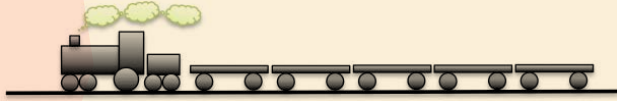


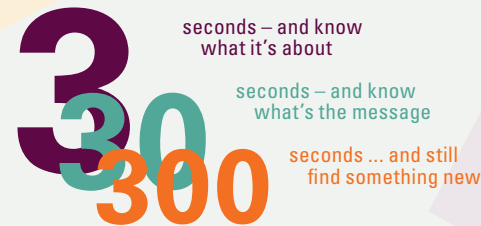
PRINCIPLES & TACTICS

The Locomotive pulls the Train



First impressions set the stage. If the first experience is good, your reader will forgive a lot later on; if the first part is a puzzle, the reader may not even get to 'later on'. Experienced writers indicate that 50% of the work goes in the first part: in the first chapter of a book, the first section of a chapter, the first sentence of a paragraph.

Three spans of attention



The Curse of Knowledge

You, the author, know a lot about the subject you are writing on, your audience less. For you, many things seem 'obvious' because they're in the back of your head. Not so for the reader. It's like tapping your favourite tune with your pen on the table: in your head you hear the entire orchestra. Not so your table companion. Try to imagine their perspective.

USE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS

Plan before you write

Genre and argument. Decide if you are writing an empirical, review, or position paper. 30 second message. Decide and formulate your 'elevator pitch'.

Basic materials

Place together the key references, observations, and visuals you intend to use in your story. With these outline elements, you can get feedback on New and Relevant. In the writing, you can then focus on Clear and True.

Work these in 3 Powerpoint pages, and discuss them. Then you can set course before you deal with comma's and word choice (CNR).

Iterate

Don't expect to get it right in one go. Write, then review it as a reader. Then write. Let it lie down for a night. Then rewrite. Even experienced writers will have a dozen or more draft versions in writing a paper.

DON'T DROWN IN RULES AND TIPS

Write!

Don't let the tips and rules hold you back. Just start writing, then review. It's like what Schön said about sketching: you have a dialogue with your materials. So, get started.

PITFALLS: 3 COMPETING GENRES

For most of us, academic writing doesn't come naturally, and we are easily lured into more natural ways of writing. Sometimes we don't notice before we're several pages further. Keep your eyes open to see when you drift off into tempting genres:

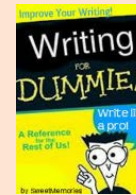


The Personal Diary

"I did this, and then I did that, and then I did that, ...and there's that... ...and this..."

A chronological account of your exploration. But the reader thinks: 'Where is this going, and why do I need to know this?'

Academic writing conveys information efficiently

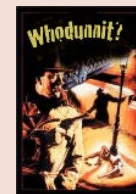


The Instruction Manual

"You must do this, and this needs to be done so, ... And you must do that..."

A series of instructions with opinions of how things should be done, without giving proof why this is the necessary way.

All claims and values come with an argumentation



The Mystery Novel

"Keep on reading, You're puzzled now, but all will be revealed in the end..."

It took the author a long way to come to the conclusion, and he lets the reader share that suffering. Possibly with a disappointing end.

Conclusions should be easy to find

All these genres have their place, even in science, but rarely in an academic paper. So why does this map not give full argumentations? Because it is an instruction manual, not an academic paper.