its future, services, etc.?
- How could the statement do a better job of conveying the bank's connection and interest, especially in light of Snapchat partnership news?

COMMENTARY

- “Big picture” isn’t the study demographics, nor Scorpio.
- It’s the emergence of what BNP Paribas dubbed “Millennipreneurs” and what they’re doing worldwide.
- That’s where emphasis should be, especially for social media, which are a maelstrom of millennial activity. What “millennis” are doing, what it means to banking, finance, investment.
- Boldface is popular in social media, but not as effective in text as in headlines and subheads. Also, other “stresses” such as italics, underlines, and all-capped statements are not helpful.
- Items underlined are problematic, mostly because superfluous, unneeded.

'SNACKABLE' VERSION

'Millennipreneurs,' emerging worldwide force, building more businesses than other generations

10 words

- Global bank BNP Paribas reports that a new breed of millennials, whom they've nicknamed "millennipreneurs," has emerged on the global economic scene and last year started twice as many businesses as the generations who came before them. Based on a survey of 18 countries covering Europe, Asia and the U.S., the findings are included in the bank's "Entrepreneurial Report 2016."

[LINK TO REPORT](#)

- Among the new group, women were more successful than men, earned 35 percent profit and were most active in Poland, Spain and China in the trade, professional services, and fashion sectors.
- In addition, the United States, China and Germany were the most attractive entrepreneurial regions, although businesses in China, India and Turkey achieved the greatest success.
- BNP Paribas said the new entrepreneurs increased their investments by 12 percent over the past year, including significant investments outside their home countries. They also have diverse portfolios and allocated 20 percent of their profits to their businesses and 17 percent to real estate.

163 words or 28% shorter than the original 227 (can be even shorter)

SOCIAL MEDIA VERSION

'Millennipreneurs,' emerging worldwide force, building more businesses than prior generations

- Global bank BNP Paribas reports a new breed of millennials, which they've nicknamed "millennipreneurs," has emerged on the global economic scene and last year started twice as many businesses as the generations who came before them. The findings are included in the bank's "Entrepreneurial Report 2016." [LINK TO REPORT](#)
- Women were more successful than men, earned 35 percent profit and were most active in Poland, Spain and China. In addition, the U.S., China and Germany were the most attractive entrepreneurial regions, although businesses in China, India and Turkey achieved the greatest success.
- BNP Paribas said the millennials increased their investments by 12 percent over the past year, inside as well as outside their home countries. They have diverse portfolios and allocated 20 percent of profits to their businesses and 17 percent to real estate.

134 words or 41% shorter than original 227 words.

What's missing that's critical for BNP Paribas?

GUIDELINES

Social media embody communities of interest for everything A-Z, e.g., from Antelope advocates to Zhou Dynasty zealots. How do we write for them? (My apologies if the rhyming seems too cute.)

1. Snack, don't yak (get to the point quickly, briefly).
2. Think links (to websites, videos, long content).
3. Focus, don't hocus (don't mislead, online readers hate it).
4. Heed the speed (respond fast, readers won't wait).
5. Refine the design (enhance text with subheads, bullets, pix).
6. Hone the tone (reflect each medium's style).
7. Invite insight (encourage comments, engagement).
8. Seal the deal (make it easy to subscribe, like or follow).
9. Copywrite tight (think print ads, product packaging)
10. Nail the sale (get the order, make a friend).

WRITING TWEETS

TWITTER

- Be useful and relevant to the reader,
- Convey the main benefit as usual or unique
- Write simply, directly.
- Avoid hard-sell marketing or PR.
- Abbreviate but make sure your abbreviations are understandable.
- Write fewer than 140 characters to avoid “spill over” on screen and the need for readers to “scroll” or move your cursor.
- Write so your post can be read without scrolling.
- Shorten hyperlinks (use TinyURL, Bitly, other free services).
- Use keywords for SEO.
- Use hashtags to encourage dialogue.
- Tweet regularly, at least weekly.
- Re-post current and archived tweets, but rewrite slightly.

'UPWORTHY' TWEETS

- The next time someone uses the R-word in front of you, quote NFL star Joe Haden. He nailed it.
CONTEXT: About an online initiative launched in 2009, Spread the Word to End the Word, to eliminate "derogatory use of the R-word from everyday speech."
- The classic image of a farmer is a man. These stunning pics prove that wrong.
CONTEXT: fact that 30% of farmers in U.S. are women.
- A boy asked his mailman for junk mail so he could practice reading. He didn't get his exact request.
CONTEXT: About 12-year-old boy who was collecting and reading discarded pieces of spam's predecessor.



