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"Business Writing Checklist"

By Linda Elizabeth Alexander

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You're ready to do it. You've accepted an assignment from your boss, agreed to put together a sales presentation, or were asked to write a report about last week's meeting results. Where do you begin? Before you venture off into the land of writing for your job, be prepared with the items on this checklist.

1. Adjust your attitude. Writing doesn't have to be like drawing blood. In fact, many times in business writing, much of the work is already done for you. Your job may be as simple as rewording or organizing information that you already have.
2. Quiet. No matter how much you like your music or AM radio talk show it is best to work in a quiet spot. Even if you work in a noisy place like a newsroom or a cube farm, reduce the amount of noise around you so you can concentrate better. Wear earplugs if it helps you!
3. Your thinking cap! Colored markers, pencils, or a large easel pad may help you with brainstorming. Or, you may find it easier to work with a team first to generate ideas and then have one person write the first draft. Whatever works for you, make sure your brain is in creative mode, not editing/criticism mode. Creativity comes first; editing and refining later.
4. Eliminate distractions.

Turn off the phone, close your office door, and don't check your email every 10 seconds. Have your assistant tell everyone you're in a meeting and you can't see him or her unless they're dying.

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For at least 1 hour, work with no interruptions.

5. Computer, pen, scratchpad, or other tools you like.

You may prefer writing longhand; it can help you connect with your thoughts and emotions. Or, you may be quicker at typing directly on the computer. Either way, don't expect a perfect draft the first time. You will be scribbling a lot (or cutting and pasting) at first.

6. Contact names and phone numbers, etc.

Be sure you have handy a list of people you might need to talk with to verify information. For example, if you are writing an article for your company newsletter, you may need quotes from the CEO.

7. Dictionary and Thesaurus. The ones that come with the word processor are not sufficient. Get yourself some good old fashioned books, or a dictionary hesaurus on CD.

8. Company style guide. Some companies are very strict about their internal or external communications. They may have rules about style (different accepted spellings, for example) so that everybody who reads your company's literature or correspondence receives a consistent message about your company. You may lose credibility with your readers if everything sounds like it came from XYZ Corporation, except the letter you are writing.

9. The right atmosphere. If your office doesn't cut it, find a better place. The library may work. A conference room might provide more space for you to pace as you're dictating your masterpiece. If you're writing about your company's manufacturing plant, it might help you to actually be there while you're writing.

10. Writing is rewriting. Remember that nobody, even Shakespeare, gets it on the first try. Your first draft is exactly that – a rough copy, a sketch. Think of it as the equivalent of a doodle when artists paint. They don't start with the canvas – and neither should you. Unlike many other jobs, in writing, it's okay to make mistakes as you go along. Your final draft will be vastly different from the few sentence fragments you begin with.

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Using the checklist items will set you up for a successful writing session. Have on hand as many of these items as you can each and every time you sit down to write something — whether it's a letter to your customers or an annual report. By keeping all the tools you need in one place, your writing session will go smoother and will be easier on your stress level than without them.

Linda Elizabeth Alexander is a business writer and marketing consultant based in Longmont, Colorado, USA. Improve your writing skills at work! Subscribe to her FREE ezine. Write to the Point at lalexander@write2thepointcom.com or visit <http://www.write2thepointcom.com/articles.html>.

Why Wedding Checklist Is Important?

By Mary Williams

Is a wedding checklist important? Why do you need it? Do you think everything you have on your mind will be ready on your big day? Don't you think of the opportunities of missing something? If you don't have a wedding checklist you're asking for trouble. No matter how good your memory is you'd be very unwise to rely on it for every little detail you have to remember concerning your wedding.

In such an important day for you, it would be a crying shame if it was spoiled simply because you failed to plan properly in the first place – and a properly constructed checklist is the very best way you can ensure that all of your wedding plans come to fruition.

Creating a wedding checklist tailored to your specific needs and desires will certainly help to relieve the inevitable stress, particularly as the special day gets closer. Having a well thought out wedding checklist will ensure that you don't forget anything and will enable you to relax, safe in this knowledge, and enjoy the day itself.

Here are some of the things you should put on your checklist are setting the wedding date and time, reserving the date with a florist, photographer and DJ; reserving the church and reception location. These are the first things that should be done in the planning stages six to twelve months before the wedding day itself.

Other important things for your checklist include planning a budget, choosing the wedding party and ordering the invitations. You also need to make arrangements for a wedding dress, hairdressing and makeup. Not forgetting that you also need to arrange for co-coordinated clothing for your wedding attendants and, of course, you need to arrange the all-important wedding rings with a jeweler.

It is necessary that all of the above major things should be arranged as early as possible so that you have plenty of time for the small details later.

Reminders are helpful. Don't forget to ensure that you put reminders on your list for closer to the date. Reminders for ordering your wedding flowers, the wedding cake, addressing and sending invitations, a

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final fitting for the wedding dress and groom's outfit and placing a wedding announcement in the local press etc.

About a month to six weeks before your big day you should go over your wedding checklist to make absolutely sure you haven't forgotten anything. There are, of course, many more things than those listed above that you will need to put on your specific wedding planning checklist that are personal to your wedding, but the above will give you an idea of the things you need to include.

Being well-organized with your checklist will help you having plenty of time to complete each task. With this checklist, your wedding will be as what you have dreamed!

Mary Williams maintains a number of dating websites, including

,

, and

. Please visit her websites

and find more interesting dating articles.



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