

### Introduction

How is your New Year's resolution to read more and write better holding up? After tracing the fascinating story of the most influential writing style guide of all time and absorbing advice on writing from some of modern history's most celebrated writers, here comes some priceless and pricelessly uncompromising wisdom from a very different kind of cultural legend: iconic businessman and original "Mad Man" David Ogilvy (June 23, 1911–July 21, 1999). On September 7th, 1982, Ogilvy sent the following internal memo to all agency employees, titled "How to Write" and found in the 1986 gem *The Unpublished David Ogilvy* (public library).

Source: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2012/02/07/david-ogilvy-on-writing/>

### David Ogilvy



I once used the word OBSOLETE in a headline, only to discover that 43 per cent of housewives had no idea what it meant. In another headline, I used the word INEFFABLE, only to discover that I didn't know what it meant myself.

— David Ogilvy —

AZ QUOTES

### Ten Hints

1. Read the Roman-Raphaelson book on writing. Read it three times.
2. Write the way you talk. Naturally.
3. Use short words, short sentences and short paragraphs.
4. Never use jargon words like reconceptualize, demassification, attitudinally, judgmentally. They are hallmarks of a pretentious ass.
5. Never write more than two pages on any subject.
6. Check your quotations.
7. Never send a letter or a memo on the day you write it. Read it aloud the next morning — and then edit it.
8. If it is something important, get a colleague to improve it.
9. Before you send your letter or your memo, make sure it is crystal clear what you want the recipient to do.
10. If you want ACTION, don't write. Go and tell the guy what you want.

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