

# Document Writing Tips

## 1. Never “underline” text or titles for emphasis.

- The PC is not a typewriter. (See Book # 1 by Robin Williams)
- In the days of the typewriter this was the only way to add emphasis.
- Underline is also the international symbol for an internet [Hyperlink](#).
- The reader has as the urge to click on your “underlined text”.
- Use *Italic* or **Bold**.
- **Increase Font Size with Bold Attribute.**

## • **Be Bold Don't be a Wimp!**

## 2. Avoid using more than two font types in one document.

- Use **Serif Fonts** for body text and **Sans Serif** for headlines.
- **serif - Readability**

A small decorative stroke at the end of a letter's main strokes.

Extensive studies have concluded that serif type is more **readable** in extended text than sans serif type. It's not clear exactly why; suggestions are that the serifs tend to lead the eye along the horizontal line, or that the thick/thin variations in the strokes of most serif types eases reading.

- **Sans Serif - Legibility**

A type face that does not have serifs.

Sans Serif, on the other hand, has been shown to be more **legible**. What's the difference? Well, legibility refers more to character recognition than to reading blocks of text. Put in practical terms, sans serif is easier to recognize at a glance for short little bursts of type, such as headlines on a page.

## 3. AVOID USING ALL CAPS.

- All Caps are difficult to read because the words appear to be square.
- At a distance the shape of the words can help identify the spelling.
- **The Dog and Cat** is easier to read than **THE DOG AND CAT**.
- All caps in an e-mail message means you are angry and shouting.

## 4. Avoid using Fonts that are too small (8pts).

- Fonts too small (8pts)
- Your Fonts size should be 10 points or 12 points for body text.
- This document uses 16 points **Bold Sans Serif Arial** type for headings.
- This document uses 12 point **Serif Palatino Linotype** for body text.

## 5. Avoid cluttering your document with distractions.

- White space on the page makes your document cleaner looking and easier to read.
- Background patterns & graphics can be distracting to the reader.

## 6. Avoid using too many words in one line.

- Use 10 to 15 words per line.
- Look at magazines to see how the professionals do it.
- Magazine columns use few words per line.

## 7. Avoid Centering

- If text is aligned on the left or right the vertical line that connects the text is much stronger because it has a hard invisible edge to follow. **This gives left and right aligned text a cleaner and more dramatic look.**

### John Smith

153 Main Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 43294  
Phone 563-2341-8955

**Left Aligned**

### John Smith

153 Main Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 43294  
Phone 563-2341-8955

**Right Aligned**

### John Smith

153 Main Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 43294  
Phone 563-2341-8955

**Centered**

- **Centered** text forces your eye to jump around to find the words.

## 8. Be consistent throughout your document.

- Use Proximity, Alignment, Repetition & Contrast (See Book # 2 by Robin Williams)
- Don't change **font types** in the middle of your document.
- Don't change **bullet types** in the middle of your document.
- Don't change **line spacing** in the middle of your document.
- Don't change **paragraph style** in the middle of your document.
- Don't change **page layout** in the middle of your document.

## 9. Avoid the use font colors.

- Use sparingly.
- Using a **variety of colors can make your document look clownish.**

## 10. Use background colors or patterns carefully.

Be sure the background does not blur the foreground text.

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# Desktop Publishing Books [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) by Robin Williams (Not the actor) <http://www.ratz.com>

The author recommends these books be read in this order.

## 1. The PC is Not a Typewriter

A style manual for creating professional looking type on your PC.

## 2. The Non-Designer's Design Book

Design and typographic principles for the visual novice.

## 3. The Non-Designer's Type Book

Insights and techniques for creating professional-level type.

## 4. How to Boss Your Fonts Around 2nd Edition

A primer on font technology and font management on the Macintosh.

## 5. The Non-Designer's Scan and Print Book

All you need to know about production and prepress to get great-looking pages.

## 6. Robin Williams Design Workshop (Page 122 the Secret to good forms)

Ideal book for the aspiring designer wanting to advance to the next level of expertise and creativity.

## 7. The Non-Designer's Web Book

An Easy guide to creating, designing, and posting your own web site.

## 8. Web Design Workshop

The principles of creative, effective design to the Web.