

## POWER SALES WRITING



Helping organizations drive  
revenue and generate profits  
through stronger business  
communications

**Key:**  
Show respect for your  
reader's time.

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# Sue Hershkowitz-Coore, CSP

Welcome to the August edition of Power Writing. Here are tips and tricks to help boost your career success.

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### In this issue:

- Increase email efficiency
- Writing to GenX
- Avoid the dreaded spam filter
- Ask SpeakerSue: Going to the prom!
- Have a need for email training?

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### Increase email efficiency

According to Information Mapping, Inc., the ability to write effective email is a critical job skill. Respondents — 80% of them — said good email skills are “extremely” or “very” important to their jobs. Yet, 40% of people surveyed said they “waste” 30 minutes to 3 hours each day reading “ineffectively” written emails. What are the most annoying email mistakes? According to the IM research, here are the four main issues:

- No clear next step or the reader doesn't know how to act on the information.
- Poorly organized content.
- Missing or buried information.
- Too much information.

So what are readers really complaining about? They're annoyed that the writer is writing without regard to the reader!

### What can you do?

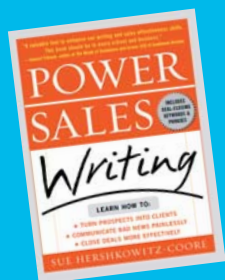
Key: Show respect for your reader's time.

- Provide a crystal clear next step. (Do the jet lag test: If you flew from NY to London and downloaded in the airport on the way to your meeting, would you know exactly who would do what, when?)
- Tell them only what they need to know; not everything you know.
- Put critical information into the subject line (Report deadline: August 2), or use sub-heads in your email.
- S.O.R.T.A (Stamp Out Reply To All) Determine who needs the information and send your message only to them.
- Use names within the email:
  - Paul: Pl set the room for 35. We have 30 registered but I'm expecting last minute registrants.
  - Teo: Pl make sure we have 35 handouts, just in case.
  - Lin: The exec team will be there. FYI
- Eliminate BCC (unless you need to protect confidentiality of addresses or you're sending a necessary message to everyone [See above]) BCC is sneaky. When you BCC, you hide the truth from someone. That makes you a liar. (If you've been BCC'ing yourself, CC yourself instead.)
- Eliminate CCB (Carbon Copy Bloat).

# POWER SALES WRITING



Regardless of age,  
we all want to feel special,  
and be respected.



To order your copy today:  
[www.speakersue.com/  
pswbook.htm](http://www.speakersue.com/pswbook.htm)

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Email is critical to your career success. What one change in your company's email culture would improve the way you work together and the results you get? Decide to make that change today!

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## Exclusive White Paper Plus Gift for Your Referral

You've heard SpeakerSue present and you know that her ideas change the way you write. Be certain everyone on your team "gets it." As a bonus, when you refer SpeakerSue, you'll receive an exclusive white paper and an awesome gift that we promise you'll use everyday! Call Nance at 480-575-9711 to learn more about your thank you gifts. (Your entire team will thank you, too, for helping them to learn how they can separate themselves from the competition and write safe and smart!)

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## Writing to GenX

Regardless of age, we all want to feel special, and be respected. Beyond that, how do you compel GenX to read your message?

- Use testimonials. GenX doesn't respond to traditional marketing approaches because they've seen too many people burned. They tend to be suspicious (rightfully so) of the "sales pitch." The best way to remove their skepticism is to use authentic, trackable testimonials from people they respect.
- Make it easy to get the point. GenX multitask more effectively than others. (We all try to multi-task but research shows that when Boomers attempt it, they actually spend more time than they would have if they did each activity individually and don't perform as well on either task.) GenX is happiest working at their computer and doing something else at the same time. Design your email so that you make it easy for them to grasp your message while they're on the phone and listening to music as they carry on a conversation with a third person! Don't hide your key points. They may be comfortable dividing their attention, but it's still smart to make it easy for them to know what you want, why you want it and when you need it.

