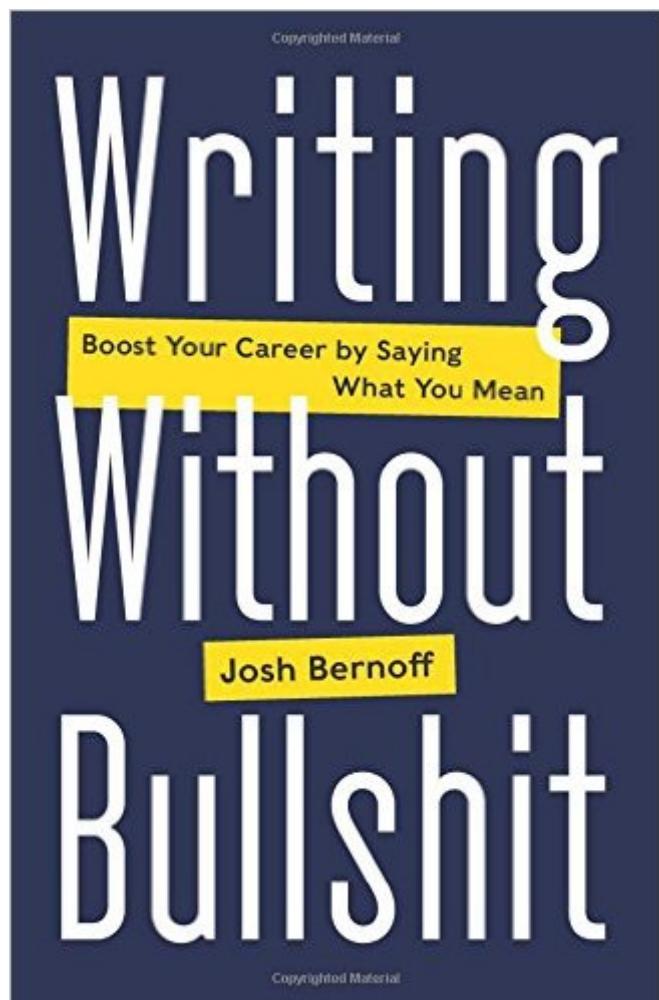


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# Writing Without Bullshit: Boost Your Career By Saying What You Mean



## Synopsis

Joining the ranks of classics like *The Elements of Style* and *On Writing Well*, *Writing Without Bullshit* helps professionals get to the point to get ahead. It's time for *Writing Without Bullshit*. *Writing Without Bullshit* is the first comprehensive guide to writing for today's world: a noisy environment where everyone reads what you write on a screen. The average news story now gets only 36 seconds of attention. Unless you change how you write, your emails, reports, and Web copy don't stand a chance. In this practical and witty book, you'll learn to front-load your writing with pithy titles, subject lines, and opening sentences. You'll acquire the courage and skill to purge weak and meaningless jargon, wimpy passive voice, and cowardly weasel words. And you'll get used to writing directly to the reader to make every word count. At the center of it all is the Iron Imperative: treat the reader's time as more valuable than your own. Embrace that, and your customers, your boss, and your colleagues will recognize the power and boldness of your thinking. Transcend the fear that makes your writing weak. Plan and execute writing projects with confidence. Manage edits and reviews flawlessly. And master every modern format from emails and social media to reports and press releases. Stop writing to fit in. Start writing to stand out. Boost your career by writing without bullshit.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Top 10 Ways That Clear Writing Can Boost Your Career By Josh Bernoff, author of *Writing Without Bullshit*. You may not think you're a business writer, but you are. You write emails. Perhaps you write web pages or reports or news releases. And whatever you write, you're

probably doing it wrong. What you learned in school is the exact opposite of what you need to succeed in a world where everyone reads on a screen. People today spend about 36 seconds on the average news article. A typical businessperson spends 46 hours per week reading and writing. They're busy, and their lives are cluttered. You need to write in a way that punches through the noise. You need to write without bullshit. Here are my top ten tips for writing that succeeds at work:

1. Move beyond fear. When you're afraid, you write like you're afraid. Stop hedging and say what you mean. You'll get credit for directness.
2. Write shorter. Delete the warmup sentences. Organize carefully. Delete repetitive content. If you keep your emails under 250 words, people will be more likely to read them.
3. Front-load your writing. Make your titles and subject lines descriptive. Tell the story in the first two sentences. You haven't got long to capture people's attention.
4. Purge passive voice. Passive sentences frustrate people. Don't tell us "the new system is estimated to cost \$150,000." Tell us who's responsible: "The IT department estimates that the new system will cost \$150,000."
5. Replace jargon. Big words are more likely to confuse readers than impress them. Don't tell us that you've "become part of the vendor ecosystem" when you really mean "our product is now compatible with other companies' software."
6. Eliminate weasel words. Weasel words are vague, meaningless intensifiers. When you tell us you're "incredibly excited about the new hire's massive performance improvement and deep knowledge of the subject," we sense that you're bullshitting us. Replace the intensifiers and qualifiers with facts and statistics.
7. Reveal structure. Paragraphs suck for online readers, especially when stacked on one another like cinder blocks. Use headings, bullets, lists, tables, graphics, and links to make writing easier to scan and parse.
8. Structure your process. If you're writing something long, spend the first half of your time on research and planning. Then, when it's time to write, you'll have everything at your fingertips.
9. Write a fat outline. Regular outlines are worthless for planning. Pretend you're writing a "treatment" for Hollywood: Include details, quotes, and ideas in your outline. Fat outlines force you to plan more thoroughly, and they're great for communicating your plan to others.
10. Manage reviews with discipline. Reviewers will ruin your best writing if you let them. Give each reviewer a specific task, like verifying technical details or the correctness of language. Set deadlines so the reviews come back together. Then, don't just do what they say; use your creativity to solve the problems they've found without losing the soul of what you wrote. Whether you're writing web copy or research reports, make an impact.

Don't write to fit in. Write to stand out. Write without bullshit.

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