



POWER WRITING TIPS

Proofreading and Editing Tools for High-Impact Messages

Proofreading and editing errors can sabotage important high-impact messages. Such errors project a lack of professionalism or knowledge. The process of just dumping ideas onto your screen, spell-checking, and sending messages doesn't cut it. Below are easy, targeted techniques that improve your writing clarity and accuracy. Use these to get the positive results you want.

Proofreading and Editing Power Tools

1. **Tweak your draft.** Reread your draft message, and adjust it to meet the recipient's needs for clarity. Also improve the tone as necessary to make it as positive as possible. Trim out meandering content to focus your message and make it more readable.
2. **Check spelling and grammar.** Always use spell and grammar checkers as a first proofreading tool—it can save you from embarrassing errors you might miss. However, remember that these programs DO NOT catch all errors. See examples in the box below. You must follow up with careful personal spelling and grammar review.
3. **Proofread from a hard copy—not from your screen.** Accuracy skyrockets by proofreading from a printout instead of from your screen. Print on a light-colored paper—it wakes up your brain! Mark corrections on the printout with a red felt-tip pen (it shows up best).
4. **Use a straight edge to keep your eyes focused.** In reading, our eyes move up, down, right, and left. Use a straight edge (a ruler or piece of paper) to focus your vision and avoid missing errors. Place the straight edge directly under the line you are proofreading.
5. **Make the necessary corrections and revisions to your draft message.**
6. **Check spelling and grammar again.** This catches additional errors you might have made in revising your electronic message.

Spell and Grammar Checkers Are NOT Perfect

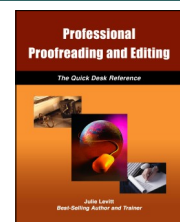
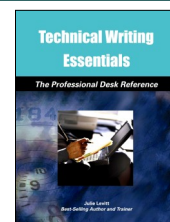
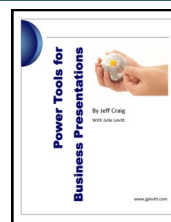
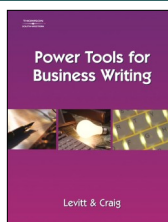
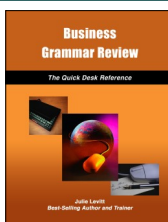
YOU need to find many types of errors that automated checkers don't, such as:

- **Misspelled names.** That really impresses readers! (see #1 below)
- **Misspelling sound-alike words.** (capitol/capital, cord/chord—see #2 below)
- **Errors in word placement and pluralizing.** (see #3 below)

Examples of actual automated checker errors:

1. I enjoyed meeting you, **John**. (should be Jon)
2. The **affect** of the explosion was minor. (should be effect)
3. The website provides **link to the all** chapters. (should be links to all the)

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To schedule a course for your team, please contact us at 208-853-7027 or jalevitt@cableone.net.