



EFFICIENT WRITING

Didactics of mathematics KU IND

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WHO IS MIRJAM?

Background

- Engineer & PhD, DTU (social science)
- Assistant Professor, DTU
- Associate Professor, AAU (humanities)
- Coach and consultant

Work areas

- Writing Bootcamps and coaching
- Doctoral coaching
- Training doctoral supervisors
- Change management support



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UNWIND

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PROGRAM

Agenda!



- 09:00–10:30 Introduction, writing exercise and writing tools
- 10:30–10:45 Break**
- 10:45–12:00 Writing goals and first writing session
- 12:00–12:45 Lunch**
- 12:45–14:00 More writing tools and second writing session
- Different phases in writing, rhetorical reading & target group
 - Plan your writing & writing snacks
- 14:00–14:20 Break with physical movement**
- 14:20–15:40 Peer feedback – in theory and practice
- 15:40–16:00 Plan your writing & create writing groups
- 16:00 End of workshop**



INTRODUCTION AND TOOLS

SPEEDWRITING

Purposes

- To get started producing text
- To overcome your own inner critic
- Generate ideas and clarify thoughts
- To warm up for writing

How?

- Decide on a time span and write all the time (max. 15 min)
- Write in a fast pace
- Don't correct errors
- <http://studypedia.au.dk/skriv-opgaven/skriv-nu/>



EXERCISE: SPEEDWRITING

Speed write for 7 minutes:

- When does academic writing work well?
- What are my challenges in academic writing?

If you stop write: 'If I knew what to write I would write...'



SHARE IN GROUPS – 10 MINUTES

What are your
main challenges
in academic
writing?

What are your
best strategies to
get writing done?

CHALLENGE:
WRITING IS A
COMPETENCE
THAT WE ARE
EXPECTED TO
HAVE ...

“Although there are many courses, books and so on about writing, it is generally assumed that people will somehow work out how to manage themselves to write *productively* and *well*.”

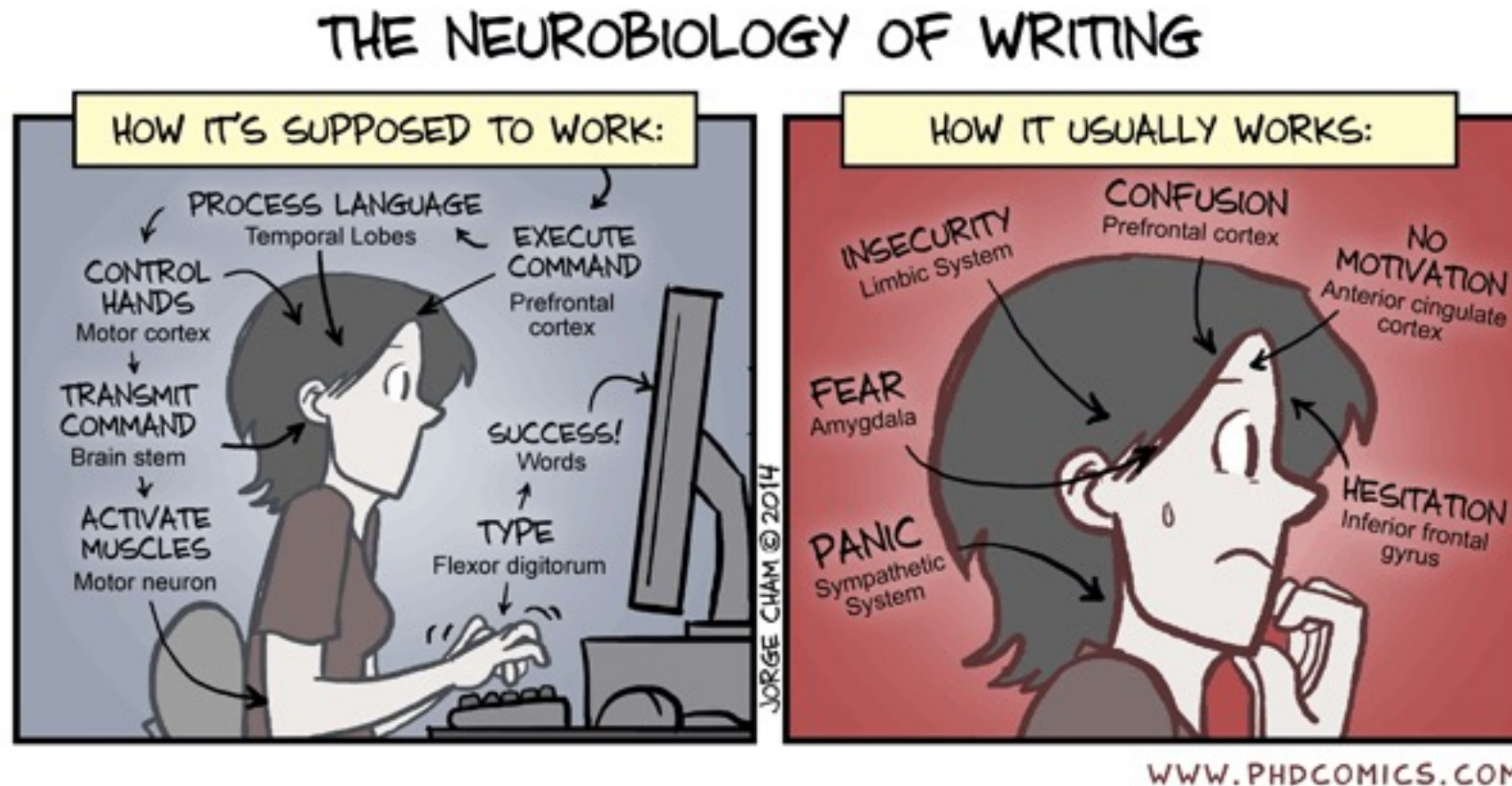
Source: Gardiner & Kearns (2012), The ABCDE of writing: Coaching high-quality high-quantity writing, p. 237

