

How to Write Like a Pro By STMA Editorial Staff

O.K., so you don't like to write and you didn't go to turf school to focus on writing. However, good written communication skills are critical to your job success. Being able to communicate well in writing can help you in a myriad of ways. A well-written memo can persuade your employer to authorize budget dollars for products, equipment, personnel and training. Or, an e-mail that confirms your understanding of a discussion with a coach or athletic director can make the difference between success and failure.

Effective written communication in the workplace will position you as a professional to your peers, your employer and your staff. To extend that recognition to a broader audience, consider writing articles for your chapter newsletter, regional turf publication or the STMA SPORTSTURF Magazine. You have excellent experiences to share about your work and help others learn.

Use these five easy tips to help you put together the right message for strong writing.

5 Tips to Write it Right

1) Use the three "S" structure. Keep your sentences Simple, Short and Succinct. Shorter sentences are easier to read and understand.

2) Use "Active" voice rather than passive. **Better** - Ex: Our field management program uses IPM to provide healthy turf and safe playing conditions. **Not as good** : Ex: IPM was used as a management program to provide healthy turf and safe playing conditions.

3) When possible, use "Action" verbs, which communicate authority, a solution orientation, and allow you to highlight accomplishments.

40 verbs for stronger writing include : Accomplish, Achieve, Advise, Analyze, Complete, Control, Create, Conduct, Design, Develop, Direct, Evaluate, Execute, Facilitate, Generate, Identify, Implement, Improve, Increase, Innovate, Introduce, Launch, Manage, Monitor, Negotiate, Organized, Overhaul, Plan, Prepare, Prioritize, Recommend, Research, Resolve, Restructure, Specify, Streamline, Strengthen, Supervise, Train, Upgrade.

4) Write down the three specific messages you want to communicate through your writing at the top of your document. Three is a magic number. People can remember and comprehend messages and ideas in groups of three. Make certain that each sentence you write supports one of the messages, and that you are not including miscellaneous, non essential information. Be sure to delete your outline before you send your document.

5) Set your memo, article or other written communication aside for at least an hour -- a day if possible. Go back and reread it to catch errors in spelling and grammar and rework weak sentences.