

## Writing for Business

Did you know that taking advantage of writing opportunities can be one of the best forms of marketing and advertising for you and your business? Articles for newsletters, business sections of your local newspaper, periodicals like *The Weekender*, and trade journals are all terrific outlets for informing the public about your areas of expertise.

Oftentimes, writing about topics that interest you, or that you feel passionate about—even if they're not business-related, have the same beneficial effect as those business-related topics you might want to focus on. They give your readers another perspective about who you are, they provide insights into your life and personality that might otherwise not be known. Talk about free publicity!

And listen, I don't want to hear that you don't know how to write, or that you can't spell, or that you don't know anything about punctuation and grammar. Do you really think that Hemingway, Stephen King, and Nora Roberts were born with those skills? Did you ever hear about the dictionary, the thesaurus, and spell-check? The best way to refine your article while making sure your spelling, punctuation, and grammar are perfect is to have another person edit it. Be sure that you choose the right person—not your mother, spouse, or best friend. You should choose someone who writes, and writes well, and who knows the business of writing. In case you haven't noticed, other people tend to have an easier time spotting our faults than we do. They also tend to be freer with praise.

Why not give it a try? I'd recommend starting out small, like with a newsletter article or a letter to the editor. Stick to 100-250 words. If you feel you need to brush up on your grammar and punctuation skills, *Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E.B. White is the book you

need. The paperback version costs less than \$10 at Barnes and Noble. I still have the first copy I bought over 30 years ago. (It was much cheaper then!) If you feel you need some help with creativity, then *Writing the Natural Way* by Gabriele L. Rico is the book--and the paperback version costs less than \$20!

Happy writing!