

Creative Writing

Skills for successful business communication

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Broadstreet

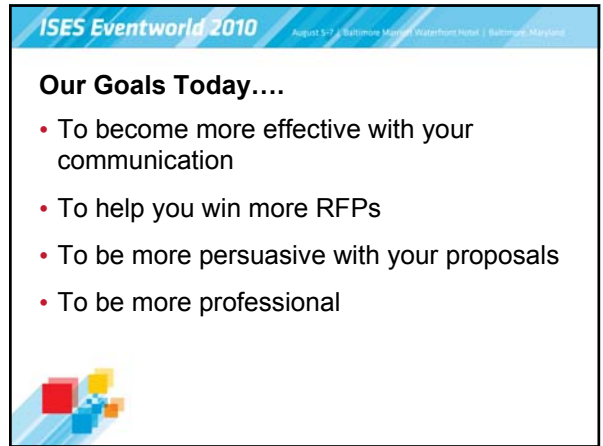
Saturday August 7, 2010

expand your experience

Education Network Business

August 5-7
Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel
Baltimore, Maryland

ISES Eventworld 2010



ISES Eventworld 2010 August 5-7 | Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel | Baltimore, Maryland

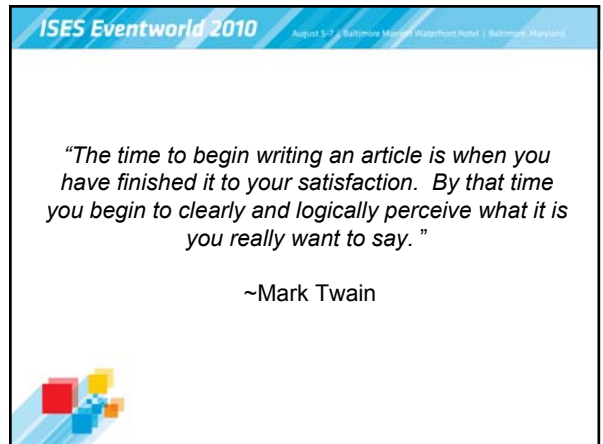
Our Goals Today....

- To become more effective with your communication
- To help you win more RFPs
- To be more persuasive with your proposals
- To be more professional



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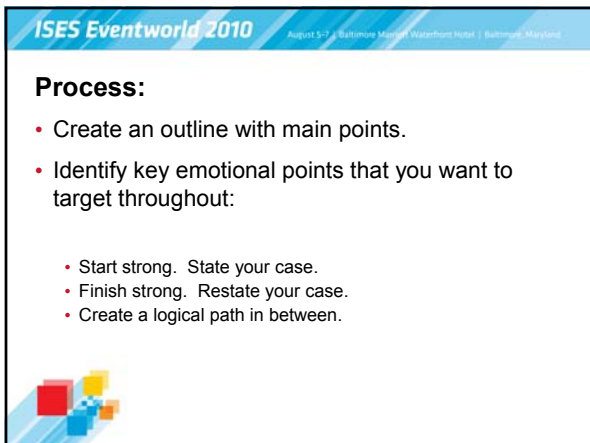
Challenge #1: Organizing Your Thoughts



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“The time to begin writing an article is when you have finished it to your satisfaction. By that time you begin to clearly and logically perceive what it is you really want to say.”

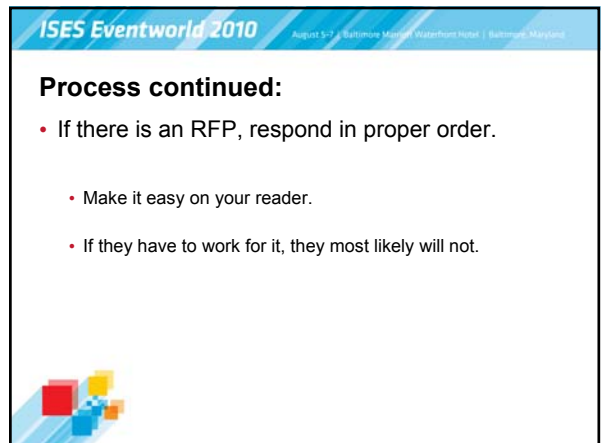
~Mark Twain



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Process:

- Create an outline with main points.
- Identify key emotional points that you want to target throughout:
 - Start strong. State your case.
 - Finish strong. Restate your case.
 - Create a logical path in between.