EXERCISE: Write Tweet

Write One Tweet on this Workshop
Length: 71-100 characters (Not 140 or 280)

Put on flip charts

#PRwriting



SAMPLE TWEETS ON THIS WORKSHOP

(also headlines)

- How to cure PR writing ills: A double dose of training
- PR writing shoulds and shouldn'ts made easy
- Getting writing right with PR Pros in Washington
- Why do PR pros want to be better than you?
- Solving PR writing problems is elementary Dear Watson
- Improving PR writing for the private and public good
- Professor teaches PR scribes how to do it better
- Learning PR writing the new-fashioned way
- PR writers take on the 'new rules' of writing
- PR writers clean up their writing with a 'new rule' broom

TWITTER TWEETS (ASSUMES INCLUSION OF HASHTAGS)

- **Worldwide, 'Millennipreneurs' more entrepreneurial than GenY, reports Top-10 global bank BNP Paribas** (101 characters, 12 words)
- **Millennials more entrepreneurial than their parents and grandparents, says global bank BNP Paribas** (99 characters, 13 words)
- **Women exceed men as new-business creators, make more money, earn 35% profit, says BNP Paribas' study** (101 characters, 16 words)
- **Millennial female entrepreneurs worldwide make more money than male entrepreneurs** (81 characters, 10 words)
- **Move over Baby Boomers and GenY, here come the 'Millennipreneurs'** (66 characters, 10 words)

What's good or not so good about these headlines in your opinion?

FINANCIAL TWEET (BY FBI NO LESS)

Asset forfeiture is used to disrupt, dismantle & deter those who prey on the vulnerable for financial gain.

[https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/white-collar-crime/asset-forfeiture ...](https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/white-collar-crime/asset-forfeiture...)



TWEETS USING HEADLINE FORMULAS

- **Who else wants** to write better for business purposes than PR Pros? 54
characters, 64 with spaces
- **The secrets of** PR writing revealed in Washington, DC. 44 *characters, 52 with spaces*
- **Little known ways to** write better if you want to influence people. 54
characters, 65 with spaces
- **Build a** PR writing reputation you can be Proud of. 40 *characters, 49 with spaces*
- **What you should know about** PR writing that's new and different. 52
characters, 62 with spaces
- **Lessons I learned while** teaching PR writing in the Shining City on the Hill. 62
characters, 75 with spaces
- **How to survive your first** job interview when they ask what good writing is. 61
characters, 74 with spaces

BLOGGING

BLOGGING

- Have interesting name, write regularly on schedule (daily, twice weekly).
- Use informal style.
- Keep it simple, short.
- Focus on single topic at a time.
- Use bullet points, other graphic helpers.
- Include at least one image.
- Link to related information (e.g., audio, video, how-to articles).
- Allow for prompt feedback
- Engage, respond.
- Measure, evaluate.
- Have blogging rules for employees.

MESSAGES, SLOGANS, THEMES

WRITE MESSAGES

EMAIL WRITING

- Subject line is headline. Follow same logic as headlines for other documents.
- Use standard upper/lower case letters. CAPITAL LETTERS shout.
- Avoid boldface and italics.
- Reread and proof before sending.
- Remember, your messages are forever.
- Remember, your emails on company computers are owned by your employer.
- Don't clutter your email interface with graphics, company info.
- Use BCC for long lists of recipients.
- Personalize as much as possible. Use recipient's name when you send and reply.
- Attach longer documents. Better, link recipients to them.

What Reporters Prefer in Emails

Cision Research

- Inviting subject line as headline
- 200-word maximum message
- No or limited scrolling
- Five “Ws” up front – Who, What, When, Where, Why?
- Link to complete document if required, e.g., news release, report, study, survey, speech
- Message can be different from linked document, e.g., note.
- Link to images. Thumbnails OK for guidance
- Bullets OK, but make them complete statements
- Plain layout, not fancy
- Substance, not style, is what counts most

STORYTELLING

- New buzzword like “word-of-mouth.”
- Been around since beginning of time.
- Now, it’s become a useful tool in PR and marketing, especially online.
- But need to tell the truth, not hoodwink.
- Real stories, not clickbait.
- There are good stories waiting to be told in every organization. They have to do with how people create, engage with and sell your products and services. They have to do with your issues, actions and activities.
- Assign “stringers” in your organization to help you find the stories if you don’t have the time and resources to find as many as you would like on your own.