HOW DO I GET STARTED?



*Writing is 90% procrastination
and 30% panic.*

IDEALS VERSUS REALITY





Could writing
just be a piece of
work?

I LACK TIME!



YOUR "TO DO" LIST

TO DO

- ☒ ~~WRITE TO DO LIST~~
- ☐ GET REIMBURSED FOR CONFERENCE EXPENSES
- ☐ WORK ON THESIS

TO DO

- ☒ ~~WRITE TO DO LIST~~
- ☒ ~~GET REIMBURSED FOR CONFERENCE EXPENSES~~ ☐ GO TO BANK
- ☐ WORK ON THESIS
- ☒ SEND SLIDES TO PROF JONE
- ☐ SUBMIT PAPER REVIEW
- ☐ GRADE FINALS
- ☐ MEET WITH UNDERGRAD

JORGE CHAM © 2010

TO DO

- ☒ CLEAN APARTMENT? ☐ DENTIST?
- ☒ BACK UP FILES! ☐ BUY MORE COFFEE!
- ☒ ~~WRITE TO DO LIST~~
- ☒ ORDER SUPPLIES
- ☒ GET REIMBURSED FOR CONFERENCE EXPENSES
- ☐ WORK ON THESIS
- ☒ SUBMIT PAPER REVIEW
- ☒ PRINT POSTER
- ☐ GRADE FINALS
- ☒ CALL MOM!!
- ☐ LAUNDRY
- ☐ MEET WITH UNDERGRAD
- ☐ HELP LABMATE WITH THEIR RESEARCH

