

Mark My Words: How Editors Can Coach Clarity

NEW Half-Day *Copyediting* Webinar

WISH YOU COULD AFFORD TRAINING IN 2009? YOU CAN.

Introducing the newest training opportunity from *Copyediting*: a half-day webinar that's just one price per log-in site, no matter how many people attend.

All you need is an Internet connection and a speakerphone. Gather your entire editorial staff or a group of your fellow freelancers to take full advantage of expert *Copyediting* training that's a true bargain.

In this practical Web-based seminar led by *Copyediting* editor Wendalyn Nichols, you'll learn to shape a writer's copy to remove biased or loaded language, clichés, jargon, and bureaucratese without taking the life out of it or making people sound as if they aren't knowledgeable members of their own profession.

The webinar comprises four consecutive 45-minute sessions with 15-minute breaks between them, for a total of four hours. Each session will involve approximately 30 minutes of presentation and 15 minutes of discussion.

See page 2 of this document for the full agenda.

Dates

The webinar will be offered on four successive Wednesdays: March 4, 11, 18, and 25, 2009. Choose which day and time is most convenient for you: the same webinar will be presented each day.

Times

March 4 and 18:

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Pacific

9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Mountain

10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Central

11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Eastern

March 11 and 25:

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Pacific

11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mountain

12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Central

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Eastern

To register, go to www.copyediting.com and click on the **WORKSHOP tab.**

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WEBINAR AGENDA

Before the webinar, you will be sent a document containing example sentences and passages that we'll refer to during our half-day together. The examples will be presented as editing exercises you can do ahead of time, to get the most from the seminar. But don't worry—if you don't have time to go through them, we'll be looking in detail at how to edit them during the seminar.

Hour 1: Tightening copy without strangling it

Do you need to delete every use of the word *that*? Change every “in order to” to just *to*? Break every long sentence into shorter ones? Many of us, especially if we were trained by journalism teachers, have been taught that tight writing equals minimalism. In this first session, we'll reconsider that principle, and look at how we can wield a scalpel rather than a hacksaw.

Hour 2: Removing hidden bias

It may seem that these days, no matter what you write, someone is going to be offended. We don't have the option of throwing up our hands, however. Editors can help writers avoid blunders—if we are adept at providing alternative language that isn't so painfully PC that it draws attention to itself. We'll discuss how to deal with terminology, work around the *he/they* problem, and neutralize unintentionally loaded language.

Hour 3: Jargon, clichés, and bureaucratese

Simplicity of expression should be the goal of all writers, no matter how technical their subject matter. Yet a certain amount of business jargon is expected in business writing, and scientific and other technical subjects require that certain conventions be followed. We'll discuss how we, as editors, can help a writer know the difference—to keep the necessary jargon and helpful analogies, but ditch the bureaucratese and distracting clichés that impede understanding or even undermine the message.

Hour 4: Coaching writers

Editing a writer is one thing; doing it in a way that doesn't put the writer's back up and actually helps the writer improve is quite another. In our final hour we will discuss techniques for editing tactfully—and we'll also take a look at what we can do in our workplaces to help improve the quality of writing before it hits our desks.