IMAGE INCLUDED IN 'MILLENNIS' REPORT



- Best image for this release?
- Does it show what the survey says?
- What else might have been used?
- What's missing?

WRITING IMAGE CAPTIONS

A picture is worth 1,000 words. This is especially true in social media. Using an image in a Facebook, WeChat or Twitter post increases readership by three or four times what it would be without the image. Unlike captions for newspaper or newsletter images, social media captions can be more playful, although they still must adhere to traditional standards of clarity, accuracy and newsworthiness. The best SM captions are written in keeping with the following guidelines.

- Study the image. Make sure it reflects your organization's culture, values, ethics, brand.
- If the image is self-contained, e.g., for Instagram or Pinterest, make sure the caption says enough for the reader to understand the context and source.
- If the image is illustrating a larger piece, e.g., a blog, make sure the caption isn't overdone, that it enhances the blog as opposed to relating extensive details.
- Don't state the obvious, e.g., Shown here is President X being welcomed by Y. Say, instead, President X is welcomed by Y at new BNP Paribas Virtual Reality HQ in Hong Kong.
- Use conversational language. Don't be too cute unless it's merited.
- Use present tense. It enhances immediacy and impact Write a few sentences.

...continued

WRITING IMAGE CAPTIONS

- Avoid terms like “is shown,” “pictured here,” “looks on.”
- Use description if it’s unclear what the reader is viewing, e.g., President X wears rainbow tie in observance of Gay Pride Day.
- Quotes can make good captions.
- Make it easy to read.
- Put a date on the image.
- Give a picture of the picture, e.g., “BNP Paribas Asia PR and marketing pros at June 29 Hong Kong webinar with Prof. Don Bates, New York University, on how to engage more with millennials in social media.” Photo by ???”
- Make sure caption is grammatically correct, properly spelled.
- Use copyright and trademark symbols as appropriate.
- Respect privacy rights
- Avoid racial, sexual, ethnic, political sensitivities

WRITE IMAGE CAPTION—10-12 WORDS



SAMPLE CAPTION



BNP PARIBAS' 2016 SURVEY

says women millennials most successful entrepreneurs.

WOMEN MILLENNIALS

better entrepreneurs than previous generations.

BNP PARIBAS' 2016 SURVEY

has women smiling for good reason.

EDITING/PROOFREADING

GUIDELINES

- Use standard guidelines.
- Proofreading is not editing, editing is not rewriting.
- Tell reviewers exactly what you want them to review. Otherwise, they'll get in over their heads. Be specific, e.g., spelling, punctuation, flow, tone, length, readability.
- Don't let others control your copy. That's not their job.
- Attach a list of bullet points that describe the target audience, goal, deadline, restrictions, etc., so reviewers understand the requirements of the document, rather than presume what they are.

5-SECOND PROOFREADING TEST

**How many “F’s” are there
in the following paragraph.**

Write your answer quickly.

**FINISHED FILES ARE THE RE-
SULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTI-
FIC STUDY COMBINED WITH
THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS**

EXERCISE

PROOFREAD DOCUMENT

PROOFED PARAGRAPH

In ~~writing~~ **writing** as in almost ~~in~~ **in** anything important in life, practice make perfect. At least ~~that's~~ **that's** what Professor Don Bates, the ~~instructor~~ **instructor** of this writing ~~course,~~ **course**, ~~coarse~~ thinks after spending more ~~then~~ **than** 30 ~~yaers~~ **years** in the PR ~~bussiness~~ **business** as a ~~a~~ PR ~~practitioner~~ **practitioner**, then a teacher and then a consultant. He has had ~~experiance~~ **experience** writing hundreds of new releases, and pitch letters, and feature ~~articales~~ **articles**, and speeches and other ~~kind~~ **kinds** of PR documents.

EDITED PROOF

Edited, underlined letters or words have been added:

In writing ~~as in almost anything important in life~~, practice makes perfect. ~~At least~~ That's what Professor Don Bates, ~~the~~ instructor of this ~~writing~~ course, ~~of this writing course~~ thinks after ~~spending~~ more than 30 years ~~in the PR business~~ as PR practitioner, ~~then a~~ writer, teacher and ~~, then a~~ consultant. He has ~~has had experience~~ ~~writing~~ written hundreds of news releases, feature articles, speeches, and other PR documents.

CLEAN EDIT

In writing, practice makes perfect. That's what Professor Don Bates, instructor of this course, thinks after more than 30 years as PR practitioner, writer, teacher and consultant. He has written hundreds of news releases, feature articles, speeches, and other PR documents.

