

Checklist



Yes



No

The Ultimate Editing Checklist for Every Writer

Samuel Osho

www.samosho.com

Introduction

2

Editing is the magic button that can make or mar your work; it can show the beauty of your research or reveal the ugly skeletons of your laxity. The choice is yours! How often do you return from the grocery store rebuking yourself for forgetting to get an item you have always craved for? Yes, it happens to everyone especially if you don't fancy the idea of making a list of your needs. It takes about five minutes to create a checklist but we often trivialize its importance.

A checklist is a lifesaver!

Writing is beautiful and spending a lot of time on research is commendable. What justifies the number of resources you have invested in your writing is the output. However, the output is at the mercy of editing and therefore editing can't be shoved aside. It's the most crucial stage of your writing process.

The Checklist

3

Before you use the checklist for the editing of your work, do these two things:

- Take a break - this helps you to check the written piece with fresh eyes.
- If possible, print it out on paper and use the hard copy for your editing.

Now, you can check the boxes.

I have:

- Avoided tricky subject and verb agreement traps, such as "One of the girls ~~are~~ (is) running" or "Neither of the tires ~~are~~ (is) good." I have also done the same for other indefinite pronouns such as everybody, anybody, either, each and any.
- Chosen the right pronouns for my sentences. For example: "Sam and ~~me~~ (I) ate pizza" or "The boxer slapped ~~he~~ (him) and ~~I~~ (me)."

The Checklist

4

I have:

- ❑ Paid attention to the three-fold purpose of an apostrophe.
(1)"The Obama's lodge is for sale." (shows possession)
(2)"Don't" (form contraction) and (3)"It's high time you stopped using if's, and's, or but's." (to pluralize special words)
- ❑ Avoided pluralizing nouns that have only a singular form, such as furniture, feedback, cutlery, wheat, happiness, scenery, news, advice, lingerie, information, luggage, and bread.
- ❑ Deleted all unconventional or shorthand abbreviations, such as "Ped Xing (Pedestrian Crossing)" or "OK (okay)."
- ❑ Spelled out a recurring acronym at the first point of its introduction.

The Checklist

5

I have:

- ❑ Written out all numbers less than 10 in full, numbers 10 and above were represented numerically. For example: "There were eight balls on the pitch during the soccer game" and "The king has 20 wives in his palace."
- ❑ Substituted "said" with powerful and acceptable verbs such as: replied, whispered, answered, asked, commented, shouted, murmured, demanded, and inquired.
- ❑ Crossed out unnecessary and extraneous words especially glaring redundancies. For example: "stand ~~up~~," "sit ~~down~~," "clap ~~your~~—hands," "end result," "basic fundamentals/essentials," "false pretense," "final outcome," "~~unexpected~~ surprise," "~~unintended~~ mistake," and "repeat again"

The Checklist

6

I have:

- Removed unneeded sentences.
- Deleted "that" except when it is needed for coherence.
- Rewritten lengthy sentences to achieve more clarity.
- Improved my punctuation.
- Replaced long words with short ones, such as "Heidi is ~~not~~ smart (dull)," "Bill ~~did not remember~~ (forgot) the Super Bowl Sunday." Another example of brevity is: "U.S. President Donald Trump ..." instead of "Donald Trump, who is the president of the United States."
- Deleted all the common metaphors and similes used in print. For example: "life is a journey," "the apple of my eyes" and "ideas in motion."

The Checklist

7

I have:

- Substituted all the passive sentences with active ones.
For example: "The broken cup was replaced by Martin" should be "Martin replaced the broken cup."
- Replaced all complex and ambiguous words with simple words.
- Used strong nouns and verbs instead of overusing adjectives and adverbs.
- Read it out loud and observed its flow and smoothness.
(Let this be the last thing you do).