

# Be a Better Writer

Improving Written  
Workplace Communication

# The Value of Writing Well

*“Make thyself a craftsman in speech, and thereby thou shall you gain the upper hand.”*

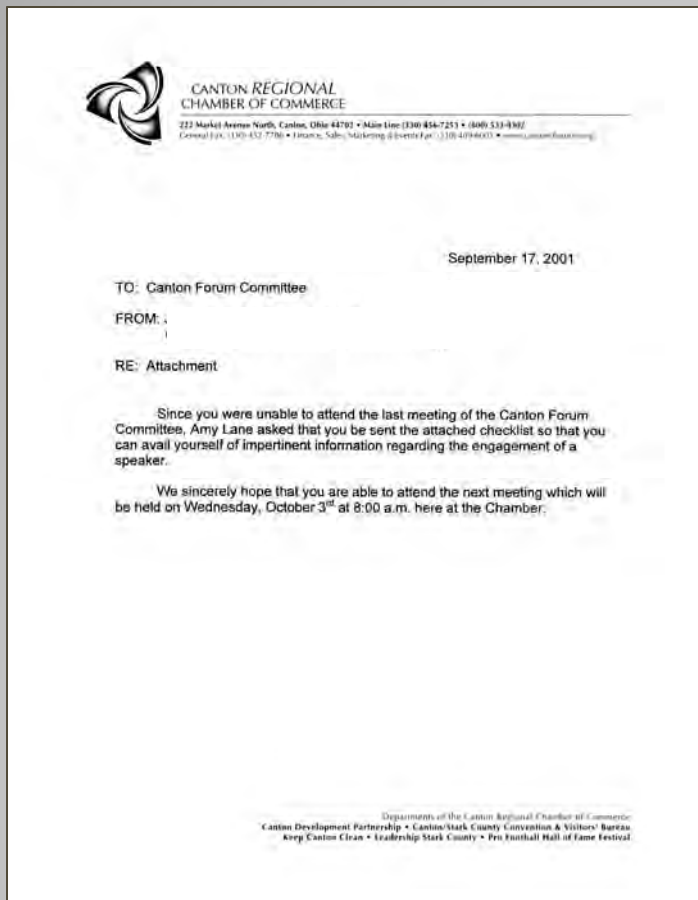
*-Egyptian tomb inscription*

# The Value of Writing Well

- Writing is a "marker" for people who are more intelligent, more promotable and more valuable\*
- An Office Team survey of 150 senior executives showed that 84% said it takes just 1 or 2 typos to remove a candidate from consideration for a job

\*National Commission on Writing

# The Pain of Poor Writing



“... Amy asked that you be sent the attached checklist so that you can avail yourself of impertinent information regarding the engagement of a speaker.”



# How Good a Writer Are You?

- What kind of impression are you making?
- Could you recognize your shortcomings as a writer?

# What We'll Cover

- The Four C's
  - Correct
  - Concise
  - Compelling
  - Clear

# What We'll Cover

- If you didn't learn it in elementary school ... you won't learn it today
- If you have the fundamentals, you **WILL** be a better writer



**Correct:  
The Write Word**

# The Meaning Aludes Me

- When you use a word, make sure it's the right word

*My wife had a difficult delivery.  
They had to seduce labor.*

# The Meaning Aludes Me

- When you use a word, make sure it's the right word

*Let's conjugate at the baggage claim.  
You can't rest on your morals.  
We need to be translucent with our  
customers.*



# The Meaning Aludes Me

- There's no excuse for using the wrong word



# Correct: Proofreading

# Proofreading Techniques

- Self-checks

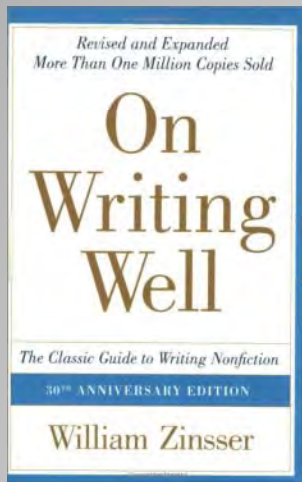
- Read out loud
- Print and read it with a finger
- Put it away and check it later
- Read it backwards

- Have someone else read it

*“WGBH TV, your favorite public television station”*

**Concise**

# Less is More



"There's not much to be said about the period except that most writers don't reach it soon enough."