[41 words from original 71, simpler, more direct,]

THANK YOU

FINAL WORDS, YOUR PROMISE

Now, Make a Promise to Yourself

With this workshop as a guide,
tell us two things you will do
to improve your writing
when you get back home.

Put on flip charts.

**Put check mark next to things
already mentioned by someone else.**

Included in this addendum are additional writing exercises, guidelines and resources for your use after the workshop. Any questions or comments, please contact Don Bates, instructor, New York University. db155@nyu.edu, or 917-913-8940 in the United States. Thank you for taking part.

ADDENDUM

WORDINESS

- Cut drafts at least in half.
- Minimize adjectives, adverbs.
- Eliminate prepositions.
- Use active verbs/voice, avoid passive verbs/voice.
- Set word limits for each form you write (e.g., 250-300 for news releases, 500-600 for Op-Eds, 1,500-2,000 for speeches).
- Get someone else to edit and proof your writing.
- Edit final draft ruthlessly.
- Put away perfection.

WRITE RIGHT ANALYZER © Don Bates, 2017

- The Analyzer is a tool for positively assessing and improving your own writing as well as the writing of others.
- It is a work in progress.
- It is part of a larger writing toolbox now under development.
- It provides a context for considering writing strengths and weaknesses.
- The six categories are a guide to important areas of writing concern, including how a piece of writing looks to its readers: 1) substance; 2) style; 3) usage; 4) challenges; 5) formatting; and 6) graphics.
- Use what works for you and the people you train or manage.
- It should be used to support, encourage and inspire better writing.
- Suggestions for changes and additions are welcome. db155@nyu.edu

SEE HANDOUT: "WRITE RIGHT ANALYZER"

'NEW RULES' WRITING SITES (small sample)

Cision PR Resources

<http://www.cision.com>

Copyblogger

<http://www.copyblogger.com>

Co-Schedule

<http://coschedule.com>

HubSpot

<http://www.hubspot.com/>

Kissmetrics

<https://blog.kissmetrics.com>

Nielsen Norman Group

<https://www.nngroup.com>

PR-Fuel

<http://www.ereleases.com/pr-fuel>

WriteToDone

<http://writetodone.com>

SOME FAVORITE BOOKS ON WRITING

Books

- Fish, Stanley. *How to Write [and Read] a Sentence* (2011)
- Lanham, Richard. *Revising Prose*. (2007)
- Luntz, Frank. *Words that Work*. (2007 paper back)
- Orwell, George. *Why I Write*. (2005 reprint)
- Pinker, Steven. SEE SEPARATE SLIDE.
- Strunk, William and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. (1999)
- Williams, Joseph and Joseph Bizup. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, 11th Edition (2014)
- Zinsser, William. *On Writing* (2006)

Style Guides

- Associated Press. *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*. (2016)
- University of Chicago Press. *The Chicago Manual of Style*. (2010)

STEVEN PINKER ON WRITING

Profound, practical, prescient thinking about today's language and writing from a master thinker on the subjects.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGubdYZPYPg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoeQYLao4io>
- The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century. (2014)
- The Language Instinct. (1994)

ROLE OF RESEARCH FOR WRITING

- Always do some research before you write anything.
- What's been said, what's being said, who's saying it, what's credible, what's worthwhile?
- Use research to contextualize and strengthen your messages.
- Use to enhance your credibility and reputation.

BOILERPLATE/ORGANIZATION I.D.

- Do you really need one? If so, how long, how many words?
- Something simple is best, 25-50 words unless your business is publicly regulated and must by law include extensive information.
- Whatever you have, at the very least you should have a snapshot reference you include after the first mention of the organization's name. Consider KMALL.

Official I.D. Statement:

- “KMALL is a global online retail e-commerce provider that delivers products directly to consumers around the world. Founded in 2012, KMALL offers customers a convenient way to shop for a wide selection of lifestyle products at attractive prices through kmall360.com, and other websites, which are available in multiple languages. KMALL is owned by Info Tech Hong Kong. KMALL offers products in the three core categories of apparel, small accessories and gadgets and home and garden. KMALL's innovative data-driven business model allows itself to offer customized products, such as wedding dress and evening dress, at scale for optimal marketing, merchandising and fulfillment.”