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Process continued:

- If there is an RFP, respond in proper order.
 - Make it easy on your reader.
 - If they have to work for it, they most likely will not.

Putting Skills to Work

- Write an outline for a proposal using the RFP provided at your table.

Example RFP Response Outline:

Restate the Objective

Why we are the right team to achieve the objectives

Overview of initial creative ideas for Hawaii (Big Picture) that includes objectives and attendee demographic (why its appropriate)...include "energy" and "Spring."

Description of hotel and shopping portion...needs to be high end so specify the shops available.

Outline other daytime activities that are specific to the Hawaiian experience.

Include value-added items such as room drops, transfers, aloha greeters etc...that help to motivate and engage the dealers.

Note on branded materials, registration website, signage etc...

Description of airfare, hotel, meal functions including reasoning. Include details of Hawaii specific elements that are meaningful (ie Hawaiian Airlines, beach front resorts and dining with views of the ocean).

Pricing Details.

Team and company profiles with any relative experience.

Challenge #2: How Do I Start?

Process:

- Writers Write.
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes.
- Skip the first paragraph at first if that is what is holding you up.
- You can always go back and make changes.

Process continued:

- Write like you speak. Be conversational. This is a dialogue with your reader.
- If you wouldn't say it that way in conversation, don't write it that way on paper.

My Example:

Springtime in Hawaii. Is there anything better? For the dealers at XYZ Automotive, the Spring of 2011 just might mean the Hawaiian experience of a lifetime. Fifty lucky dealers and their spouses will enjoy the sandy beaches and tropical breezes of the Big Island's Kona shores. Four days and three nights spent with nothing to do but relax, dine, shop and play! Now that's a trip to work for...



Challenge #3: Be More Professional



Process:

- Think "Clean."
- How you write is indicative of how you conduct your business.
- Sloppy writing = Sloppy work.
- Professional writing = Professional work.



"I'm not a very good writer, but I'm an excellent rewriter."

~James Michener



Process continued:

- Proof read every time! No exceptions.
- Have someone else proof read every time if possible.
- Walk away (overnight if possible or at least for an hour) and then come back and proof read again.
- Spellcheck is not foolproof!



Process continued:

- Underline all of the verbs. Do the tenses agree?
- Underline all of the pronouns/nouns. Do they also agree?



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Process continued:

- Final Spell-check. Always check the last draft that you have made changes to. Assume nothing.
- Review your original outline and make sure that you have not missed anything.
- If appropriate, do a final comparison to the RFP to make sure that you have hit everything and are in order.

Example:

"When guests walk in the ballroom it will be lighted by beautiful color and patterns; accented with logos in the forms of gobos of the brand. Their will be a stage for the band at the far end of the room and it features a beautiful backdrop. Guest tables will be scattered around the room and each one has a linen on it and beautiful floral centerpeace. The food would be delicious and served by an awesome team of wait staff."

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"When guests walk in the ballroom it will be lighted by beautiful color and patterns; accented with logos in the forms of gobos of the brand. Their will be a stage for the band at the far end of the room and it features a beatuful backdrop. Guest tables will be scattered around the room and each one has a linen on it and beautiful floral centerpeace sits on the center of each table. The food would be delicious and served by an awesome team of wait staff."

Revised Example:

The ballroom is awash with the colors of XYZ Corporation in celebration of this special night. Hues of blue, violet and indigo create an elegant atmosphere while gobo patterns of the XYZ logo add subtle branding.

The focal point of the room is the main stage. It commands attention on the far wall, dressed in layers of fabric and light. It showcases the latest technology in LED projection screens to support the show.

Guests dine at beautifully appointed tables featuring floor length silk linens in various shades of blue to complement the lighting in the room. Centerpieces are different on every table creating visual interest; some are tall while others cascade down the sides of the tables and others are multiple pave arrangements in smaller containers. Each table has its own personality, unique in its design.

The menu is presented in four courses by the celebrity chef and delivered by a staff that has been especially trained for this occasion. Every detail is attended to and the service is impeccable.

