

The Webscout

Section Editor:

Webscout Editor
Karin Eichele,
Novartis Pharma GmbH,
Nuernberg, Germany
karin.eichele@novartis.
com

Writing matters

Writing matters – anything that matters in writing, or any writing that matters? I tend to interpret it the second way, but I asked Google what it thinks. It responded with some nice-to-read, worth-reading, and helpful sites. I found that, like us medical writers, many people care a lot about words and language. Here is a selection of my discoveries.

<http://www.dailywritingtips.com/>

This is a blog by a small team of writers, who strongly believe in writing as being essential for success, irrespective of the profession. This especially holds true for the increasing importance of blogs and social networks. Daily Writing Tips gives tips for writing clear and proper English, including daily tips on grammar, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary. The blog is structured into categories, so you can easily access topics you are interested in. And after having gone through all of these articles, you can test your knowledge in the tests and quizzes section. Enjoy this blog.

<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/writmatt/cover.htm>

‘Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style’. This citation by Matthew Arnold, British poet and cultural critic, is the beginning of this handbook on how to get your message across. And indeed, that’s all good writing is about. If only it were that easy! This handbook follows the ideas of the plain language movement and also covers matters of editing, proof-reading, and layout. With about 90 pages, it is of course not a complete reference, but basic ideas are pleasingly and descriptively presented.

http://www.rlf.org.uk/fellowshipscheme/documents/RLFwritingmatters_000.pdf

Writing matters is a report by the Royal Literary Fund on the importance of good writing in higher education and the current gaps. It was written in

the context of the Royal Literary Fund Fellowship Scheme, which was designed to help students develop their writing skills with the assistance of professional writers. During the first years of this fellowship project, the tutors perceived a great deficit in students’ writing skills. They found a gap between school writing and academic writing, and they found that the complexity and conventions of writing in academia trouble students. They add that good writing helps to convey a message and that persuasive writing is essential not only in science but also in business. The study also found that employers often criticise employees’ lack of writing skills. Finally, the authors strongly feel that universities should reinforce writing education.

<http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/doc/about.csp>

The *National Writing Project* (NWP) is a network dedicated to education and helps teachers improve writing and learning at schools, colleges, and universities. It is a US-based project driven by enthusiastic writing teachers and intended for teachers with a special focus on writing in the 21st century, specifically, writing in an online environment. The resources section is warmly recommended, even for non-teaching writers, especially the online resources on digital literacy on <http://digitalis.nwp.org/>. NWP Digital collects ideas and reflects teaching and writing in an interconnected world.

<http://www.rhetcomp.gsu.edu/~bgu/8121/Reading-Porter.pdf>

Once upon a time – can you remember practicing handwriting at school? I found this ‘cyberwriter’s tale’ on the influences of technology on writing. It is written with a good sense of humour – you will like it and it will probably make you laugh every now and then.

If you have any further questions or you have any other comments or suggestions, please email me at: karin.eichele@novartis.com.

Karin Eichele
Novartis Pharma GmbH, Germany
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