

## How To W.R.I.T.E.<sup>™</sup> Content

---

I use the acronym "W.R.I.T.E." to describe each of the necessary steps for

- W - WEIGH your idea options.
- R - REACH a formatting decision.
- I - INTRODUCE supporting points.
- T - TELL the relevant details.
- E - END by polishing document.

Let's take a quick look at each of these five steps...

### 1. *WEIGH Your Idea Options*

Every lesson begins with determining what you're going to write about for that specific lesson. As a general rule, there should be ONE primary focus in terms of your lesson topic. What will you write about?

While you probably have many ideas to begin with – and we'll cover how to find COUNTLESS ideas in future lessons – I do want to give you four quick ways to find ideas to write about that you can use for any of your lessons...

- ➔ **Competitor's bullet points.** That is, you find an existing sales page for a product (ebook, membership site, special report, etc.) that is related to yours and you look at their bullet points. Usually this will spawn many ideas to use as topics for your own lessons.
- ➔ **Magazine cover stories.** Another method is to look at the covers of magazines related to the topic of your membership site. This will also yield ideas to write about ... and fresh ones come with every new issue! (Note: You can also check your library for past issues or hunt for them online)
- ➔ **Bookstore lists.** Drop by your favorite bookstore (or browse online for every greater convenience at Amazon.com or BarnesAndNoble.com) and search for books within your category/topic and look for (1) The subjects of the books themselves and (2) additional ideas in the table of contents or on the back covers.

- **Ezine article subjects.** You can also visit your favorite online ezine article directory (EzineArticles.com, GoArticles.com, etc.) and look within categories related to your topic for existing ezine articles. Many of these will serve as suitable ideas to build lessons upon.

Of course, I tell you to do this to find IDEAS. Obviously you don't want to copy their content or even use a similar format or structure in organizing your lessons. Just use these methods to brainstorm ideas to write about.

## 2. REACH a Formatting Decision

Next, you'll want to decide how you'll organize the content of your lesson. While there are many different methods of doing this, I personally recommend one of the "big three" when it comes to sharing information ...

- **List.** A list is simple that: a set of ways, tips, keys, suggestions, ideas, methods, techniques, hints, etc. (I.E. 20 Membership Site Ideas. Ring any bells? ☺)
- **Tutorial.** A tutorial is a set of chronological steps to complete a process. If the topic of your lesson can be described in "how to" format, then it is a tutorial and should be organized in sequential steps. (Most of my lessons are arranged in this format.)
- **Q&A.** A "questions and answers" format is used when you identify a series of key questions related to your topic and then provide answers to them. (I'll talk specifically about this kind of lesson later ... you will want to use these at specific times within your sequence, but don't worry about that now.)

After you have decided which of these three formats works best for the lesson you're about to write, it's time to move on...

## 3. INTRODUCE Supporting Points

That is, come up with the appropriate list, steps or questions that you'll be using as the foundation for your lesson.

- If you are going to use "list", then share as many as you can possibly think of ... up to twenty. When you are sharing "ways"

or “tips” or “ideas”, the more you can share the better. Why? Because not all of the ideas will be relevant or interesting to the individual reader. But if you include numerous ways to do XYZ, it’s likely one or more will strike a chord and keep them happy.

- If you are going to use “steps”, then I recommend you keep it to single digits. The more steps there are to complete, the less likely your reader will actually do them. Less is more. Keep it to 9 steps or less, preferably 3-5 steps.
- If you are going to use “questions”, then I recommend that you keep it to 10 questions or less. And it’s important that you organize your questions in the best way so they are chunked together by topic.

As a general rule of thumb, I also recommend (and do myself!) that you try to share at least 2-3 tips or examples for each of your major points.

(Notice that I do this a lot and people respond with emails of gratitude on a daily basis – it really is beneficial to the reader to get as many different perspectives on information as possible.)

Look back over the first three steps that we’ve covered so far ... each of them have additional “sub-points” that further clarify or illustrate the major point.

After you have determined your format, it’s time to...

#### 4. *TELL the Relevant Details*

That is, fill-in-the-blanks for the points and sub-points that you’ve mentioned in your outline.

Write 1-3 paragraphs for each of your points/sub-points and you should have a nice lesson fleshed out.

Just to give you some additional ideas on “telling” the relevant details, I’m extracting a short brainstorming tool that I shared in my [Simple Product Profit Formula](#) course...

One of the things that you’ll find invaluable to you as an information writer is what I have labeled as a “starter swipe file”.

Just to further prove that I “practice what I preach” about using definitions as “enhancers”, here is one ☺...

## **DEFINED: “Starter Swipe File”**

**A “starter swipe file” is a collection of ideas to write about written in a single sentence formatted template.**

Example: One of the biggest reasons people fail in \_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_.

**I could use this starter sentence to create paragraphs of content about virtually any topic in the world –**

- One of the biggest reasons people fail in marketing is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in dieting is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in reaching goals is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in homeschooling is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in relationships is...

**These starter sentences allow me to quickly find something to write about anytime I want to build content into a document –**

- 1. At the beginning as I outline it,**
- 2. During the writing process as I struggle for ideas or**
- 3. At the conclusion of the document when I find portions of the document need more information.**

Now I encourage you to build your own swipe file of sentences that you can use to get you started on writing. You'll find that you have favorites that you refer to in EVERY lesson you write, while there will be others that are just perfect for certain scenarios.