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## Avoid the spam filter

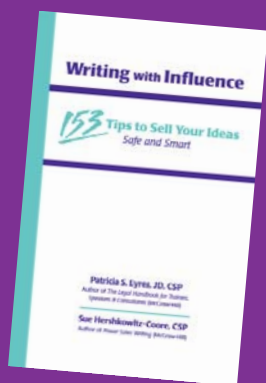
- Stay away from the color red. Almost all filters swallow messages that use red type.
- Ditch your logo, letterhead and wallpaper. Yes, your logo is lovely and some consultant probably told you to use it to extend your brand image. Nice idea in theory. In practice, the use of the logo multiplies the chance that your message will be filtered out as spam. It's not worth the chance that your reader won't get your email. Include the name of your company, in standard type, in your signature file.
- Use bold sparingly. Because putting words in bold lettering is the best way to capture attention, people with bad intentions use it to compel us to read. (I can't keep using the "s" word or this message will end up being filtered out, too.) An occasional word, made bold, can be effective. Watch out though: "eyetracker" research indicates that we zero in on the words in bold and don't even see the words around it.

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## Ask SpeakerSue

**Question:** I'm 26 years old and don't really see the need to write emails in a formal manner. My generation is comfortable with abbreviations and all lower case letters (though I hate ALL CAPS). Isn't this the wave of the future?

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Your comments and questions are always appreciated!

Send your question to "Ask SpeakerSue".

If your question is used you'll receive a free copy of *Writing with Influence: 153 Tips to Sell Your Ideas Safe and Smart*

Co-authored by attorney Patti Eyres and Sue Hershkowitz-Coore, CSP

[www.speakersue.com/wbook.htm](http://www.speakersue.com/wbook.htm)

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**SpeakerSue says:** It's not like you're going to a prom but some formality is important. Just as messages written in all caps annoy you because it feels like the writer is shouting at you, some readers don't like reading all lower case letters (it's kind of like whispering your message). You're right that email shouldn't sound like it's a message to the Queen. It should, however, show respect for your reader — and for your reader's reader (whoever your reader might forward your message to). Also, reading comprehension is slashed by 40% when we read messages on a computer screen (which is why most people still print out lengthy or complex messages) and the lack of appropriate punctuation and standard grammar is the same as pulling up to an intersection with a broken stop light. If you're determined, you'll still get through the intersection. But it takes more work and the last thing most readers want is more work! Finally, just as most of us are guilty of making quick judgments based on the way someone looks, talks or dresses (even when we know we shouldn't!), people also judge us by what and how we write. Even if it doesn't matter to you what they think of you, you need to care about what they think of the organization you're representing. Prom dress formality went out with Benjamin Franklin. Standards of good writing — whether you're 26 or 66 — are alive and well.

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### Have a Need for Email Training?

Email can be your best tool or your greatest liability. Are you and your team writing as persuasively, professionally and powerfully as you could be? Do you use email to increase your influence, distinguish your ideas, products and services from the competition and stand out? "How to Create Emails that Boost Career Success" transforms the way your team communicates. Whether your company needs to focus on outside sales or internal messages, you will be amazed at how results change when writing improves. This is the most important sales and service training you can offer! Email <[Nance@SpeakerSue.com](mailto:Nance@SpeakerSue.com)> for more information or call us at 480-575-9711. You only need this session if you write email!

All the best-

*Sue*

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"Employees' ability to communicate, to solve problems and to lead will be more important to their organizations' future success than functional and technical capabilities." Foresight 2020 (June 2006)

"Sue, they loved your presentation as you can see by the "evaluations" below...not a single unhappy customer! I want to thank you and Nance for working with me on the program and really understanding our group and their unique needs. You are terrific and I am sure we will book you again." Carolyn Gardner, Florida Association of Realtors, June 2006

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