

# WELCOME!

## PACIFIC NORTHWEST FORESTRY LEADERSHIP



**CARRIANN LANE**

Write Words Inc.

## WRITING FOR ENGAGEMENT: Creating Captivating Content



## TODAY'S OBJECTIVES



# WHAT'S THE **CONVERSATION**?



**Content is conversation.**

Your members want to **have a conversation with you**.  
Capture their attention and keep it by connecting to  
conversations they want to start.





REPRESENT REAL CHARACTERISTICS  
AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF ONE  
READER GROUP



WHO?

PERSONNAS BREATHE LIFE INTO  
READER DEMOGRAPHICS



HELP YOU ANTICIPATE  
CONVERSATIONS  
READERS WANT TO START







**SCENARIOS**

**REPRESENT A CONVERSATION  
READERS WANT TO START.**



## SCENARIOS

Scenarios help you:

- Realize your readers are **GOAL ORIENTED**.
- Focus on what's **IMPORTANT** to your readers.
- Write your **CONTENT** as **CONVERSATION**.

# YOU HAVE **51 SECONDS.**



## THE BAD NEWS

- The average open rate of email marketing and newsletter campaigns in North America is around 31%.
- The average time spent reading digital newsletters in North America is **51 seconds.**



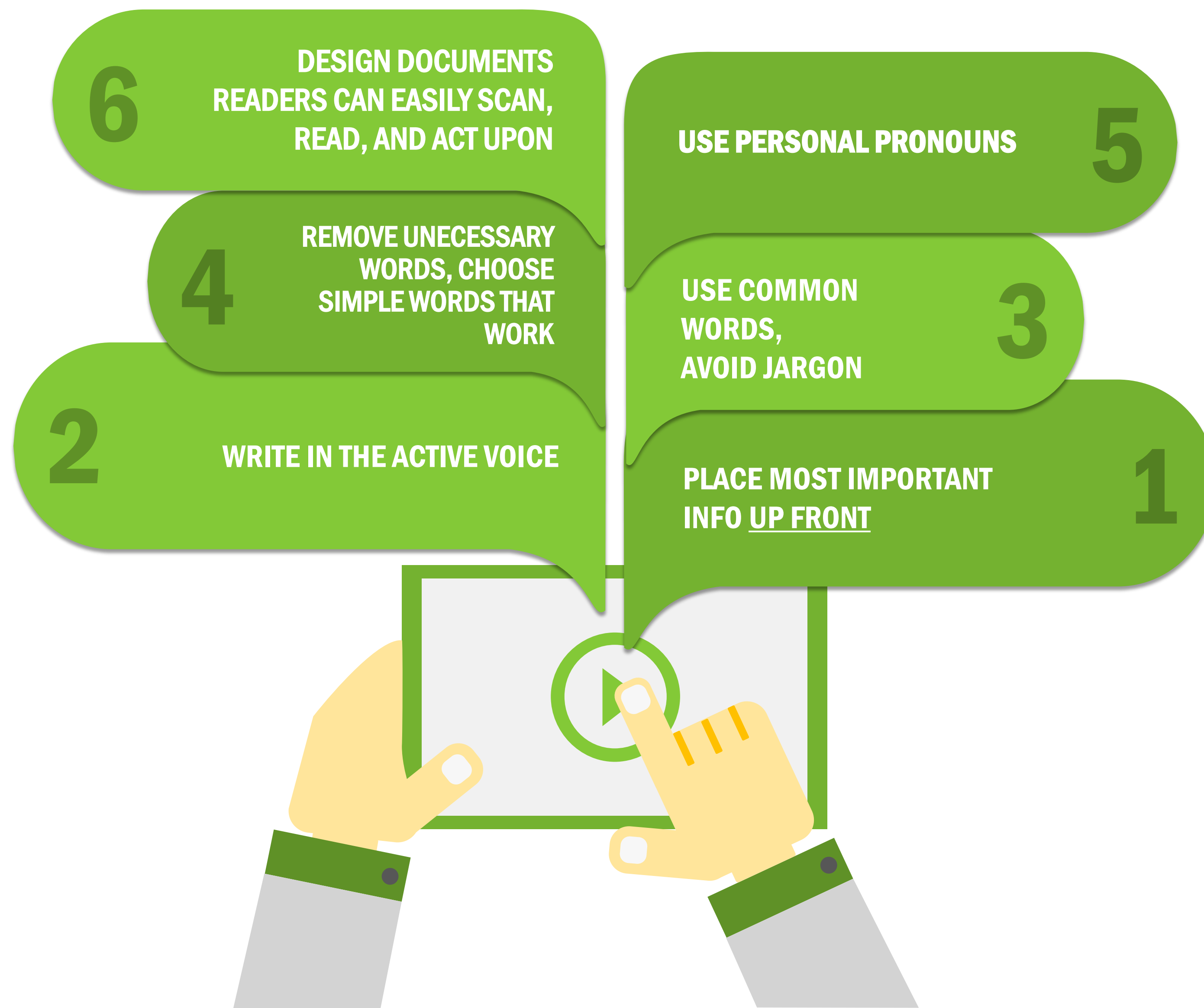
## THE GOOD NEWS



Email remains the most effective method of communication.

