

10 Tips for Writers

by Bonkung J. Handerson

Many people who have trouble writing believe it is a mysterious process that the average person cannot master. They assume that anyone who writes well does so because of a magic mixture of talent and inspiration, and that people who are not lucky enough to have those gifts can never become writers. Every profession requires some natural talents and inspiration. However, skill in every area can also be acquired through training, practice and hard work. Writing is no exception. Here are some ways to begin:

1 *Master the language.* Get a grip on the language for your communications, whether it is English, French, German or a vernacular language. No writer can effectively communicate well with the intended reader if he or she lacks the basic skills to communicate or write well in the reader's language.

2 *Know the basics.* Good writing should answer at least three of the seven fundamental questions of who, what, where, when, which, why, and how. A careful handling of the six "Ws" and one "H" tells the whole story.

3 *Get started.* All writers, amateurs and professionals, can procrastinate indefinitely. Because of this, most successful writers do not wait for inspiration. They write whether they feel like it or not. In many cases, they write on schedule, putting in regular hours just as they would on the job. Avoid procrastination. Get started now!

4 *Work with other writers.* Working with experienced writers will help you to learn patience, perseverance and objectivity. Other writers can encourage and inspire you in your work. They can teach you about writing and publishing processes and give you confidence to continue.

5 *Accept criticism and correction.* Most renowned writers had to write and rewrite their scripts over and over again to be where they are today. Writing and rewriting of scripts, and accepting criticism even from detractors, are litmus tests for any good writer.

6 *Read, read, read.* Reading is part and parcel of good writing. A good writer must be knowledgeable about almost every facet of life. Read widely and benefit from the ideas in the works of other authors.

7 *Plan.* Successful writers make plans before they start to write, but they keep their plans flexible, subject to revision. They seldom know precisely what they are going to write before they start, and they plan on discovering part of their content as they work.

8 *Be inquisitive.* Successful writers work constantly at observing what goes on around them and have a system for gathering and storing material. They collect clippings, keep notebooks, write in journals or keep working archives on their word processors.

9 *Respect deadlines.* Even successful writers need deadlines to make them work.

10 *Reread and revise.* Always stop and read what you have written so far. This helps you to eliminate silly errors that might escape your eyes during a general proofreading.

Observe these guidelines and you should become a good writer, one whose message will reach the intended reader. Start writing now, and write well!❖

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