

The Write Stuff

Discover the write (get it? lol) ways to develop content for your local's digital communications tools.



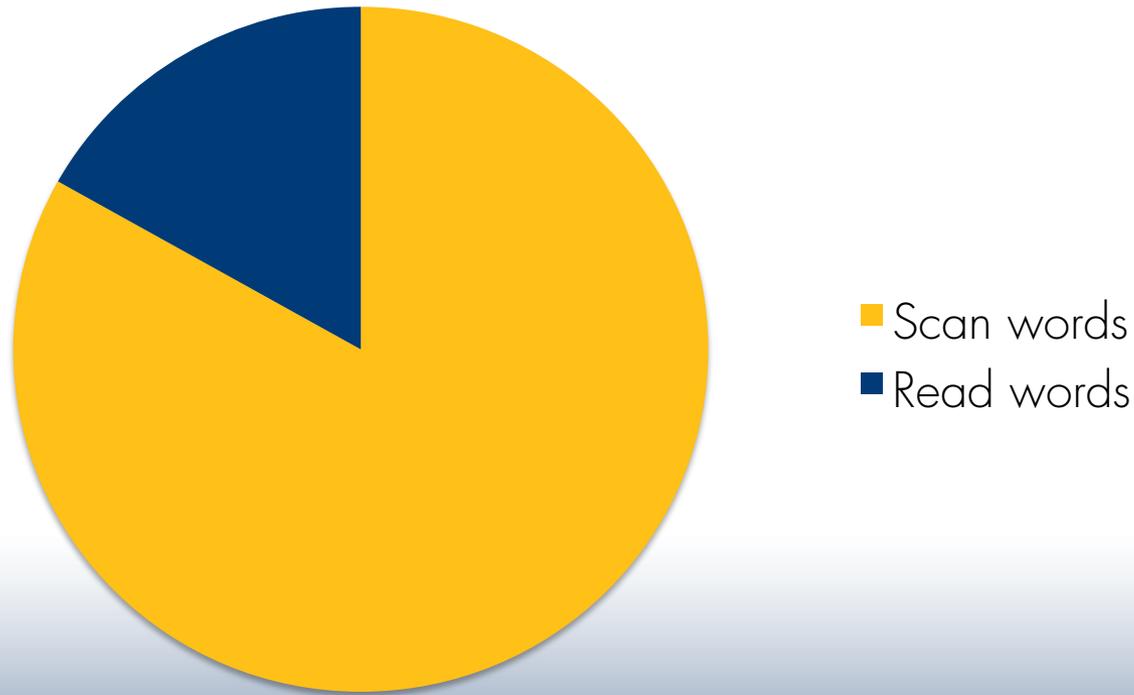
WWW.USW.ORG

Today's Workshop:

- Getting to know each other
- Principles of writing for the web
- Exercise 1: Editing web copy
- Exercise 2: Writing web copy

Why write differently on the web?

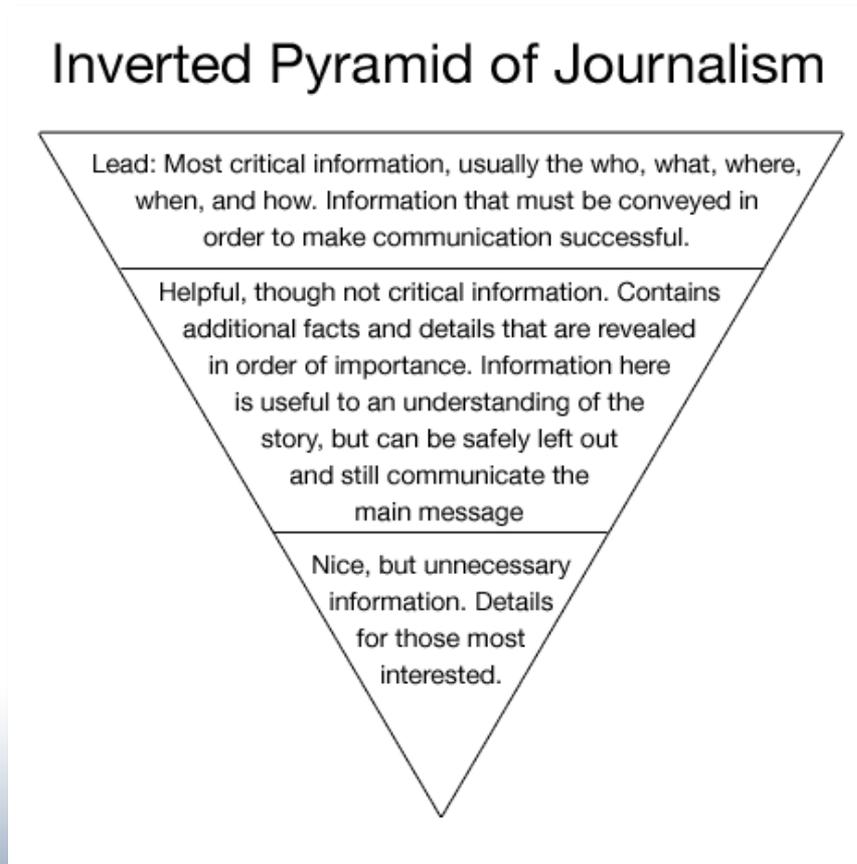
How people interact with content online



Principles of writing for the web:

- Structure text in an inverted pyramid style
- Employ a conversation, but factual tone
- Write using the active voice
- Utilize action verbs
- Use fewer words
- Include one idea per paragraph
- Provide specific useful information
- Use clear, descriptive headlines and plenty of sub-headings
- Format text appropriately
- Spellcheck and proofread to maintain consistent style

1. Inverted pyramid style



Inverted pyramid style example:

JUN 08, 2016

Women of Steel Members Join the AFL-CIO in Attending the 2016 UN Commission on the Status of Women in NYC

Ten USW Women of Steel (WOS) members in March joined a group of fifty union women from throughout the country in New York City for the AFL-CIO's inaugural Women's Global Leadership Program.

The four-day event brought together union sisters from both the private and public sectors to learn about the global labor movement while advocating for gender equality and inclusive international development at the United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women.

Workshops and panel discussions focused on issues such as poverty, discrimination, racism, and wage and gender inequality. The program was designed to give women leaders the opportunity to advocate for women and trade union rights in a global setting.

Cathy Drummond, District 11 WOS coordinator, left the event



2. Conversational & factual tone

- Tone of voice should be appropriate to the audience (members, media, public?)
- Don't be cryptic, don't start with a question
- Get to the point quickly

Tone examples:

POOR

Ever wonder where your dues dollar goes? You do have a say. As a member, you oversee how your dues are spent through electing your own leadership and participating in Local Union meetings. It takes money to run a strong effective union and union dues give the United Steelworkers the power to fight for your rights! Check out this graphic explaining every penny and pass it on. Knowledge is power! #USWWorks

BETTER

As a member, you oversee how your dues are spent by electing local union leaders and participating in meetings. It takes money to run a strong, effective union and union dues give the USW the ability to fight for your rights. Check out this graphic explaining every penny and pass it on. #USWWorks

3. Using an active voice



Active voice example:

POOR

The USW was represented by members from Local Union 13-227 in Washington D.C. this week at the Jefferson Awards Foundation national ceremony.

BETTER

Members from Local Union 13-227 represented the Steelworkers at the Jefferson Awards Foundation national ceremony in Washington D.C. this week.

4. Utilize Active Verbs



Action verbs example:

POOR

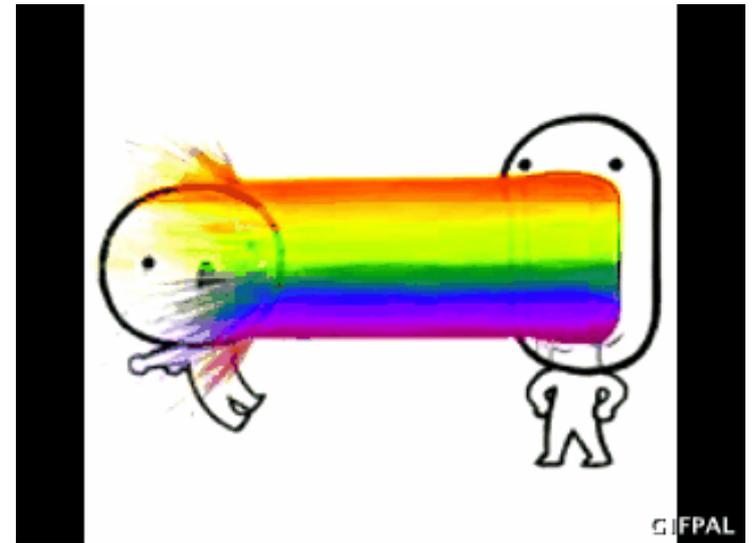
Sixteen hundred members of the USW in five states began negotiations with Express Scripts on June 25, 2015. The company continues to propose plans to take away these workers' quality health insurance. Instead Express Scripts would like to put a plan in place that would cost their employees thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket costs each year before insurance kicks in.

BETTER

Since June 25, 1,600 Steelworkers in five states have been negotiating with Express Scripts. The company is unrelenting in its attempt to strip these workers of their quality health insurance, insisting on a plan that would result in thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket costs each year before insurance kicks in.

