

# 10 Tips For Writers

*In Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," there are 268 words; 196 of them (73%) are only one syllable long.*

- 1. Use familiar words:**

<b>Don't use:</b> terminate initiate unanimity	<b>Use:</b> end begin agreement
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- 2. Use short words:**

<b>Don't use:</b> predicated terminate demonstrate utilize	<b>Use:</b> based quit show use
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- 3. Use concrete language:**

<b>Don't use:</b> a higher percentage sometime next week more fabric	<b>Use</b> 22 percent gain 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday 3.5 yards
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- 4. Use active voice:**

<b>Don't use:</b> The results were given. The time was decided by the committee. The policy is enforced by the agents.	<b>Use:</b> We gave the results. The committee decided the time. The agents enforce the policy.
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- 5. Avoid camouflaged verbs:**

<b>Don't use:</b> make an application give assistance to make a commitment	<b>Use:</b> apply assist commit
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- 6. Use words for precise meanings:**

**Examples:**  
*fewer* people beget *less* confusion  
*farther* down the road but with *further* insight  
superior *to* but different *from*
- 7. Avoid sexist language. Use the third person or the plural as alternatives to he/she.**

**Examples:**  
*The writer* who use uses sexist language often alienates *his* audience →  
*Writers* who use sexist language often alienate *their* audiences.
- 8. Avoid racial and ethnic stereotyping. Take one person at a time.**
- 9. Avoid slang and clichés. Maintain a professional tone and use your own words.**
- 10. Keep writing. The more you write, the better you get.**