

5 Tips for Smart Writers Who Want to Turbo Charge Their Online Writing Game

The words are just a tool in the toolbox



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Good writing starts a convo, great writing provokes readers to think.

No matter how good the words you're writing might be, they're meaningless if the ideas they add up to aren't given a fighting chance to connect with readers. But in order to do that, you have to understand what you're really doing when you're writing articles, posts, Tweets, and Online content,

and you have to understand what you're not doing as well.

Your mission as a writer is to provoke people to think differently.

That's it. That's the game.

Writing online is only partially about the writing itself. No, the real point of writing online is to upgrade ideas and share them with readers in such a way that they help those readers face challenges and solve problems. The words you bang out on the keyboard and put in strings of sentences are there to help you do that. They supplement the real work. But the real work at the end of the day is problem-solving through idea production.

You're in the idea business and what you're producing are packages of ideas, wrapped in words.

It isn't about what you write nearly so much as what you think and how you package those thoughts that counts the most with online writing. Thoughts become ideas, ideas become creative stirrings of the imagination, stirrings of what's possible, and when all of that is fused with action, they become acts of transformation. They become the embodiment of problem-solving itself.

It isn't about writing the best piece of content your reader

has ever seen. It's about using words to repackage ideas that can help people in big ways. The words support the work, but the work will always be about ideas and turning them into solutions to problems.

Learn the art and craft of selling with the value you create.

Real value is its own sales team.

This means understanding the needs of online audiences and the rules of online writing. It means understanding a thing or two about your readers and what they truly want and need. And it means knowing exactly how you're helping them get those things.

Show people how an idea can change their lives, but don't stop there. Show them how exactly to use the ideas you're sharing with them to do just that. Walk them through the process, equip them, empower them, champion them and keep coming back to do it over and over, and guess what? You won't have to worry about your ideas having a fighting chance, because that's what you're doing when you shift your focus from selling to simply being valuable to people.

Writing that is only about saying something as pretty as possible misses the point.

The point is to solve problems and share ideas that help you do that. The best way to do this is to provoke readers to think through the ideas you're sharing with them. It means giving people all the tools they need to be every bit as good as you and the opportunity, even, to be better.

That's empowerment and it will make you stand out because it costs courage and offers trust. Those are rare items in a world saturated with ideas and noise, where people hold their trade secrets close to their chest and want to be better than everyone else at any cost.

You win when you make people think. Sometimes readers will love you for this. Sometimes they won't. As long as you have successfully gotten them to think, you have done the work.

This will require you to have a note-taking system.

The right system will help you process quality books, articles, posts, Tweets, and more by breaking it down to its core elements for a blueprint to reverse engineer what you're reading.

I'm not going to push any one system over the other, or ask you to be loyal to all of the rules of any one system or the other. But to work with the ideas behind good writing, you have to have a tool that augments your thinking. And there is no tool more powerful than having a note-taking system

that you use consistently.

All this means is that you need a place to actively process the things you're reading, listening to, and watching. This is your digital workshop, where you can tinker with other people's ideas and ultimately connect those ideas in valuable new ways, creating something original. That's how you go from status-quo thinking to creative problem-solving.

Here's the secret to being successful online: find problems and solve them in valuable new ways.

Good writers are the product of great writers, and great writers are the product of great writers and time.

If you want to be a good writer, you should study great writers. Don't just read what they write, but dissect it. Get involved with it. Take a closer look under the hood, and see how they're solving people's problems through the power of their ideas and how they wrap those ideas in words.