

## Four Common Writing Mistakes and How to Fix Them

Here are four common writing mistakes people make. Avoid them to bring whatever you write to the next level and make it easy for your reader to understand what you're communicating.

### 1. Cut the jargon

We often incorporate industry jargon without even realizing it. Our target customers are probably also familiar with the lingo, so what is the problem? A little bit of it is fine, especially if you are a business-to-business operation. But, you can make your writing more powerful if you limit its use.

#### How to Fix It:

By using simple, common words, you make your writing accessible to everyone. If your writing can be understood by your kids, grandma or significant other, then you know you are keeping the piece clear. If it's easy for them to follow, then your customers will have no problem either.

### 2. Avoid repetition

It's easy to repeat the same word or phrase when writing, particularly if we're describing a product or service. But, variety will keep your audience engaged and keep reading.

#### How to Fix It:

A good test for this is to read your writing backwards to catch these repeated words. Then, use a thesaurus to come up other words as replacements. For cases where you can't substitute a word – such as naming the service you provide – try to rephrase sentences so that you limit how many times you use the word in a given piece.

### 3. Remove words

Make each word count. Remove filler words that don't add value, such as just, very, also, so, that, then, really and like. Another common culprit is using multiple words together that mean the same thing. Examples include end result, advanced planning or surrounded on all sides.

#### How to Fix It:

Delete any unnecessary words or phrases. Again, reading what you're writing backwards can sometimes make them easier to spot. It's also a great trick is to try to write as if you're posting the content to social media. Can you find a way to fit it into those character counts? Even if your final piece is longer, this exercise will help you identify unnecessary details or words.

### 4. Use simple sentences

When we put too many ideas into one sentence, we risk confusing the reader. It makes our writing complicated to read and forces the reader to figure out what we're saying.

#### How to Fix It:

Instead, separate distinct thoughts into their own sentences. You can combine different thoughts if they build on each other, but you want to avoid combining unrelated ideas. If you find yourself using several commas, hyphens or semicolons in a sentence, it's a good indication that you have too much going on.

#### Need More Help?

There are several free resources available at [DiscoveryAndStory.com](http://DiscoveryAndStory.com) to help you improve your business writing. Sign up on the site to receive emails for additional tips and resources sent directly to you.