



Copywriting kick-start worksheet

Use this worksheet to kick-start the copywriting process and move past the blank page. When you follow these steps, you'll get yourself 'primed' to write anything from annual reports to blog posts, press releases to speeches.

To make the most of this worksheet, there are a few things you should do before starting:

- Set aside at least two hours to really get into the zone and make some serious writing progress.
 - Organize your workspace, your files, your computer's desktop; anything you need to tidy to feel clutter-free.
 - Gather and review all necessary background information and notes.
-

Project/content name:



Step 1: Make a few notes about your audience



You have already planned this before sitting down to write, but recap now. Jot down a few words and sentences that describe your audience to bring them back to the forefront of your mind.

Step 2: Write down your communications objective



What do you want this copy to achieve? What larger communications objective does it support? Write down your objectives.

Step 3: Create a list of reader questions to address



Think about your audience and what they'll be hoping to discover when they read this content. Write down these questions and points. This will help you find that sweet spot where your communications objectives meet your audience's needs.

Step 4: Brainstorm



Write down any words or phrases that come to mind when thinking about this piece of writing. Use this exercise to allow themes to emerge and to unearth specific language you'll use.

Step 5: Create an outline, mind map or sketch



On this page, use the technique that works best to help *you* think through your main points or sections.



Now: take a very short break to let the information percolate. I suggest a 10-minute walk. DO NOT use this time to check in on email or anything else that will take you off task or undo the 'priming' work. Skip the walk if you think you'll get distracted or if you're ready to write now.



Step 6: Write down your main message



Now that you've given it considerable thought... If you could sum up this piece in one sentence, what would it be? Write it down.

Step 7: Start writing!



You've primed yourself to think about what you want to say, to whom and how you want to say it. Take advantage of being in 'the zone' by writing for at least 25 minutes. If you can do it, I suggest a solid 50 minutes of writing now!

Tip: Tell yourself that it can be totally rough and just start. Remember, no one else needs to see the first draft and editing is usually easier than writing. Plus, you may be pleasantly surprised at the quality of your rough start!