SEE NEXT SLIDE FOR ALTERNATIVES

BOILERPLATE

- Leave longer boilerplate identification for websites, sales sheets, and other appropriate formats.
- But after first reference in most written pieces, add something short and sweet that adds visibility, credibility and authority to what's written.
- For example, after the first mention of KMALL, identify it as “the global online retail store owned by Info Tech Hong Kong,” or “the global online retail store for lifestyle products,” or “one of the world’s largest global online retail stores.”
- What does the “jargony” last sentence mean?
- “KMALL's innovative data-driven business model allows itself to offer customized products, such as wedding dress and evening dress, at scale for optimal marketing, merchandising and fulfillment.” My uneducated guess:
- KMALL also delivers customized products, such as wedding and evening dresses, to fit any size.

WRITER'S TOOL KIT

- AP Stylebook (print, online, 'Styleguard' versions)
- Dictionary, e.g., Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary
- Chicago Manual of Style
- Thesaurus (Roget's is best in English)
- Rhyming dictionary
- Graphic/design guide, e.g., 'Words Into Type'
- Grammar guide, e.g., 'Woe Is I'
- Technical style guides, e.g., medical, engineering

PUNCTUATION

The use of spacing, conventional signs, and typographical devices aids reading and understanding, both silently and aloud, of handwritten and printed texts. There are 14 common punctuation forms.

1. Apostrophe
2. Brackets
3. Colon
4. Comma
5. Dash
6. Ellipsis
7. Exclamation mark
8. Full stop, period
9. Guillemets
10. Hyphen
11. Hyphen-minus
12. Question marks
13. Semicolon
14. Slash, stroke

PARTS OF SPEECH DEFINED

- **Adjective** (describes, limits) -- Modifier of noun or pronoun (*big, brave*). Adjectives make meaning of other words (nouns) more precise.
- **Adverb** (describes, limits) -- modifier of an adjective, verb, or other adverb (*very, quite*). Adverbs make writing more precise.
- **Article** (describes, limits) -- grammatical marker of definiteness (*the*) or indefiniteness (*a, an*). The article is not always listed among parts of speech. Some grammarians consider it a type of adjective or “determiner” (a broader class).
- **Conjunction** (connects) -- syntactic connector that links words, phrases, or clauses (*and, but*). Conjunctions connect words or group of words
- **Interjection** (expresses feelings and emotions) -- emotional greeting or exclamation (*Wow!*). Interjections express strong feelings.

PARTS OF SPEECH DEFINED

- **Noun** (names) -- word denoting any abstract (e.g. *home*) or concrete entity (e.g. *house*), person (*Mary*), place (*London*), thing (*necktie*), idea (*hope*), or quality (*bravery*). The most used part of speech, nouns are also called “naming words.”
- **Preposition** (relates) -- word that relates words to each other in a phrase or sentence and aids in syntactic context (*in, of*). Prepositions show the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and another word in the sentence.
- **Pronoun** (replaces) -- substitute for noun or noun phrase (*them, he*). Pronouns make sentences shorter and clearer since they replace nouns.
- **Verb** (states action or being) -- word denoting an action (*walk*), occurrence (*happen*), or state of being (*be*). Without verbs, groups of words cannot be clauses or sentences. Once called a predicate.

PITCH EMAILS/LETTERS

What is goal of “pitch” emails, letters?
What do media want from them –
i.e., format, content, style?

EXERCISE

WRITE PITCH LEAD/LEDE

FRAMING MUTUAL INTEREST

Your Goals

- Influential story you couldn't write as credibly on your own.
- Third-party endorsement.

Their Goals

- Big story that makes big difference for their audiences.
- Credible information.
- Access, assistance.

ALL-PURPOSE TEMPLATE

All-Purpose “Pitch” Template

Copyright by Don Bates 2010, 2011, 2012

db155@nyu.edu

This template intends to help writers as follows:

- Compose brief, persuasive media requests.
- Write “pitches” with little or no delay.
- Minimize verbosity and self-reverential puff.
- Increase written “pitching” success.

Importantly, template reflects norms of media relations practice and what editors/reporters require of “pitches”; i.e., get to the point, tell me what you want, make it easy for me to say yes or no.

PITCH BASICS

- One page.
- Personalized.
- Positive.
- Factual.
- Courteous.
- Talks to “you.”
- Gets to the point.
- Makes all-important “ask”: what you want.
- Summarizes “big picture.”
- Cogently presents perspective.
- Asks for one story, not several.
- Tells how, when you’ll follow up.
- Introduces available sources.
- Avoids or minimizes flattery.
- No “wind ups” (E.g., In light of the current economy...Because of your interest in...).
- Presents 5 W’s at outset.
- Conveys perspective, provokes controversy, asserts (as appropriate).
- Don’t be bland.
- Speaks simply, directly, forcefully.
- Attaches supporting information *IF* essential.
- Includes contact information 24/7.

