



Seven Steps to Better Written Copy

The best thing you can do for your written copy is to hire a professional; that way you ensure that the best work is being done in the shortest amount of time, and the end result will be text that works for you to achieve your goals. Sometimes, though, constraints of budget or time can make it impossible to get an expert on board, and you have to do the best job you can by yourself. Here are some tips to making your writing more powerful:

- 1 *Keep your goals in mind*** – Think about what it is that you want to achieve with this piece, what action you want the reader to take. Every sentence should work towards that goal, and if it doesn't, you should cut it out.
- 2 *Don't write about yourself, write to the reader*** – Everything should be addressed directly to the reader (for example, “our product will give you ABC” becomes “you will get ABC from our product”).
- 3 *Don't talk about features, talk about benefits*** – Your reader doesn't care about your product or service, they care about how they will benefit from it. Don't tell them that your toaster uses state-of-the-art heating technology, say that they'll get crisper toast in less time.
- 4 *Try reading it out loud*** – Make sure you only pause when punctuation calls for it, and read the text word-for-word. If you feel yourself running out of breath, your sentences are too long. If there's a word you can't pronounce, change it.
- 5 *Break your text into chunks*** – Paragraphs should be short, and there should be a visible space between them. This makes the page less threatening and easier to read, because it's easier for the reader to break the content into conceptual sections.
- 6 *Keep it simple*** – Never use a long, “sophisticated” word when a short and clear one can carry the same message. Only ever use long words when they convey something the short words don't (and if you think they mean exactly the same thing, you're probably wrong).
- 7 *When in doubt, call a pro*** – Words matter. Written content is permanent, and it's worth spending some money to make sure permanent impressions of yourself and your business are as favorable as possible.