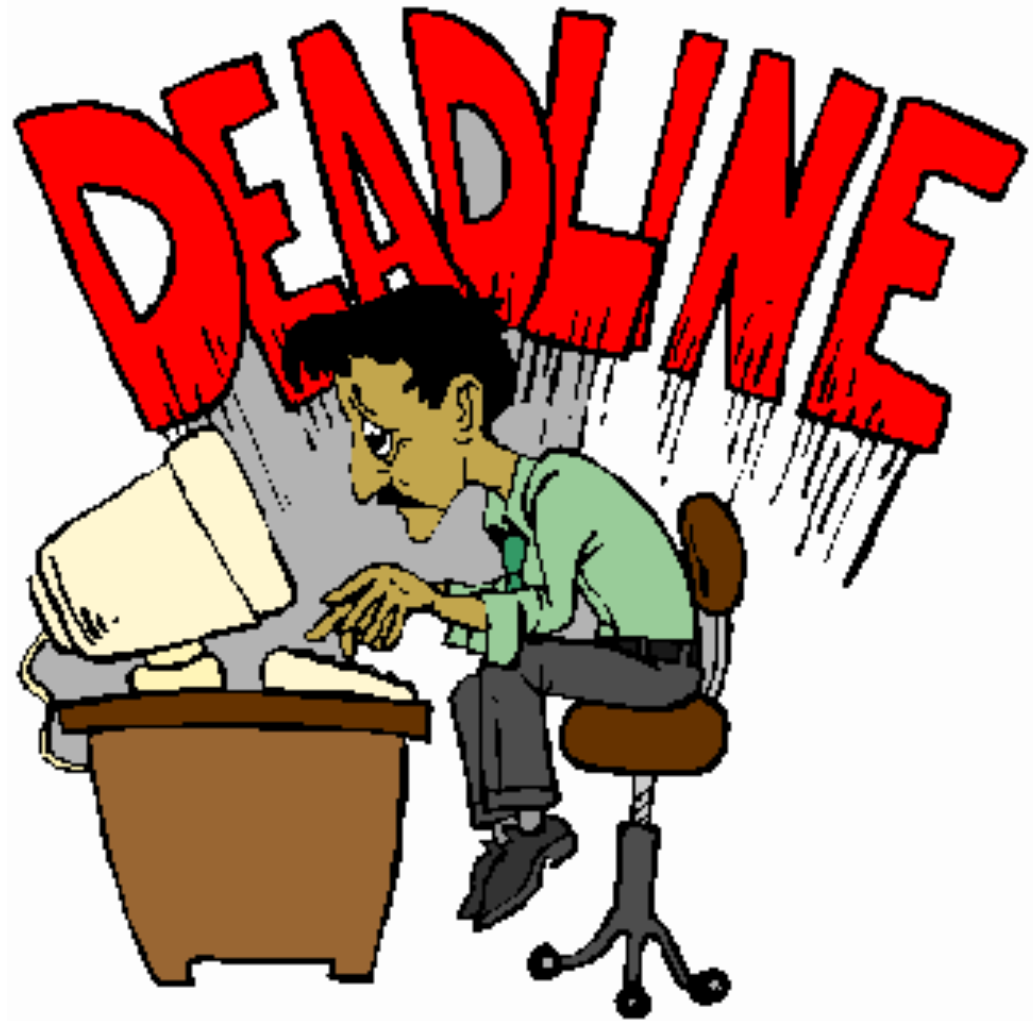
TO DO

- ☐ WRITE NEW TO DO LIST
- ☐ WORK ON THESIS?

SIGH...



DEADLINES
WORK
– BUT IT IS NOT
THAT JOYFUL!



WAITING FOR THE RIGHT STATE OF
MIND...

“If I waited till I
felt like writing,
I'd never write at all.

– Anne Tyler

WHY DO WE PROCRASTINATE?