BEWARE:

- To Two Too
- Their There They're
- Its It's
- Women Woman/ Men Man
- Complement Compliment
- Principal Principle

Challenge #4: Be Effective

Process:

- Be strong upfront.
- Say what you need to say in the first paragraph.
- Say what you want to say for the rest.
- Sometimes your strongest opening paragraph is one sentence. Don't be afraid to be poignant.

Examples:

"We understand that change is never easy for any company. Implementing new sales tools and training initiatives to reach a new level of customer represents a challenge. And, that is what this event is all about."

“Destination: Inspiration...

The goal is simple...provide guests with an entertaining and engaging experience that positions the State Lottery and its games as a “must do” activity among members of the target demographic. “



“For more than 100 years there have been virtually no changes in the field of pathology. But now, with the advent of the latest version of XYZ software, the industry finds itself thrust to the very forefront of today’s most advanced digital technology.”



Process continued:

- Speak the same language as your reader.
- Stay away from industry slang unless it is to make a point.
- Make no assumptions about your reader.
- Avoid shortened or text message language.



Process continued:

- Consider your objectives and build towards them.
- Use concise language. Short paragraphs.
- Paint a picture. Walk the reader through an experience and bring it to life for them.



Examples:

“The Lottery Tour is a unique, mobile marketing experience for current and potential players of the State Lottery. The tour features an expandable trailer that travels to a variety of target-rich event types and locations. Inside the trailer, guests are treated to a variety of experiential engagements, from game play stations to new product overviews to learning stations highlighting the good that comes from lottery revenues.”



“FEEL – That playing The State Lottery is a dynamic, fun and entertaining experience.

THINK – That time spent playing the games of The State Lottery is worthwhile.

KNOW - That The State Lottery offers a wide variety of interactive gaming experiences.

DO – What they must do to (responsibly) play the interactive games of The State Lottery.”



What paints a picture?

- Color
- Size/perspective
- Senses: smell, taste, touch, sound, visual
- Temperature
- Texture



“Don’t tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass.”

~Anton Chekhov



*“When you are describing,
A shape, or sound, or tint;
Don’t state the matter plainly,
But put it in a hint;
And learn to look at all things,
With a sort of mental squint.”*

~Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll)



Process continued:

- Use strong words that generate an emotional response.
- Use persuasive language.
- **“Words That Work: It’s not what you say it’s what people hear.”** by Dr. Frank Luntz.



Words That Work:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| • Imagine | • Investment |
| • Hassle-free | • Independent |
| • Lifestyle | • Certified |
| • Accountability | • Prosperity |
| • Results | • Peace of Mind |
| • Innovation | • The Right to... |
| • Efficient/Efficiency | • All-American |
| | • A Culture of... |



Words That Work continued:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| • Customer-Centric | • Renew |
| • Casual Elegance | • Revitalize |
| • Spirituality | • Rejuvenate |
| • Financial Security | • Restore |
| • A Balanced Approach | • Rekindle |
| • Value | • Reinvent |



“Be Concise” Exercise

- The best writers have the best editors.
- Most people use too many words to get their point across.
- An effective short story is much more challenging to write than a novel.



Exercise Part 1:

- Write a paragraph that describes what your office looks like. Use as much detail as you feel appropriate to describe the environment so that we can picture it in our minds eye when we read it.



My Example:

When you step inside the Broadstreet offices, the first thing you notice is the LED screen that greets you and illustrates the services that we offer.

The reception counter is branded and back lit all in white and there is always an amazing floral arrangement sitting on the counter.

The office is light and bright with views of the Empire State Building. Designers, writers and producers are all buzzing around the center of the 12th floor while the executives and conference rooms are set around the perimeter. There are multiple conference rooms that are all named after the colors that they are decorated in. Editing bays, IT, supplies and the kitchen round out the corners. The furniture is contemporary and ergonomic by design.

What you notice the most about our offices is the creative buzz. People are smiling and they seem happy in their work. We like to say that the air is just a bit lighter and the atmosphere is charged with creative energy.



Next Step:

- Eliminate 50% of the words in your paragraph.



My Example:

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What you notice the most about our office is the creative buzz. People are smiling and they seem happy in their work. The air is just a bit lighter and the atmosphere is charged with creative energy.



“Every writer I know has trouble writing.”

~Joseph Heller