5. Use Fewer Words

- Remove any paragraphs, sentences and words that don't directly help make your point
- Trim, edit, combine, be concise – DON'T WORD VOMIT ON YOUR READER



Fewer words example:

POOR

Congratulations! A group of 61 workers at Ultimate RB, a rubber recycling factory, in McMinnville, NM, has voted to join the USW. The biggest factor in their decision to unionize was the ability to be able to have a say and impact decisions that affect them. Hit that thumbs up in #Solidarity and to welcome our newest members to the Steelworkers family! #USWWorks

BETTER

Congratulations to 61 workers at Ultimate RB, a rubber recycling factory, in McMinnville, NM, who voted to join the USW so they could have a say about decisions that affect them. Hit that thumbs up to welcome Hit that thumbs up in welcome our newest members to the Steelworkers family! #USWWorks

6. One idea per paragraph

- Long, narrative paragraphs are difficult to read online!

One idea per paragraph example:

POOR

Clint Bryant, a member of USW Local 9036, is Saginaw, Michigan's newest member of City Council. At age 27, Clint will be the council's youngest member when he takes office on Monday, May 23.

Despite his youth, Clint has never shied away from a challenge. Eight years ago Clint joined the USW when he took a job as a bus driver at First Student Transportation. Not long after joining the union he was elected Unit President. In addition, Clint - a USW Leadership Scholarship student - has also served on the Bargaining Committee, and he is currently the Recording Secretary.

BETTER

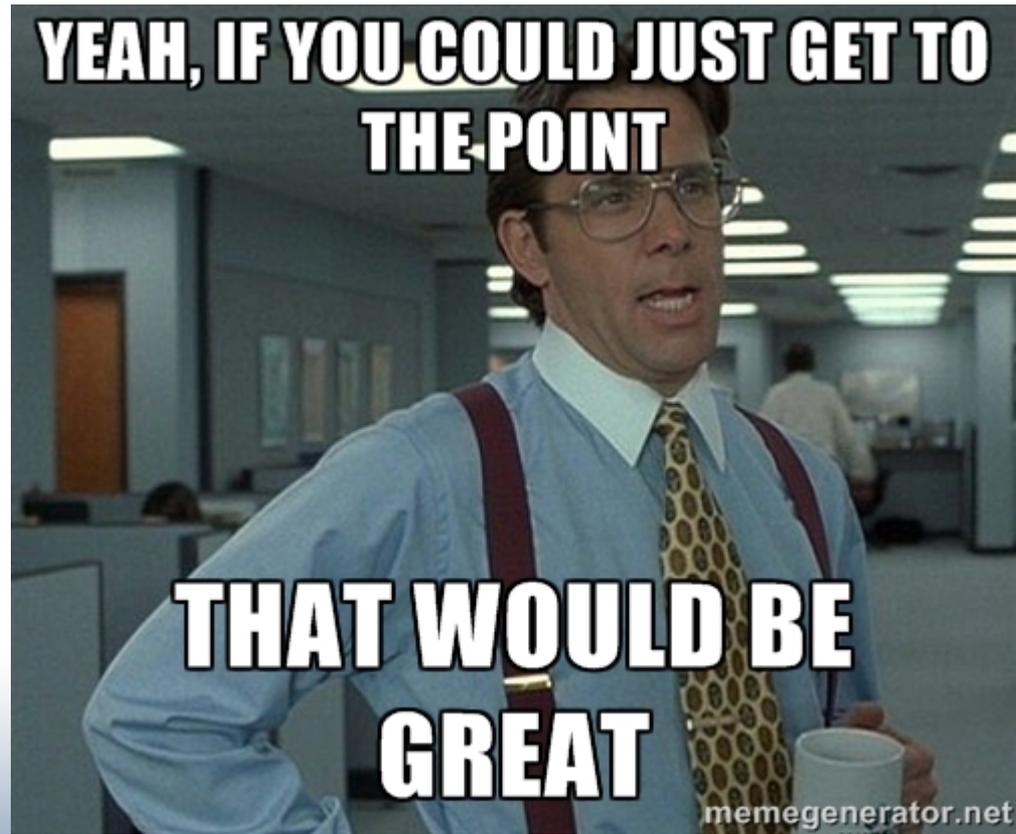
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In addition, Clint - a USW Leadership Scholarship student - has also served on the Bargaining Committee, and he is currently the Recording Secretary.

7. Provide specific, useful information



8. Clear descriptive headlines & plenty of sub-headings

- Headlines should be descriptive, not cryptic
- Headlines should be compelling
- Sub-headings should be used liberally

Headlines, sub-headings example:

POOR

What is Rapid Response?

