

Periodical Power, part 3
Key Traits of Successful Articles

“Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell.”

— William Strunk Jr., *The Elements of Style*

“Omit needless words.” — William Strunk Jr., *The Elements of Style*

A. ARTICLE OVERVIEW — What is it?

1. Topic

2. Theme

3. Audience

4. Purpose

5. Angle/Approach

Is it the most appropriate one for your purpose and audience?

B. FIRST IMPRESSIONS — Are you attracting people to what you’ve written?

1. Title & subtitle

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Tips for titles:

2. Lead

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Tips for leads:

C. ARTICLE DEVELOPMENT — Consistent? Ingredients all present?

1. Purpose
 - What's your goal?
 - Purpose directs content.
2. Perspective / tone
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3. Length
 - Take advantage of Subtitles / Section Headers

D. ARTICLE STRUCTURE

1. Organization
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2. Conclusion
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E. ARTICLE CONTENT — Is everything necessary? Effective?

1. Sections
2. Paragraphs
3. Dialogue / Quotes
4. Sentences / Phrases
5. Strong specific words

F. COPY-EDITING OBSERVATIONS

1. Spelling (Don't rely on spell check)
2. Grammar (Standard English unless a compelling reason.)
3. Punctuation (Highway signs for the reader.)

Hints: *Look at it cold.*
Circle each verb on a page.
Read it aloud.