

Webinar Notes

1. Copyediting is the middle stage of cleaning up your text.
 - a. Check for style, grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and logic.
 - b. Focus on correctness, clarity, consistency, and concision.
 - c. More artistic freedom than proofreading stage, but not as much latitude for large-scale changes as the first round of editing.
2. Remember whose voice should prevail.
 - a. Source author's voice (made of style and grammar choices) is more important than your own personal preferences.
 - b. Voice is determined by the purpose of the text and its target audience.
 - c. Some questions to help you decide:
 - i. How formal is this text?
 - ii. What is the specialty field?
 - iii. Who is the ultimate end-user of the text?
 - iv. What is the goal of the text? Educate, persuade, entertain...?
3. Grammar is your best defense against ambiguity.
 - a. Possible sources of confusion:
 - i. Verb tense
 - ii. Subject-verb agreement
 - iii. Use of commas
 - iv. Pronouns
 - v. Modifiers
4. Write drunk, edit sober. (Ernest Hemingway)
 - a. Check the logic.
 - b. Clean up distractions.
 - c. Use lists (style sheets, common errors).
5. For further reading:
 - a. *Building Great Sentences: How to Write the Kinds of Sentences You Love to Read.* (Brooks Landon)

- b. *The Fine Art of Copyediting*. (Elsie Myers Stainton)
- c. *The Elements of Legal Style*. (Bryan A. Garner)
- d. *Lawyers, Liars, and the Art of Storytelling: Using Stories to Advocate, Influence, and Persuade*. (Jonathan Shapiro)
- e. *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed.
- f. “Understanding Voice and Tone in Writing.” (Grammar Girl)
<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/understanding-voice-and-tone-in-writing?page=1>

Exercises

1(a) - Describe this style:

“The going idea is that texting has, in essence, made graffiti a universal pastime: Barely punctuated, sparsely capitalized and with decidedly creative spellings throughout, texting means that today's America is reveling in writing badly. Ten years ago (we'll soon get to why it would only be back then) the proper answer to this would have been LOL -- "laughing out loud" -- because in reality, texting is sprouting new grammar all the time. Yes, grammar, as subtle and sophisticated as subjunctives and such...”

Your answer:

1(b) - Describe this style:

“...According to the report, youth who have had a major depressive episode in the past year are at greater risk for suicide. They are more likely than other youth to initiate alcohol and other drug use, experience concurrent substance use disorders, and smoke daily. A major depressive episode is defined as a period of at least two weeks when a person experienced a depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities, plus four other symptoms of depression, such as problems with sleep, eating, energy, concentration, and feelings of self-worth...”

Your answer:

1(c) - Describe this style:

“Absent reasonable suspicion, police extension of a traffic stop in order to conduct a dog sniff violates the Constitution's shield against unreasonable seizures. On remand, the Eight Circuit is to consider the District Court's determination that detention for the dog sniff was not independently supported by individualized suspicion.”

Your answer:

2(a) - Rewrite this sentence to change its style:

“With all your essential driving information like current speed, navigation, and collision warnings projected on the windshield in your direct line of sight, you can keep your eyes where they belong — on the road.”

Your answer:

2(b) - Rewrite this sentence to change its style:

“On average women earn 18% less than men, according to analysis by Korn Ferry Hay Group, a consulting firm which looked at more than 8m employees in 33 countries. ”

Your answer:

2(c) - Rewrite this sentence to change its style:

“You certainly usually find something, if you look, but it is not always quite the something you were after.”

Your answer:

3(a) - Improve this sentence:

As there were no eggs available to me, I had to forego breaking my fast that particular morning.

Your answer:

3(b) - Improve this sentence:

Present at the meeting were the Director, Pat Lacey, the Deputy Director, James Garreth, and shareholders Amy Mattigan, Dirk McGurk, Thomas Hallan, and Kimberly Easel.

Your answer:

3(c) - Improve this sentence:

The die-cutting machine operator is responsible for keeping his machine calibrated.

Your answer:

3(d) - Improve this sentence:

Founded in 1607, visitors to Jamestown, Virginia can explore one of the first permanent settlements in the New World.

Your answer:

3(e) - Improve this sentence:

Our results driven marketing firm delivers creative solutions that will build your brand and drive customers and revenue to your door.

Your answer: