

PUT IT IN WRITING!

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By Rhoberta Shaler

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Ever been asked to 'Put it in Writing.'? Sure, you have. Did you immediately go to your desk and effortlessly record your thoughts and suggestions? Or, perhaps, you struggled and anguished? For most folks, producing useful, credible and appropriate written communication requires careful thought. Those folks are wise. Written communication is an excellent opportunity to showcase your communication skills. Writing something down not only clarifies an issue, it tends to give the idea longevity, and, sometimes, a life of its own. Write carefully!

Written communication can be a double-edged sword, can't it? Well done, it can positively influence your career. Poorly, quickly or thoughtlessly done, it can work against you repeatedly. In a way, it IS written in stone. There it sits for everyone to see...and revisit.

Caution: Avoid putting negative information in writing! Absolutely do not put negative information in writing unless it is accurately supported by verifiable fact.

If you want or need to convey your opinion or perception, do so orally. Say it, rather than write it. Things have a tendency to be scrutinized much more closely when they are in writing. Folks look for inaccuracies and 'fodder for blame' in written communication. Written words scribed in the heat of the moment can sit in someone's files and become inadvertent weapons for years to come. A negative written communication can become a time bomb just waiting for the wrong person to

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detonate it. In 'Getting Promoted', Harry E. Chambers says:
"Enemies created in writing tend to have long life spans." Be careful.

There are a few basic guidelines to keep in mind before you put pen to paper or allow your fingers to touch those keys. Sure, the important thing is the message itself, however, how that message is conveyed is a message in itself! Grammar counts. Poor grammar detracts from the message. You do not want anything to get in the way of your important message, do you? Your computer may be a help as it suggests grammatical changes, but, it is not infallible. You need the skills to

catch errors. You know that your spell checker is limited otherwise it would not have left this poem intact:

Eye halve a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea.
It plainly marcs four my revue
Miss steaks eye kin Knot Sea.
Eye strikes a key
And type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write
It shows me strait a weigh.
As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite
Its rare lea ever wrong.
Eye has run this poem threw it
I am shore your pleased two no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh
My checker tolled me sew.

(borrowed from
www.viriniawater.co.uk/webnews/webnewsapr00.html Thanks.)

Make your writing concise. No one has the time or desire to read a novel about your topic. "Just the facts, Ma'am." That's what's needed. Quality, not quantity, is best. Winston Churchill is reported to have said to an aide placing a three-inch-high report on his desk, "That report, by its very size, demands that it will never be read." Be sure to read what you write before you send it. No one needs an exercise in endurance to capture your point.

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Take every opportunity to put positive information in writing. Thank and congratulate folks. Report on all successes, major and minor. Recommend solutions. Provide updates. When you've got something good to say, Harry Chambers says: "Insure accuracy, provide proof when available or necessary, and distribute the communication as widely as possible." Being the author of good news can put your name in a positive light when promotion time arrives, too! This has got to be good!

Write as you speak and speak thoughtfully. This is the best guideline for written communication at work.

Dr. Shaler speaks to thousands of people each year giving them and their organizations "The OK's to

SUCCEED!" —the Optimization Keys to lift their sights and elevate results from acceptable to EXCEPTIONAL. She is the author of Optimize Your Day! Practical Wisdom for Optimal Living'. Her book as well as her free ezines are available from her website, www.OptimizeLifeNow.com

Have You Plotted Your Story Before Writing It?

By Nick Vernon

Creative Writing Tips -

The writer, who doesn't have the time to plot, always finds the time to rewrite.

Sound familiar?

I've been guilty of this too, back in the early days of my writing apprenticeship. I was so eager to get stuck into writing my story that I wouldn't bother with plotting.

Plotting gives you a sense of direction. It's your map, which will lead you to write your story. Leaping into the unknown rarely works. Without a plot several things can happen.... Our stories aren't focused

We lose our way Our characters don't come to life because we don't take the time to develop them

We get stuck The story strays from us

And all this happens when we haven't figured everything out first.

Your plot is the foundation of your story. It's the skeleton, which will hold your story together. Your plot is there to work everything out first - to see if it can be worked out, and then flesh out that skeleton with other elements that make a story.

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Plotting is the difference between writing a story for yourself and writing one for an audience. Writing for ourselves doesn't require too much strain because we only have ourselves to please. It's when we have to please our readers that the hard work begins.

If you are aiming to sell your stories, plotting is a must.

Have you plotted your story before writing it?

Besides his passion for writing, Nick Vernon runs an online gift site where you will find gift information, articles and readers' funny stories. Visit

Have You Plotted Your Story Before Writing It?

3 Main Tips for Writing Articles along with 3 mini tips on your word choice

The Unwritten World Of The "Reality" Of Letterwriting

Writing about 'writing'.

The Write to Link Popularity

Write Around The World FREE!

Profit Pulling Reports

How To Find A Topic For Your Ebook

Carefully Crafted Sales Emails And Web Copy

The Classified List



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