

THOUGHTS ON PROFESSIONAL WRITING

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2008

WRITING PROBLEMS:

1. Authors present more words than required to get across the message they want to communicate.
2. Authors present more arguments than required to get across the message they want to communicate.
3. Authors do not present enough arguments to get across the message they want to communicate.
4. Authors present irrelevant arguments to the message they want to communicate because these were "side-track" arguments they went through to get to their own understanding.

ADVICE:

1. Carefully create a short and disciplined title that "frames" the content, key variable(s), or purpose of the written piece.
2. Carefully create a disciplined outline for the paper to be written (no matter how long the written piece is to be) with two levels of headings beyond the title. Refine the outline before writing begins.
3. Start the formal written piece with the title and the full outline of headings. Duplicate a second set of headings below the first set. Then begin writing within that second set. The writing process may result in a revised outline and those revisions should be incorporated.
4. In the full final draft, retain the full outline as the opening for the written paper. Have at least the first level of headings beyond the title show up in the final written piece (the next level headings may need to be dropped if it comes across as too choppy). Retaining the opening stand-alone outline will help those critiquing your written piece.
5. Have others read and critique your written piece, and then revise.
6. Once the written piece is finished, remove the opening stand-alone outline.