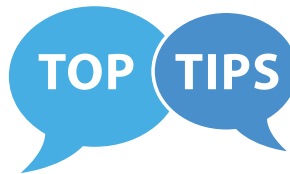


3 How To Be Your Own Editor

The secret to good writing is good editing. Dashing off the first draft of a report, an email, a novel is not necessarily the hard part! The challenge is to communicate clearly. In the past, I've written books and benefited from having a good editor. But in the business world, an editor is a luxury we often don't have. Becoming your own editor may seem daunting, but you can make it quite manageable. Here's how.



Before You Write

What and how you write depends on *whom* you're writing for. Think about your audience. Consider what they know and don't know. It will help shape the content. Be sure to do your research. Doing it will benefit your writing.

Draft One

First drafts are *not* the end product! Write knowing you will pare down later. But don't make more work for yourself than necessary. You can't tell every story. Have a sense of your primary message.

Draft Two

Rewrite then read. Analyse the structure of your work. Does it have a logical flow? Is it broken down into single-idea paragraphs? Is there a beginning, a middle and an end?

Draft Three

Look for common errors such as the overuse of jargon, long rambling sentences, or too much use of the passive instead of the active voice.

Final Draft

Final drafts are polished drafts. Double check to ensure the "fluff" is gone. Each sentence should be necessary. Read out to yourself to help identify final changes.