

The Genuine Article

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I. FOCUS YOUR IDEAS

A. Set the Scene

1. P _____: *Who's writing?*
2. M _____ or Information: *What do I want to say?*
3. T _____ A _____: *Who will read it?*
4. M _____: *Why should I write it?*

B. Take Your Best Shot

1. Zoom: _____ it in.
2. Fuse: _____ it together.
3. Refocus: Unique _____ or _____.
4. Action: D _____ or d _____.
5. FAQs: A _____ and a _____ a great question.

“If my doctor told me I had only six minutes to live, I wouldn't brood. I'd type a little faster.” —Isaac Asimov

How-to Hint: *Paying attention to the process yields a better product.*

II. STRUCTURE YOUR WORK

A. Hook 'Em or Lose 'Em

1. Don't:

- a. S_____ d_____ to your reader.
- b. S_____ the obvious.
- c. O_____ reader.
- d. G_____ it all _____.

“Writing less is often more.”—William Zinsser

2. Do:

- a. _____ your reader and _____ him in.
- b. _____ the reader _____.
- c. _____ or _____ at a problem.

“The best advice is to start at a point of tension. Throw me into a story or an article that pulls my emotions or my curiosity and makes me want to know more--about the topic, the person, or both.”—Cecil Murphey

How-to Hint: *Earn the right to be read.*

3. Bonus: Ten Ways to Hook Your Readers

a. Personal Anecdote

b. Description

c. Dialogue

d. Universal Experience

e. History

f. News or Information

g. Problem

h. Question

i. Quotation

j. Surprise

B. The Rest of the Story: Four Blueprints

1. I _____ P _____

2. C _____

3. S _____

4. A _____

III. EDIT YOUR WRITING: Double Check

- A. Hook
- B. Grammar
- C. Spelling
- D. Flow
- E. Style
- F. Unity
- G. Query Letter or Finished Article?
- H. Review Writers Guidelines!

How-to Hint: *Polishing your work gives your editor less work and you more (more time spent editing = more opportunities to write.)*

IV. RIGHTS

- A. O _____: “We’re paying to use your work only once.”
- B. F _____: “We want to be the first to use your work, but once we do, you’re free to resell it.”
- C. S _____ or R _____: “We like your work so much we want to publish it—again.”
- D. E _____: “We want people to be able to read your work in a digital format.”

V. RECORD-KEEPING

- A. Old-fashioned:
- B. High-tech:
- C. What to Keep: clips, letters of intent, contracts, manuscripts, invoices, check stubs, expense (postage, travel, mileage)

How-to Hint: *Good record-keeping builds accountability and order into your work.*

“Published writers still struggle with the writing process.”—Laurence Pringle