

**Write It the Right Way!
Don't "Beat Around the Bush."**

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Have you ever spoken to someone who beats around the bush so much that you can't seem to understand what he/she is talking about? It's very difficult for some people to just get to the point. For some reason, they give you all the details, but they can't seem to give you the main gist of what they are talking about. You can listen attentively for minutes before you get an inkling of what the story is all about. I had this experience with a prospective client some years ago. The gentleman was a well educated man; however, he could not get to the point. I literally listened for 1 ½ hours before I understood what his point was. Not only do some people talk this way, they write in the same manner. Writing is not difficult if you know the rules.

The first thing the writer should do is state the main idea for the document. Once the main idea is written, the writer can continue to elaborate with the details that are related to the main idea. Unfortunately, many writers stray from the main idea and confuse the reader. Sometimes it's hard to determine what is relevant and what isn't. The writer wants to get as much information out to the client as possible, but that information must be written in an understandable way. If the reader becomes bored, he/she will not continue on and possibly miss some very important and necessary details.

When you read any newspaper article, you'll find that the first paragraph contains the general idea of the article. Once that is down, the reporter goes into more detail. This way of writing is called the inverted pyramid style. The general is written first, and then the details come later, each in its own paragraph. Should the reader only have time to read the first paragraph of each news article, he/she comes away with a very good idea of what the news is all about for that day.

The same should be done when writing for your clients. Your clients will not read your proposal if they cannot get the information they want quickly. The idea is to spark the curiosity of the client so that he/she will read on. Once you have his/her attention, the rest is easy. But, you must keep the prospective client's attention. Don't be concerned with details that are not immediately relevant to the general idea. That's a sure fire way to loose the client's attention. Rather, state the relevant details in quick succession with an explanation for each. Your client will appreciate your candor, and you will get a more positive response from him/her.

In summary, tell your client what you are going to talk about. Talk about it in detail, then, reiterate the general gist of the idea. Writing anything is like a well-written college essay, but if you wrote poorly in college, a second opinion is in order.

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