



Hook 'Em from the Get-Go; Hold 'Em to the End

Create

- Pray!
- Focus/sharpen your idea. Condense to one sentence with strong title.
- Focus on your audience.
What are their needs?
What do you hope they will take away?
Apply the BERT principle.
- Focus on your market. Study writers' guidelines.
- Use the best hook to create a strong lead.
Anecdotal, startling statement, quote, question
- Create reader identification.
- Arrive at your focus statement quickly with an economy of words.
- Make your points (but not too many) smoothly and logically.
- Nail your ending with a strong conclusion that ties back to beginning.

Rewrite

- Prayerfully evaluate what you've written.
- Bring your manuscript to a critique group. "Iron sharpens iron" (Prov. 27:17).
- Strengthen your points with anecdotes/illustrations.
- Smooth your transition between points.
Use headings, sub-headings, bullets, numbers.
- Show don't tell; teach don't preach.
Avoid pat answers.

Edit

- Resist temptation to submit it too soon. Let it cool!
- Tighten - cut away the clutter.
Wordiness, redundancy, qualifiers
- Eliminate long, confusing sentences and incomplete sentences.
- Paragraph length varied. Create valuable white space.
- Check sentence structure, especially beginnings & endings.
- Look for inconsistencies in punctuation.
- Replace passive voice with active wherever possible.
- Avoid repetition except for emphasis.
- Use a variety of words, but don't tiptoe through the thesaurus.
- Don't write about the heads of your readers or down to them.
- Replace adverbs with strong verbs.
- Use concrete, colorful words.
- Avoid cliches - like the plague!
- Double-check quotes, statistics, and facts.
Reference properly.
Obtain permission when needed.
- Scripture accurately quoted and referenced.
Note translation. Is it periodical's preferred translation?
Do NOT proof-text. "Correctly handle the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15 NIV).
See "Twelve Rules for Use of Scripture"
- Do NOT depend on spell-checkers!
- Read aloud - even backwards!
- Prayerfully submit.