DISCLAIMER: The principles and suggestions in this handout and the WEB WRITING BASICS webinar are presented to apply to diverse personal and company situations. These materials and the overall seminar are for general informational and educational purposes only. The materials and the seminar, in general, are presented with the understanding that CareerTrack is not engaged in rendering legal advice. You should always consult an attorney with any legal issues.

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Writing for the Web is Different

Reading online is _____________% slower than reading print.

Slowness is attributed to:
- Stress on eyes
- Line lengths
- Having to scroll

Online readers hate ___________________; but love ________________________________.

When writing online, write ________________________________.
Online readers use an “F” pattern to read

- _______________ movement
- _______________ movement
- _______________ movement
- _______________ movement

Writing for web, means writing for 2 types of readers:

Web readers:
- Scan Pages
- Pick out **keywords**
- Read quickly in **short bursts**
- Are action oriented
- **Click quickly** and forage for information
- **Attention span:** 7 seconds
Style Tips

USA Today Style

- Catch your readers’ attention in the first few words
- Start with the conclusion, follow with the details
- Include only one idea per paragraph
- Use half the word count of traditional writing

Style Tips:

- Speak with an “Active” voice
- Cut wordy phrases
- Use USA Today Style
- Fragments are OK
- Use Parallel Wording

Example

To view your account information:

- If you already have an account, sign in
- If you don’t have an account, complete the new account request form
Increasing Readability

Fonts
Fonts – Common fonts, common sizes
If visitors are senior citizens, consider using bigger body fonts.
Headings: ___________ words
Sentences: ___________ words.
Paragraphs: ___________ words or less
Pages: ___________ words or less

Write to your audience
- What is their knowledge of the topic?
- What is their reading level?
- What terms do they know?
- What do they need to know?

Headers
Example:
- H1: 20pt
- H2: 16pt
- H3: 14pt
- Body: 12pt
- Don’t center
- Avoid Teasers / metaphors

Hot Tips:
- Use Bullet points
- Bold key words as needed to draw the eye to specific words
- Write to web audience
- Avoid hype
- Avoid all caps
- Beware of the “fold”
Different Types of Web Pages

Home Page

Content Page

Landing Page

Order Page
Writing for People vs. Search Engines

Search Engines Love…

Search Engines Despise…

Tips to Adjust Your Writing for Search Engines

- Use the keywords naturally
- Use keywords in H1 tags (towards front)
- Use keywords in social media (naturally)
- When talking about a topic related to your keyword, avoid using brand names – use the keyword instead
COMMON MISTAKES

1. Welcoming
2. Being too corporate
3. Focusing features not benefits
4. Writing for the wrong audience
5. Being “hype-y”
6. Not focusing on purpose of the page