



Sharon's Grammar Don't List

In honor of National Grammar Day, we've assembled a list of the grammar mistakes team SCS makes over and over and... The lazy writer lingo and shortcuts that cause our poor editor to have high blood pressure.

#1 Avoid Over-adverbing

The SCS team is guilty of these on almost all of our pre-edited copy. (We think it's because we are such an animated bunch!) Our editor is right on this one though. Too many adverbs are a Grammar Don't. Ask yourself when you are writing if you really need that "very" or that "so"?

#2 "Thing" is Just Lazy. Ditto for "get."

We know how it is. You are on a deadline. The old peepers are weary. A real word takes thought. You just want to be finished. Don't. Just don't. On occasion you may need to use these two words, but they shouldn't be a staple. We are writers people! If you can't find a word that says what you want it to, make one up. (Like we did with over-adverbing in #1.)

#3 "It's all about that comma... 'bout that comma... no drama..."

The Megan Trainor song has been stuck in all our heads since we rented a suite for the concert last week and celebrated the start of our third year in business! But the comma really can add drama. Or not. If it is missing and the sentence is a run-on, not having one can be the drama. Learn how to use a comma. Here's a great little [Commas overview](#) if you need it. Same holds true for our friend the apostrophe. This little [Apostrophe Poster](#) is a fun way to learn the rules.

#4 It's called a Thesaurus

We all are guilty of this one. Using a few of our favorite words way too many times... This is especially true when you write for a particular industry. Even Google has figured out that synonyms and a thesaurus help you find similar words and not overuse the ones your mind seems to default to. Make it a best practice after your first draft to use the Find/Search tools to check out how many times you used the same word. If you haven't done this before, you will likely be shocked at what pops up.

#5 "That" "There" "It" Shouldn't Start Every Sentence.

Starting more than a few sentences with those three words is another lazy writer shortcut. They really make our poor editor cringe. On occasion, it may be necessary. We understand. Don't make it a habit though. Challenge yourself to be better.

#6 Know the Power of the Pronoun

When you use a pronoun correctly, it helps you avoid reusing surnames in every sentence. Copy flows better. But when you use a pronoun incorrectly, no one really knows who or what you are talking about. Here's a quick quiz you can take to [test your pronoun prowess](#).

#7 Make it Personal

Somewhere along the way many of us heard that professional voice = passive voice. You know who learns otherwise? Law students. Our trusty legal voice shared this with me once when she was editing a document for me before we launched SCS. Active voice copy pulls the reader in. This is especially true when you are writing online.

#8 Create a Content Vitamix

When you use the same type of sentence exclusively in your copy, you lose the reader. Why? Sheer boredom. Mix up your sentence styles and lengths. Digital marketing is often guilty of this practice. We know people read differently online. They scan and skim and that needs to be accounted for in content. You

can use more bullets or sub-heads or cute little graphic boxes with content that you want to highlight.

#9 Sit on It

Unless the copy is a true rush job, we always sit on our final version at least overnight. Then one of us looks at it with fresh eyes after that to see if the piece really is the best it can be.

#10 Check the Jargon

We senior care industry folks have created a language all our own. The problem is our prospects and families often have no idea what we are talking about when we hit them with it. Who is DON? Who is ED? What is ADL? Of course we know these acronyms refer to the Director of Nursing, Executive Director and the Activities of Daily Living. When we use them with already confused and overwhelmed families, however, we make the process of finding care even more difficult.

Grammar Checklist Compliments of the Fun Folks at:


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