



**Write It Well**  
Business writing that gets results.

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## Editorial and Visual Style Guides

**C**reate one or more style guides if multiple people produce documents that represent your organization. Style guides can improve text-only documents like e-mails and reports, or laid-out documents like brochures, webpages, and PowerPoint presentations.

Style guides are especially important if your organization has many employees, teams, or regional offices. They minimize confusion and keep everyone on the same page.

### Visual Style Guides

Visual style guides help you create and maintain a consistent look and design identity across a variety of computer and print media.

An organization develops a stronger, more coherent identity when presenters or designers understand and follow a visual style guide, and managers make sure there's a consistent look for all the organization's documents and visual projects.

### Editorial Style Guides

Editorial style guides help a variety of writers achieve

a consistent tone – keeping an organization's official voice crisp and coherent. Here are six steps to create an editorial style guide:

1. Identify the people who write for your organization, and collect writing samples from them.
2. Review samples of their writing to identify these kinds of problems:
  - Poor grammar and punctuation
  - Inconsistent capitalization
  - Inconsistent list styles
  - Inconsistent headline and heading styles
3. Spell out easy-to-follow rules to reduce or eliminate the types of errors you identified in the writing samples.
4. Include a list of the distinctive terms that are most important to your organization (e.g., keywords, terms of art, or product names).
5. Disseminate the style guide through e-mail, intranet, or other internal file-sharing systems.
6. Make sure each writer refers to the editorial style guide before submitting draft documents.

**W**rite It Well is a Bay Area-based, woman-owned training, consulting, and publishing firm. For thirty years, we've helped busy professionals improve their skills in all aspects of business writing. We can customize our Marketing Writing program for on-site, online, or e-learning delivery.

Our other training programs include Effective E-Mail, Business Writing, Technical Writing, and Writing Performance Reviews. Individualized writing-skills programs are also available, such as Creative Briefs, Web Copy, and Requests for Proposals – we can tailor a program to the writing needs of any individual organization. For more information please visit [our website](#), write to [natashaterk@writeitwell.com](mailto:natashaterk@writeitwell.com), or call us at (510) 655-6477.