

An Incomplete Manifesto on Writing Manifestos

by Kate Templeton

Upset the apple cart. Be bold and provocative in your assertions, whether your manifesto is written for the corporate, education, or political sphere.

Embrace your role as a change agent. Successful manifestos from history call for desired or needed change.

Be concise, be clear. Make every word work towards your overall goal.

Be original. If someone else has said it already, it's not really a manifesto.

Be pragmatic. The most successful manifestos offer solutions to real problems, even if what defines a “problem” varies widely.

Write poetry, not platitudes. Not literally poetry: to borrow from Coleridge's definition of poetry, “the *best* words [for the situation] in the best order.”

Break all the rules—except this one. Manifestos can and should be radical. But we have expectations of all genres, including manifestos. If you're going to deviate from those expectations, do so with good reason.