- You have not defined the first step precisely
- You are avoiding a decision
- You are afraid that when you write down your thoughts people will realize that you are not clever enough

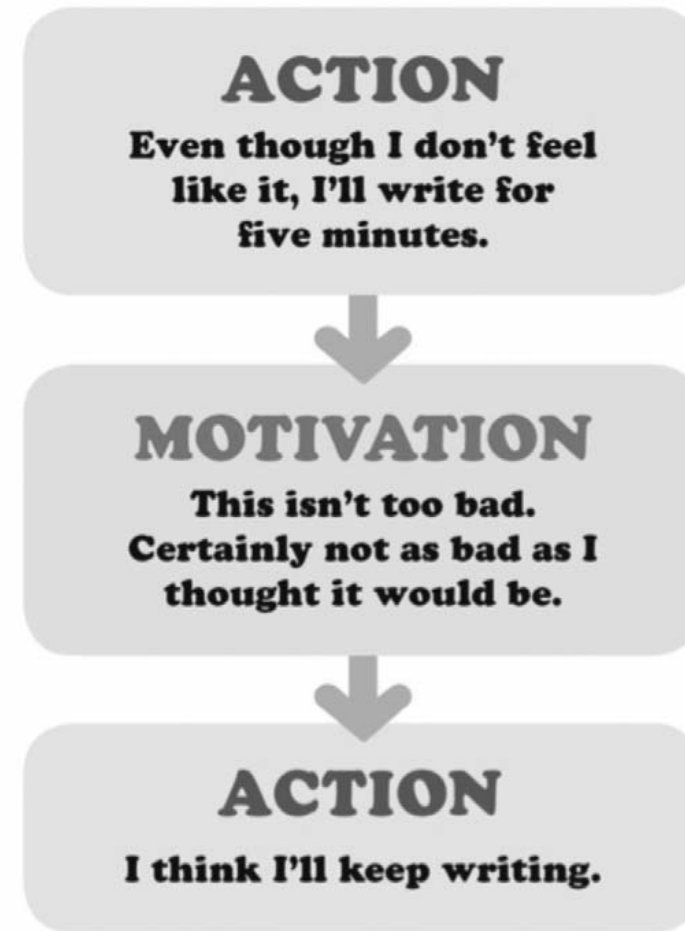


*Writing is 90% procrastination
and 30% panic.*

GET STARTED

”Motivation is triggered by taking action”

Figure 2: The relationship between action and motivation (from Gardiner & Kearns, 2010).



Source: Gardiner & Kearns (2012), The ABCD of writing: Coaching high-quality high-quantity writing, p. 244

WRITING GOALS...

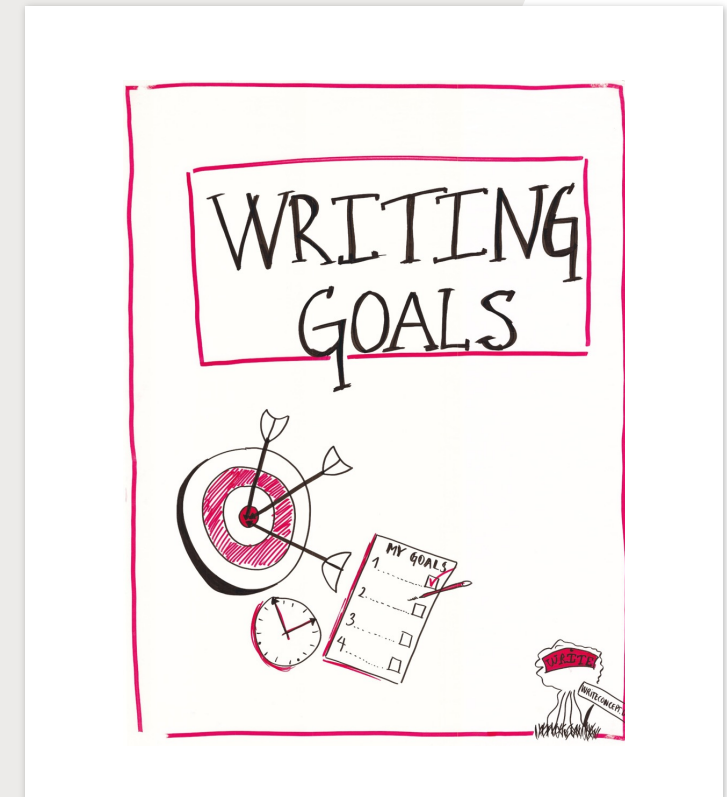
...are about braking down the task into smaller pieces