Grassroots: Rapid Response is the Steelworkers' nonpartisan grassroots education, communication, and action program that involves every member.

Communication: Rapid Response allows for almost instant personal communication with every USW member on any given subject.

Education: Rapid Response provides the necessary structure to inform every USW member about pending legislation concerning labor and work-related issues. All information identifies the issue, its effect on workers and their families, and the sponsors and supporters. It also asks for a specific response.

Change: Rapid Response provides the tools to generate necessary changes in the legislative process to ensure that labor survives and flourishes far into the future.

Headlines, sub-headings example:

BETTER

What is Rapid Response?

Grassroots

Rapid Response is the Steelworkers' nonpartisan grassroots education, communication, and action program that involves every member.

Communication

Rapid Response allows for almost instant personal communication with every USW member on any given subject.

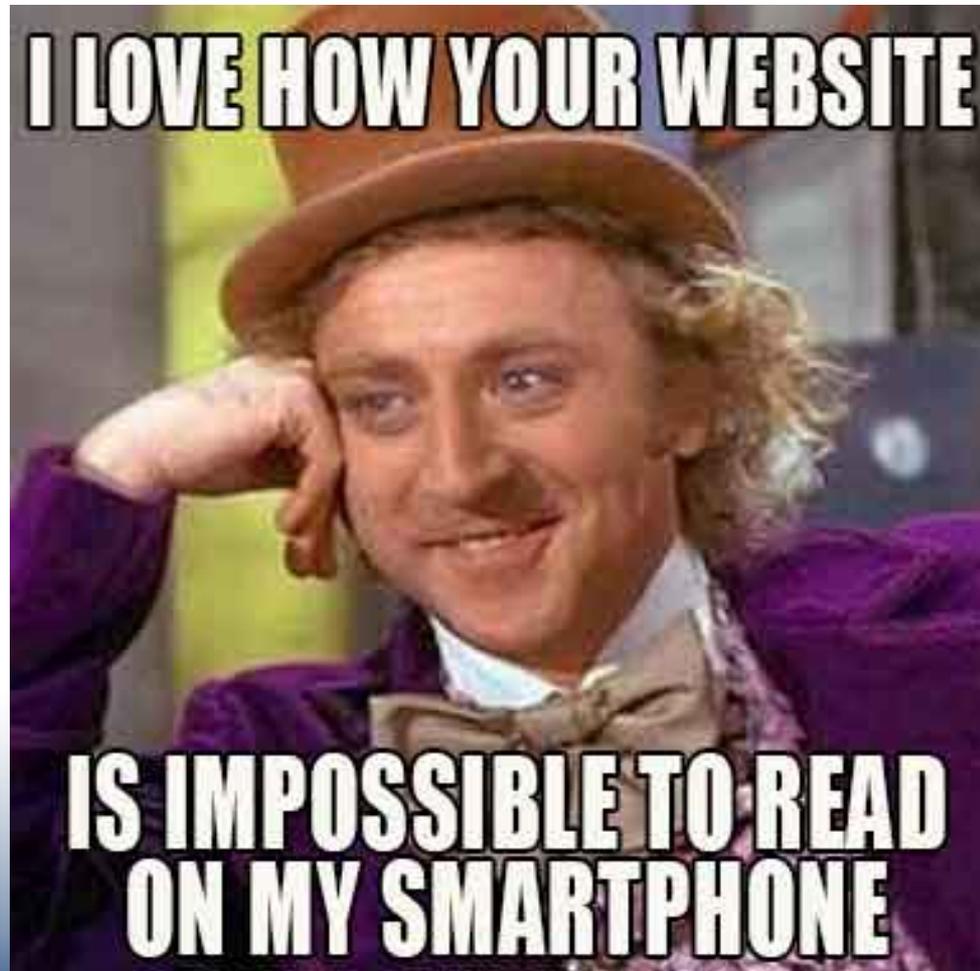
Education

Rapid Response provides the necessary structure to inform every USW member about pending legislation concerning labor and work-related issues. All information identifies the issue, its effect on workers and their families, and the sponsors and supporters. It also asks for a specific response.

Change

Rapid Response provides the tools to generate necessary changes in the legislative process to ensure that labor survives and flourishes far into the future.

9. Format text appropriately



Format examples:

POOR

WILL YOU STOP SCREAMING AT ME? IT'S SO RUDE!

BETTER

Will you stop screaming at me? It's so rude!

POOR

You can register three ways – online at www.usw.org/uspa; in person the day of registration; or by filling out the registration form and sending a check made payable to USW to 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

BETTER

You can register three ways:

- Online at usw.org/uspa
- In person the day of registration
- Fill out the registration form and mail with a check made out to USW to
USW
60 Blvd. of the Allies
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

10. Proofread and spellcheck

