

# Top Ten Legal Writing Lessons

## *Under, does, when:*

Writing objective issue statements is difficult. This format helps capture the important parts: the law & facts.

## *Structural edits are important*

Place important information in the places readers are most likely to read: topic sentences & stress positions. If they skim, you still make your point.

## *Overviews help guide readers*

Give the reader the legal test before the answer in your overview.

## *Make demands clear*

Give your reader a clear action & a deadline.

## *Write for your reader*

Know your audience & change your writing to meet their needs.

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## *Ask for specific feedback:*

Direct persons as to the feedback you want. Otherwise, they fall back to proofreading.

## *Trigger events make great facts*

Facts tell a story. Trigger events make the story a compelling read, placing important information first.

## *Short sentences have impact*

Emphasize the point.

## *Writing takes several attempts*

Build enough time for 2 drafts & at least 2 hours for editing.

## *All writing is about choices*

Writing is not a passive activity. Make choices deliberately.