

# Being Heard and Making Sense: Effective Communications Strategies

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## Pre-Writing Basics

### The Five Elements That Orient Your Writing:

1. Who? To whom are you writing? Audience
2. Why? What do I want people to understand? Intent/Purpose
3. What? What is the subject of my writing? Content
4. How? What do I want to achieve with my writing?  
Expository/Persuasive
5. Where? How does format affect my writing? Reports/Posters/E-Mail/  
Website

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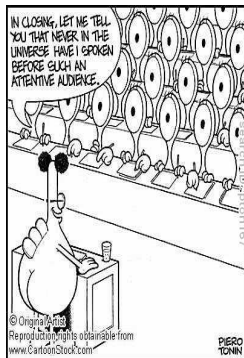
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## Audience

### Key Factors For Determining Your Audience:

- Level of Knowledge
  - Does your audience share your specific expertise?
- Interest of Audience
  - Is your audience "active" or "passive"?
- Importance of Information to Audience
  - How does your writing affect your audience's job? Workplace? Life?



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## Intent/Purpose

What is the intent or purpose of my writing?

- General Information
- Specific Information
- Instructions/Guidelines
- Continuation of Previous Writing
- Expanding An Existing Knowledge Base



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## Content

What Am I Writing?

- Scope of Content
- Necessity of Content
- Importance of Content



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## Style

What Do I Want To Achieve With My Writing?

- Expository: "How-To" Writing
- Persuasive: "Why you Should" Writing



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## Format

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### In Which Medium Will I Be Writing?

- Reports: Longer, More Involved, Expertise
- Posters: Short, Punchy, Visual
- E-Mail: Brief, Time Factors, Peers
- Website: Accessibility, Links, Visual

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## Concision



All professional writing should aim for concision of expression. Use language that is as simple as possible without “dumbing down” your content.

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Yesterday afternoon, just as the lunch bell rang, Henry, who lives on Elm Street, bounced the big, red ball, which he got for his ninth birthday, against the wall of the school so hard that it rebounded into the street in front of the schoolyard and almost caused an accident.

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Yesterday afternoon, Henry bounced the big, red ball, which he got for his ninth birthday, against the wall of the school so hard that it rebounded into the street in front of the schoolyard and almost caused an accident.

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Henry bounced the big, red ball against the wall of the school so hard that it rebounded into the street in front of the schoolyard and almost caused an accident.

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Henry bounced the big, red ball against the wall of the school so hard that it rebounded into the street in front of the schoolyard.

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Henry bounced the ball against the wall of the school.

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Henry bounced the ball.

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### Clarity

The language you choose for your writing depends on your audience. If you are writing for a specialized audience, your language will be far more complex than if you are writing for a public audience.



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## Continuity

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"If you could just email me the faxes  
of the photocopies of the transcripts  
of the fifteen phone messages in question,  
that would probably be the simplest."

As most of you write in multiple mediums, one way to ensure that your meaning gets across to your audience is to establish continuity. You need to construct your meaning so that it is adaptable to a variety of mediums. By doing this, your main meaning is repeated and, therefore, reinforced.

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