

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF BUSINESS WRITING

'metagrobolised'
(meh•tah•grow•bo•lie•se•duh)
adjective - perplexed, confused.

I Thou shalt not use words like 'thou' nor 'shalt'.

Or anything else that isn't Plain English – even if your topic is complex. *KISS: Keep It Simple, Simon.*

II Answer thy reader's biggest prayer first.

Lead with your 'big news.' You don't always have to tell a story. Cut to the chase, then 'backfill' with readers' likely questions. If they stop reading before the end, at least they'll get your main point.

III Waffley writing is an abomination unto readers.

Be brief. Like this.

IV Selfishness is sinful.

Step into your reader's sandals and stay there. Make it about them, not you.

V Know thy reader.

It's about psychology, not fancy words. The better amateur psychologist you are, the better writer you'll be.

Learn more about how to engage, motivate and persuade people. The book 'Influence' by Cialdini is a good start.



VI Thou must believe!

If you're not sold on your argument, your readers won't be. Make a strong case. Consider both logical and emotional angles. And remember to quantify: *Specifics sell.*

VII God rested on the seventh day; readers want to rest every day.

Make life easier for them by doing the 'work' for them. More people will then read more of your writing. For example, use bullets, graphics, summaries and key-points lists.

VIII Correctness is next to Godliness.

Mistakes are unholy. Check your grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. You don't want to look dum. <Like that.

IX Lift thine eyes to the sky.

Or anywhere but your page, once you've finished writing. Proofreading is crucial. Put it aside to get fresh eyes. Never write, polish, and send immediately.

X Read the word.

Actually, read lots of them – quality words written by fine writers. It programs your brain to produce the same. (Read to your kids, too, if you have them; it'll change their lives.)

Don't send your readers to Hard-to-Read-Hell!