William Zinsser

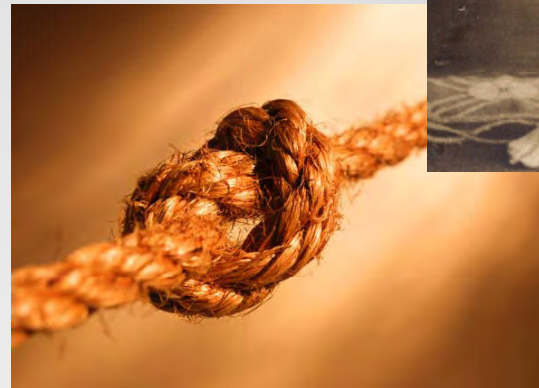
# Less is More

- Continual partial attention
- Your writing has to compete with other sources of information
- Say less ... communicate more

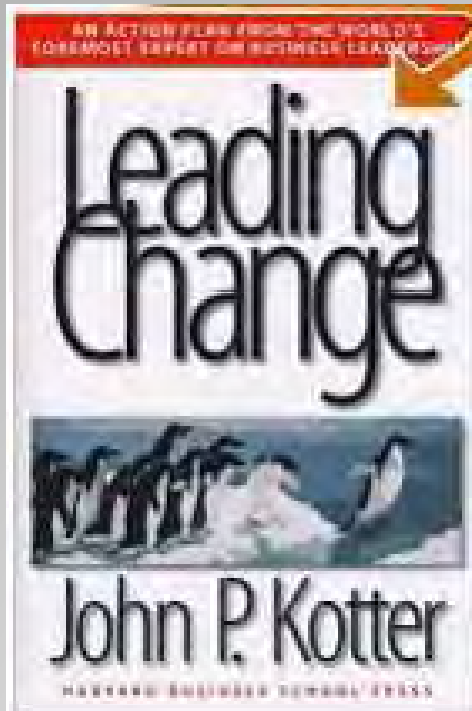


# Less is More

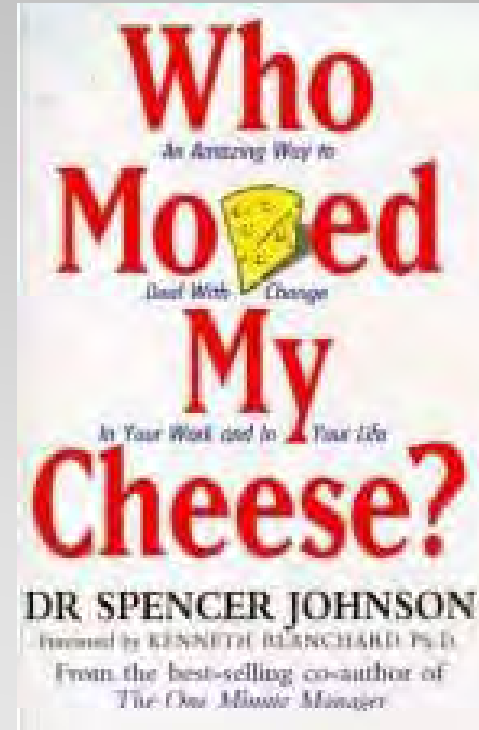
- o Houdini's secret



# Less is More



**210,000 Copies**



**14 Million Copies**

**Compelling**

# Writing Style

- The combination of word choice, sentence structure and other factors
  - Differs with audiences, format and purpose
- We'll just touch on a few elements

# Stay Active



- Write in the active voice
  - The subject does something to the object

*Russ drank a beer.*

*The car burns oil.*

*The dog ate my homework.*

# Stay Active

- Write in the active voice
- Active writing is:
  - Shorter
  - More direct
  - More interesting
  - More easily understood