Like I said, I encourage you to **build your own** swipe file. But because I've been doing this for a long time and have a very good index already created, I'm going to share fifty (yes that's 50!) of my own starter sentences that you can use as a catalyst for your own writing.

At the conclusion of this list I'll use several of them as examples just so I know you've got a good grasp of what I mean here.

**Note:** You'll probably want to print these out on a separate sheet of paper (maybe even laminate them) to refer to anytime you write.

1. One of the biggest reasons people fail in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The greatest lesson I've learned about \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The biggest mistake in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Here are the top seven reasons why you should \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If I had to narrow it down to five steps, they would be...
6. The real secret to \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
7. One thing that almost no one knows about \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Three of the best web sites for \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The absolute worst way to \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
10. A secret weapon I use for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Here's why you should never be afraid to \_\_\_\_\_...
12. Five proven ways to \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_.
13. The best model I've seen for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Two questions to ask when making this decision are \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The best example of \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Here's what you do when \_\_\_\_\_ happens...
17. The one thing you've been told that's wrong is \_\_\_\_\_.

18. New evidence suggests this about \_\_\_\_\_...
19. The one lesson I wish I had learned years ago is...
20. Here's how to protect yourself from \_\_\_\_\_...
21. The one question you must ask before \_\_\_\_\_ is...
22. Three simple exercises to help with \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_...
23. A simple way to organize your \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
24. An easy to follow system for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
25. An effective way to speed up your results is \_\_\_\_\_.
26. Here's a simple 10-step checklist for \_\_\_\_\_...
27. An often overlooked way to \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
28. When you face this problem \_\_\_\_\_, here's what to do...
29. Should you \_\_\_\_\_? Take this quiz...
30. If you're a beginner, then the first thing to do is \_\_\_\_\_.
31. If you're experienced, then here's an "advanced" tip...
32. Seven warning signs of \_\_\_\_\_ are...
33. Your three best options for \_\_\_\_\_ are...
34. A way to get faster results from \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_...
35. It only takes a few minutes to \_\_\_\_\_.
36. Five things you can do today are...
37. For \_\_\_\_\_, this works like crazy...
38. Why your \_\_\_\_\_ won't work.
39. Something every \_\_\_\_\_ needs to know is \_\_\_\_\_.
40. The best way I know to \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
41. A simple shortcut for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
42. Here's a "rule" about \_\_\_\_\_ you should BREAK...
43. The biggest waste of time for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
44. If I could only do one thing for \_\_\_\_\_ it would be \_\_\_\_\_.
45. You can actually cut \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.
46. The eleven key ingredients of \_\_\_\_\_ are...
47. My best advice for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.



48. Five ways to improve your existing \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.
49. A good way to reduce costs is \_\_\_\_\_.
50. Here is a daily schedule you can refer to for \_\_\_\_\_...

What an incredible resource this is for you! (It's invaluable to me.) There are so many different "angles" represented in this list (*the fastest way to do something, ways to improve, shortcuts, schedules, questions, exercises, lessons, mistakes, etc.*) that you could mix-n-match and never stop coming up with ideas to write about in your next lesson.

Now just to make certain you understand how to use these templates, let's work through 3 of them together...

Example: "The biggest mistake in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_."

If you were writing a lesson on homeschooling, you might use this template as "the biggest mistake in homeschooling is choosing the wrong curriculum." You would then go on to explain why that's the biggest mistake and how to avoid it.

Example: "The one question you must ask before \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_."

If you were writing a lesson on hiring a ghostwriter, you might use this template as "the one question you must ask before hiring a ghostwriter is 'do you have references?'" You would then write as many paragraphs as needed to explain why references are important, address what the reader should look for in a ghostwriter's references and so forth.

Example: "Here's how to protect yourself from \_\_\_\_\_."

If you were writing a lesson on "setting up a web site", you might use this template as "here's how you protect yourself from FTC compliance penalties". You would then explain ways to avoid potential problem with unsubstantiated claims, hype, etc.

You begin with one of the template sentences and then you simply take as many paragraphs as you need to thoroughly explain things.

It's a writer's secret weapon, a cure for writer's block and a brilliant way to brainstorm ideas anytime you want all rolled into one.

### 5. *END by Polishing Document*

Once you've written the content for your lesson, you'll want to fine-tune it. Generally speaking, there are three things that I recommend you do in putting on the finishing touches for your lesson...

- ➔ **PAD.** That is, look for areas of your lesson that need further explanation. Are there any areas that are not clearly explained? Are there areas that are noticeably weaker than others? Make sure your points are understandable. Try to add in as many examples as possible to better illustrate the points. Toss in a few more tips here and there where needed. You can add interview transcripts, quotes, research and other bits of information to get the points across better and add a bit more meat to the report.
- ➔ **POLISH.** Use different fonts to distinguish areas of your content. Change colors. Use alternative styles such as bold face, italics and underline. Indent text where appropriate. Use bullet points. (Especially on lists.) Insert headers, footers and graphics (just don't overdo it!)
- ➔ **PROOFREAD.** The final "smoothing out" you need to make certain you do is to proofread your entire document for typographic and grammatical errors. Better still would be to allow someone else who is qualified to do it for you. While this isn't a deal breaker by any means (quality of content is MUCH more important than quality of grammar in information based lessons), it certainly is a good idea to put your best foot forward.

Well that above covers it!

Now the only thing left to do is get writing! ☺