SEVEN STEPS FOR PITCH SUCCESS

1. Use personal salutation [not Dear Editor or Reporter]:

Dear Mr. or Ms. [NAME]. Use editor's or reporter's full address if pitch is mailed as letter.

2. Use direct lead and make the "ask" as concisely and clearly as you can:

I invite you to interview* Ms. Subject, [professional title/ID.]. She is [distinguishing quality}

3. Summarize what Ms. Subject wants to discuss:

Ms. Subject would like to discuss/is concerned/believes/thinks/etc. [cite problem, challenge]

4. Amplify Ms. Subject's concern with a few incisive specifics:

More specifically, she thinks [add run-in or bulleted items].

5. Clarify attachments/enclosures if you use, although typically not required:

Attached is/are [documents related to your request, invitation – e.g., survey report or speech].

6. Call for action:

I will call you [time, date – e.g., Friday, next Monday, next week] to discuss this interview.

7. Close:

Sincerely [include 24/7 contact information with name/title/etc.]

-
- **Examples of other "asks."** I invite you to ... cover event, tour facility, test product, visit offices, meet board, present award, speak at annual meeting, etc. Make reason(s) for your request crystal clear. Offer one idea, not several. You can write again with other ideas.

PITCH EXAMPLE USING TEMPLATE

SUBJ (headline, in effect): Poor PR writing undermines private and public interests

Dear Ms. Dowd:

- I invite you to interview Don Bates, New York University writing instructor. Prof. Bates is disturbed with the quality of writing among public relations and public affairs practitioners in business, government and nonprofit organizations.
- Using his classes, research and workshops as evidence – along with more than 40 years’ experience in the PR trenches – he says too many practitioners fail to convey news and other information with the straightforward style and credible content their audiences want and need. Too much of what they write is stuffed with fluff or worse. He knows why and has antidotes he says are almost embarrassing to discuss.
- Prof. Bates wants to change the way PR practitioners write so they’ll do a better job of helping their clients and the people they’re trying to reach. “By writing more simply, directly and credibly, they’ll also help to change their image as ‘spin’ masters,” he adds. “Most are not, but the poor quality of their writing makes it easy to assume they are.”
- I will call you next week [Monday morning, Tuesday afternoon, etc.] to discuss your interest in talking with Prof. Bates. In the meantime, you may contact him at 917-913-8940 or db155@nyu.edu. I am also available to assist.

WHY DO WE WRITE?

- Inform and educate media in all their forms about ostensibly important news and information regarding our employer or client.
 - Inform and educate internal and external stakeholders about the same or retargeted news.
 - Gain favorable coverage and commentary in all forms of public and private media.
 - Strengthen stakeholder relationships.
 - “Win friends and influence people.”
- **Results for clients if news and information are used:**
 - Greater public visibility.
 - Enhanced consumer branding.
 - Increased sales (products, services, memberships, etc.).
 - Strengthened market credibility.
 - Favorable actions, e.g., votes, volunteer participation, environmental assistance, community engagement.
 - Greater profitability, success.

PR WRITING BENEFITS

- Develops organizational vision, mission, goals, actions.
- Inspires two-way listening and relationships.
- Builds connections and community among stakeholders.
- Develops and delivers strategic management messages.
- Changes audience attitudes, beliefs, opinions, decisions.
- Mediates media engagement and coverage.
- Assists marketing, human resources, finance, government affairs and other management functions in communicating their respective goals.
- Serves as organization's principal editorial function.

PR WRITING PERSPECTIVE

The best PR writing stresses:

- Commercial, not aesthetic, purpose.
- Competency, not creativity.
- Journalistic, not literary, style.
- Managerial, not egocentric, perspective.

Think like an engineer; solve problems patiently.

Think like a manager; encourage and enable success.

PR PLANNING AS PR WRITING TOOL

PR writing reflects the PR planning process:

- Analyze the situation.
- Determine the audience.
- Establish the goals.
- Develop the strategy.
- Create the messages.
- Choose the tactics (e.g., format, style, length, delivery).
- Manage the distribution and follow up.
- Measure and evaluate the results.

HANDOUT: "HIERARCHICAL PR PLANNING MODEL"

Don Bates, New York University

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION AND PARTICIPATION**

dbates155@nyu.edu