You can write for this reality!

# SIX GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ENGAGING CONTENT





# ORGANIZE YOUR MESSAGE

## LEAD WITH YOUR CONCLUSION.

Choose descending order: conclusion first, support, then links to background information.

Think “bite, snack, meal.”

## WRITE MEANINGFUL HEADINGS AND HEADLINES.

Give away the big picture in summary format.  
Write headlines in the form of a question your readers might ask.

## INCREASE OPEN RATES BY A/B TESTING SEVERAL SUBJECT LINES.

Testing several send times might also reveal an optimum time of day to reach your readers.

## GRAB ATTENTION WITH RUN-IN HEADLINES AND HEADINGS.

Draw the reader’s eye and guide them through your story.



TIPS





# WRITE IN **ACTIVE VOICE**

## Banish “7 Deadly Verbs”



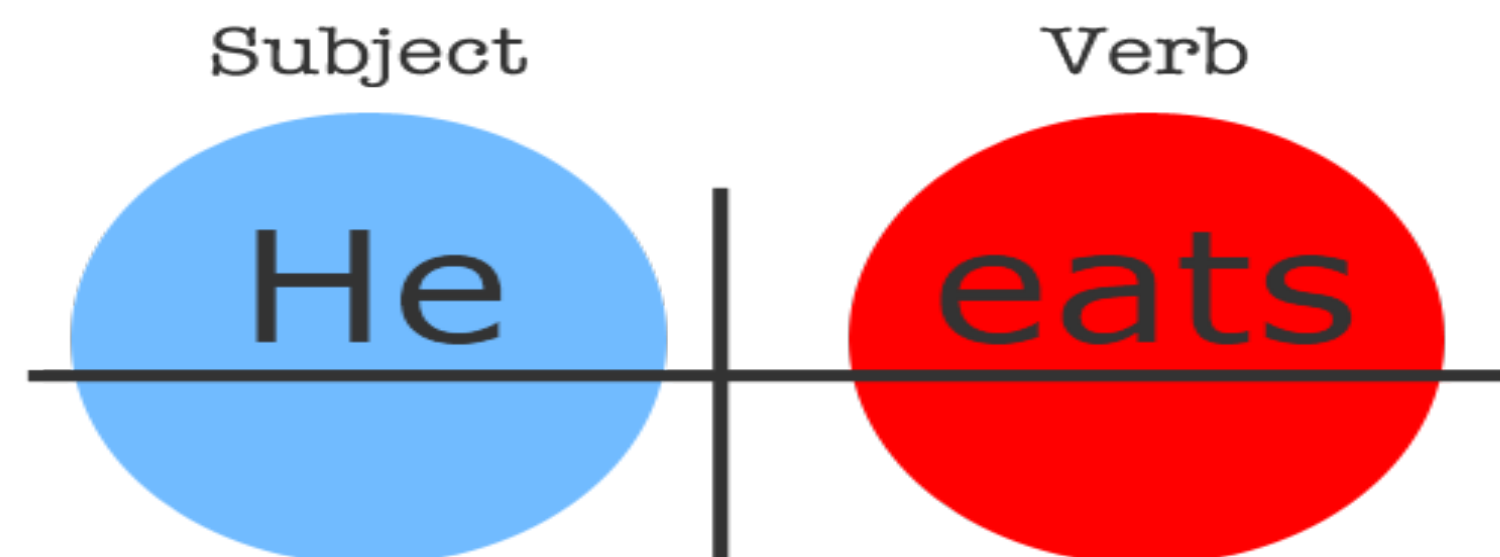


# ACTIVATE YOUR SENTENCES

**Ask:** “What’s happening?” to find the verb.

**Ask:** “Who’s doing it?” to find the subject.

**Keep subject and verb together.**





USE COMMON WORDS, **AVOID JARGON**



**What are your “in-house” words?**



## CHOOSE **ENGAGING, SHORT** WORDS

**Accordingly**

—————→ **so**

**As a means of**

—————→ **to**

**As prescribed by**

—————→ **under or in**

**At a later date**

—————→ **later**



# SIMPLIFY COMPLEX SENTENCE STRUCTURE



“Changes to an entrenched paradigm generally follow the accumulation of anomalies over time that reflect inconsistencies in system functions, challenge the existing system structure, and ultimately lead to crisis or revolution.”

1 sentence, 31 words, 21.6 grade level.



**USE PERSONAL  
PRONOUNS.**

**“YOU”**

**“I”**

**“WE”**

**HAVE A  
CONVERSATION WITH  
YOUR READER.**



# DESIGN DOCUMENTS WELL



## DIVIDE CONTENT INTO SHORT, DIGESTIBLE SECTIONS

Think “bite, snack, meal.”

## LIMIT LENGTH

Sentences: 10-17 words  
Paragraphs: 3-4 lines

## CHOOSE A CLEAN FONT

Use easy-to-read, sans-serif  
font for email or web.

## MAXIMIZE WHITE SPACE

Provide many optic rests.  
White space allows  
readers to scan quickly  
and improves reading  
ease.



**THANK YOU FOR  
TRAINING WITH US  
TODAY!**

**Carriann Lane  
Write Words Inc.**

