

Find Your Voice..



How to Develop an Effective Writing Voice

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FINDING AN EFFECTIVE VOICE WHEN WRITING can be a challenge. But it can be well worth it because it improves the quality of your work, helps you reach a wider audience, better connects with readers and entices people to seek out your work. But what exactly is a writing voice and what techniques can be used to develop it?

What is a Writing Voice?

A writing voice is something that should be unique and authentic. Readers recognize an authentic voice by the words and language you choose and it makes work *stand out*. But it's not just your writing style and tone, although these play a part. It's about communicating your ideas and passions while showing a unique way of looking at a topic or issue.

Developing Your Own Voice: The Benefits

When writing, you can't use your voice or body language to communicate. So writing in a unique voice forces you to choose words more carefully and arrange sentences more rhythmically so that each paragraph not only expresses an idea, but also reveals more of your style.

When you get it right, your writing voice helps communicate your ideas more clearly than when you speak. It also becomes easier to produce content consistently.

So, developing a voice creates a chain of positive events:

- It helps you communicate your ideas more powerfully.
- Your work is more likely to get noticed by new readers and then shared with others.
- You're more likely to attract a dedicated group of fans who return to your content.
- You're more likely to sell your work to potential clients.

Exercises to Find Your Writing Voice

If you're struggling to find your writing voice for a particular piece, here are a few techniques that could help:

Describe Your Client's Personality in Five Words

For example: ambitious, positive, fun, cool and friendly. How can you show these characteristics in the words you use, and in the rhythm and tone of your writing?

What Do They Value Most in Life?

When you list the things that matter to them, you can start to see more clearly how they view the world and put these ideas into your writing.

Imagine Your Ideal Reader

Describe him or her in detail. What do they look like, what kind of personality do they have and how do they view the world? Keep this description at hand and write as if you're addressing only this person. It's a great way to focus your work.

Ask for Feedback

Ask friends and colleagues how you come across when they read your content. Make a note of their answers.

- Read it aloud. Hearing the words spoken helps you recognize the strengths and weaknesses of your writing voice.

Find an Outlet for Your Voice

Today, there are plenty of ways to hone in on a writing voice: existing articles, social media or websites.

Getting the right writing voice may take a few attempts but it's essential for effective writing. Being able to adapt your writing voice will attract more readers and you're more likely to get noticed by clients looking for writers.

“Readers recognize authentic voice by the words and language you choose and it makes work *stand out*.”

Free-Write

Set a timer for five minutes and write whatever comes into your head. When you look back over your writing, are there any recurring features – such as word choice and tone? You may want to use these writing “mannerisms” to emphasize your unique voice.

Quick Tips to Strengthen Your Voice

- Speak the reader's language. Trying to sound clever is a turn off.
- Use shorter sentences alongside longer ones; they'll make your voice sound more dynamic.
- Write quickly, edit slowly. Get your thoughts down, then come back later to fine-tune your message.

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