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My Biggest Challenge as a Writer

I think the biggest challenge I have with my writing comes down to being brief and concise. Amplified with my tendency to naturally gravitate to a more formal, academic voice, this tends to create some communication barriers. My current job is at an insurance company, taking inbound phone calls and resolving whatever issue the caller has. This frequently means I need to send a message or email to a co-worker or supervisor. My inability to remain brief and concise with my language has created a trend, it seems, where a co-worker or supervisor takes a quick glance over my message to get the “main points” from a lengthy message, and then responds based on that interpretation. To a certain extent, there’s no need for me to relay every detail that I considered of note and thoroughly explain step-by-step how I came to conclude a policy or form is Not In Good Order or In Good Order. Explaining my thought process in such detail could help my co-workers and supervisors, but probably doesn’t as they need to review the case anyways. There is a demonstrable need for me to tone down my language on a day-to-day basis, and try to become brief and concise, and this is just considering the frustration I experience every day at work. If I truly kept in mind my audience and purpose for each message or email, it is extremely likely that I would avoid these issues.

My Biggest Strength as a Writer

I think my ability to write in length and detail -and not in a repetitive manner- results in whatever audience I write for having a logical, fluid, and precise understanding of my purpose. There is absolutely a need for being brief and concise. However, from a practical perspective about the importance of my writing, the more important it is in school, work, or elsewhere, the more important it is to ensure there is no miscommunication. In the papers and essays that I write

for various classes, particularly those that are more argumentative, persuasive, or research-oriented, my familiarity and comfort with length, specificity, and complicated language allows me to somewhat quickly and easily write quality papers (at least based on the grades I've received). In the emails and messages I send to co-workers and supervisors, going through each step of my mental process may be tiring, *but when working with a person's entire life savings or retirement*, perhaps it is critical to ensure there is no miscommunication or about the situation -and my purpose.

Learning More to Improve my Writing

I want to learn more. I have a drive to constantly learn more about whatever I do, even if I truly do not care for it. I was homeschooled for several years, and my adoptive mother was a terrible teacher. What I write, and how I write, is largely informed just based on what feels natural to me. I want to know why and how writing works on a technical level. I tend to take things to what some may consider to be an unnecessarily technical level, but striving for a deeper understanding of the world, myself, and how to be a better person is largely the only motivation anyone can truly have in life. Learning to write through a more technical lens is a broad statement, but there are a few items specifically: how does grammar work and why? How can I be more concise in my language? How can I naturally begin to consider my audience and purpose? I feel like if I learned the answers -and had the practice to implement those answers through writing- I could massively improve my capabilities as a writer, be better understood, and even begin to enjoy writing as a mechanism to share the thoughts, ideas, and experiences I have through my fascination with deep-diving on subjects to learn everything I possibly can.

There are two specific considerations I learned in English 1010 that I think will carry with me for the rest of my writing career. The first is "practice." The only way for me to

implement the things I want to learn is by practice. I can read a textbook to “learn” Ancient Greek, but if I do not read, write, or speak Ancient Greek before, during, or after reading this textbook, have I truly learned anything? This is the approach I take with learning in life, and if I want to learn the intricacies of how our written language works, I need to write more. At the moment, I have only written when I have to. I think that is a result of my own disillusionment from monotonous writing assignments on mundane topics, when I’ve thought a great deal about writing research papers, political manifestos, nerdy fiction, and poetry for my own enjoyment.

And this leads to the second consideration that has been drilled into my head in English 1010: audience and purpose. For my entire life, whenever I write I have not truly kept in mind either the audience or purpose. My writing inevitably becomes a far-left hit piece dunking on corporations, the political elite, and our system of government. That kind of writing is what I am the most comfortable with, but in my desire to only write about what I feel comfortable with, I frequently lose track of both the audience and purpose of my paper. Due to this English 1010 course, I have begun to implement this consideration into my daily work life the last couple of weeks. When a co-worker posts a “Would You Rather” question (as a general team-bonding exercise), I frequently would take the conversation in a far deeper and darker place than was necessary. The audience are my co-workers, the people I work with, and are just trying to make conversation unrelated to work while our hold times reach 30+ minutes. The purpose is to get to know each other, and have some positive conversations in between being berated by every other caller. There is a whole world of writing I have yet to explore, and just by choosing to practice more, and considering my audience and purpose, I believe that I will truly become a better writer, for school, work, and personal enjoyment.