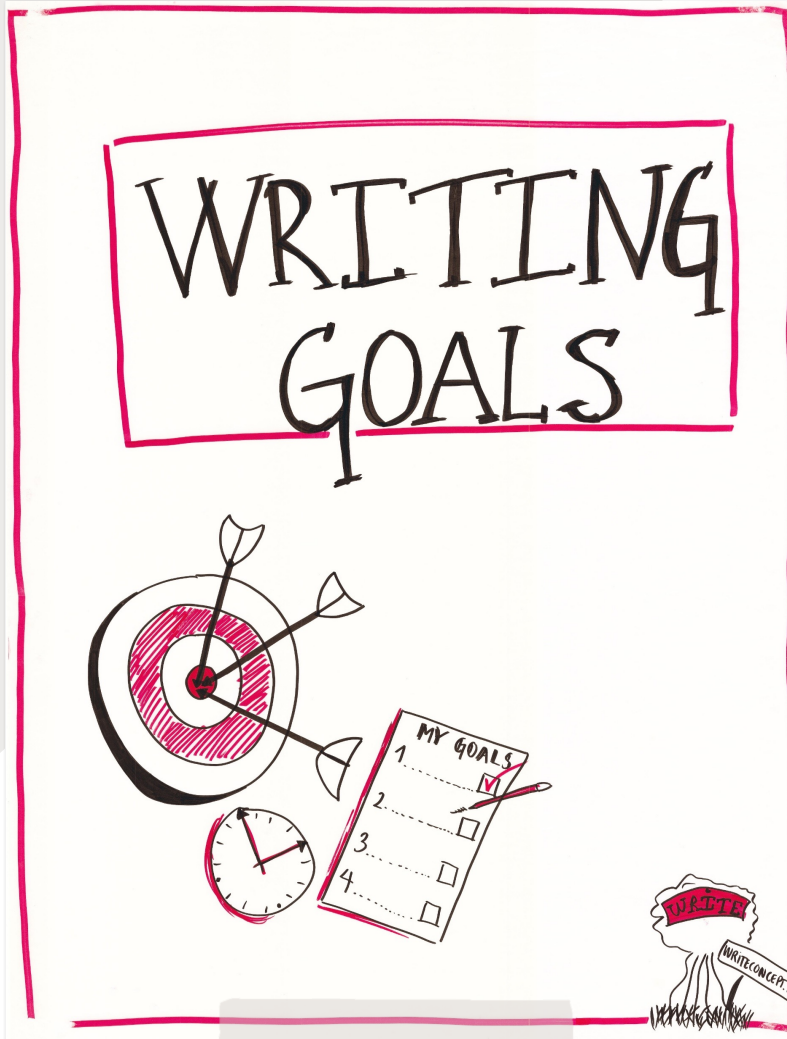


"I want to finish the article before the Easter holiday"

EXAMPLES OF WRITING GOALS

- I will write a paragraph of app. 1 page, explaining how I use the concept 'transformative learning'
- The next hour I will write 10 lines explaining the graph or quote
- I will write a draft of the first paragraph of the discussion
- I will finish the paragraph on methodology in the article and send it to my co-writers
- I will re-structure the introduction





WRITING GOALS

Purposes

To break the writing task in to smaller pieces

To overcome procrastination

How

1. Decide which time span you are setting a goal for
2. Decide what and how much you aim at writing
3. Set a timer and stop on time
4. Take a break and set a new goal if you have decided to continue



15 MIN. BREAK

WRITING SESSION

1

Use 2 minutes to set a writing goal for a 45 min. writing session.

2

Use 8 minutes to share your writing goals at the table.

3

Write on your writing goal for the next 45 min.

4

Use 10 minutes to share how it went



LUNCH BREAK 45 MIN



MORE WRITING TOOLS:

RHETORICAL READING
DIFFERENT PHASES IN WRITING
ACADEMIC PHRASE BANK
PLANNING

REACH YOUR TARGET GROUP: RHETORICAL READING

- Analyse structure and language
- What characterises this genre?
- Which discussions go on in the journal?



