



More Tips on Good Writing

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Categories : [Innovation](#)

Date : August 26, 2012



[David Ogilvy](#) was a legendary advertising executive who *Time* once called “the most sought-after wizard in today’s advertising industry.” In 1962 he sent [an internal memo titled “How to Write”](#) to all of the employees in his advertising agency, Ogilvy & Mather. His ten hints about writing are good for any kind of writing.

I especially like “Write the way you talk. Naturally” and “Never use jargon words like reconceptualize, demassification, attitudinally, judgmentally. They are hallmarks of a pretentious ass.” Another good one is “If you want ACTION, don’t write. Go and tell the guy what you want.” Ogilvy was writing before email, but that last hint seems especially important today when we are more likely to send an email rather than walk down the hall and have a conversation. It may not be possible for us to limit our writing to two pages on any subject (another hint), but shorter almost always is better. I’m not familiar with the [Roman-Raphaelson book](#) he mentions, but it is still in print and available at Amazon.

I’ve seen Ogilvy’s list in different places, but this link comes from [Brain Pickings](#), a weekly online digest focused broadly on creativity. It is free and contains some pretty interesting stuff. Earlier



posts on writing are [here](#) (Alfred Kahn) and [here](#). (C.S. Lewis).