**Clear**

# The Communications Plan

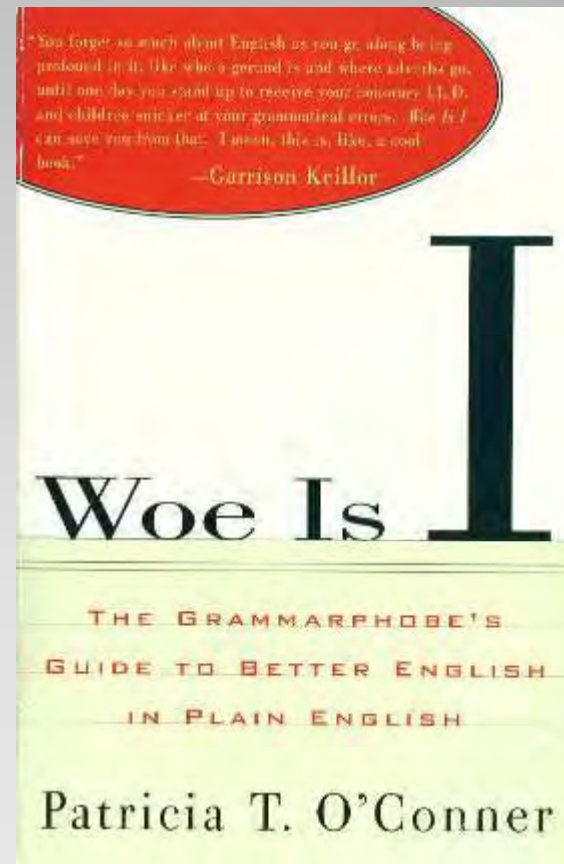
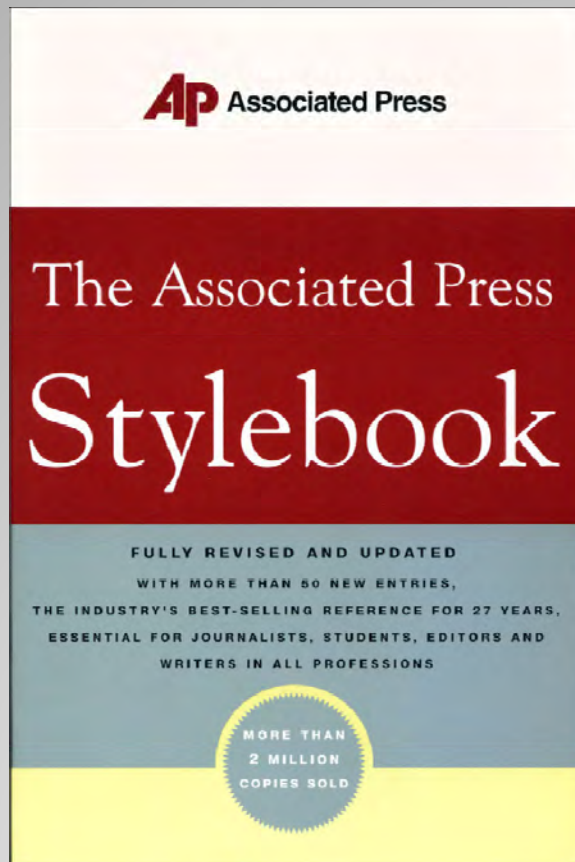
- **Audience:**  
Who is the reader?
- **Objective:**  
What do you want the reader to know, feel or do?
- **Messages:**  
What are the key points you want to communicate?

# The inverted pyramid

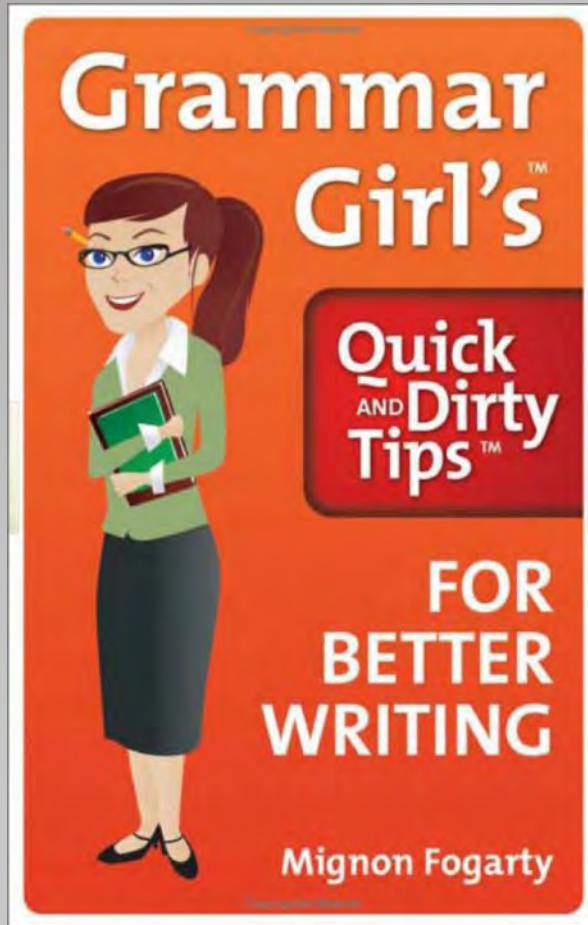


# Resources

# Resources



# Resources



# The Value of Writing Well

- Customers and clients evaluate you and your firm, in part, based on your written communication skills
- Good writing conveys an image of professionalism and competence

# Be a Better Business Writer

Improving Written  
Workplace Communication