THE ARTICLE DESIGN CANVAS

Name(s):		Target Journal:		Current Title:		Date / Version:		Article Design Canvas	
Others Research What bodies of literature(s) are relevant? Does each Literature Support or Motivate the research?		Research Design What Methodology / Design was used? Principles / Objectives of the Methodology / Design What Methods of Data Collection and Analysis were used? Strengths / Features of the Methods Sampling Methods / Aspects of Context		Findings / Results What are the Key Findings, Results, or emergent Themes?		Focal Phenomenon What "Things" are being investigated? Specify the Main Phenomenon and Specific Sub-phenomena			
Observations and Arguments What Issues / Themes are evident? What Gaps / Problems exist? What are the Risks / Costs of the Gaps / Problems?								Contributions What are the Contributions? Establish links to Identified Literature(s) Contribution(s) Type? (empirical, theoretical, practical, methodological, philosophical)	
		Theory What Theoretical Ideas are used or developed in the research? Developed Hypotheses? Theory Testing / Theory Generation? Conceptual Framework / Theoretical Lens?		Discussion How do the Findings / Results compare with Past Research? Establish links to Specific Articles					
This Research What are the Research Questions? What are the Benefits / Value of the Research Questions?								Future Research How should others use this research? What future research should be done and how can this research be incorporated into it?	

A simple template for creating an overview of the article. It visualizes the backbone structure of the research paper. Download and read more [here](#)



Introducing work

Referring to sources

Describing methods

Reporting results

Discussing findings

Writing conclusions

Academic Phrasebank / Signalling transition

GENERAL LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

Being cautious

Being critical

Classifying and listing

Compare and contrast

Defining terms

Describing trends

Describing quantities

Explaining causality

Giving examples

Signalling transition

Signalling transition

Previewing what is to follow in a paper or dissertation is like showing a map to a driver; it enables them to see where they are going. So it is useful to think of a preview section as a 'road map' for the reader. It must be accurate, but it must be easy to follow.

Writers are also expected to indicate to the reader when they are moving from one topic to another, or from one section of text to another. These are known as transition statements and examples of these, together with some previewing statements, are given below.

Previewing sections of text

The section below describes ...

What follows is an account of ...

In the following pages, I will present ...

The following is a brief description of ...

In the section that follows, it will be argued that ...

The problem of X is discussed in the following section.

A more detailed account of X is given in the following section.

The structure and functions of X will be explained in the following section.

Advising cautious interpretation of results - close

(Also refer to *Discussing Findings*)

These findings cannot be extrapolated to all patients.

These data must be interpreted with caution because ...

These results therefore need to be interpreted with caution.

These results do not rule out the influence of other factors in ...

This account must be approached with some caution because ...

It is important to bear in mind the possible bias in these responses.

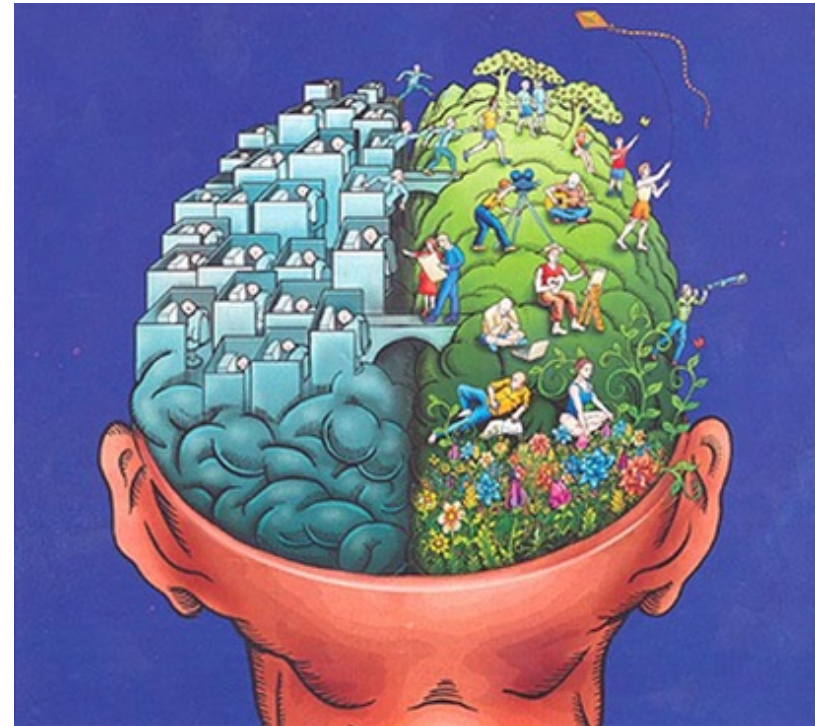
Although exclusion of X did not ..., these results should be interpreted with caution.

However, with a small sample size, caution must be applied, as the findings might not be ...

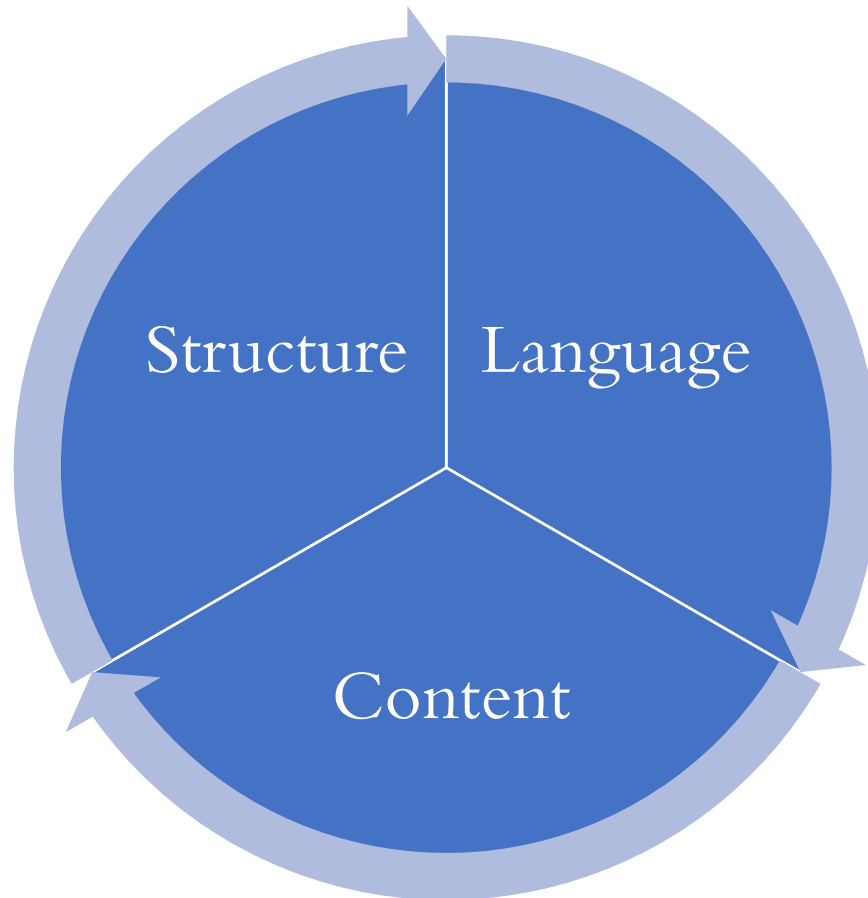
DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DIFFERENT PHASES IN THE WRITING PROCESS



Separate creative and critical
thinking when you write



THE 3 RHETORICAL GRIPS OF THE TEXT



- Content: ideas, claims, line of argument
- Structure: sequence of ideas and sections
- Language: precision, active vs. passive voice

THE CONTENT

Questions you can ask your text while writing:

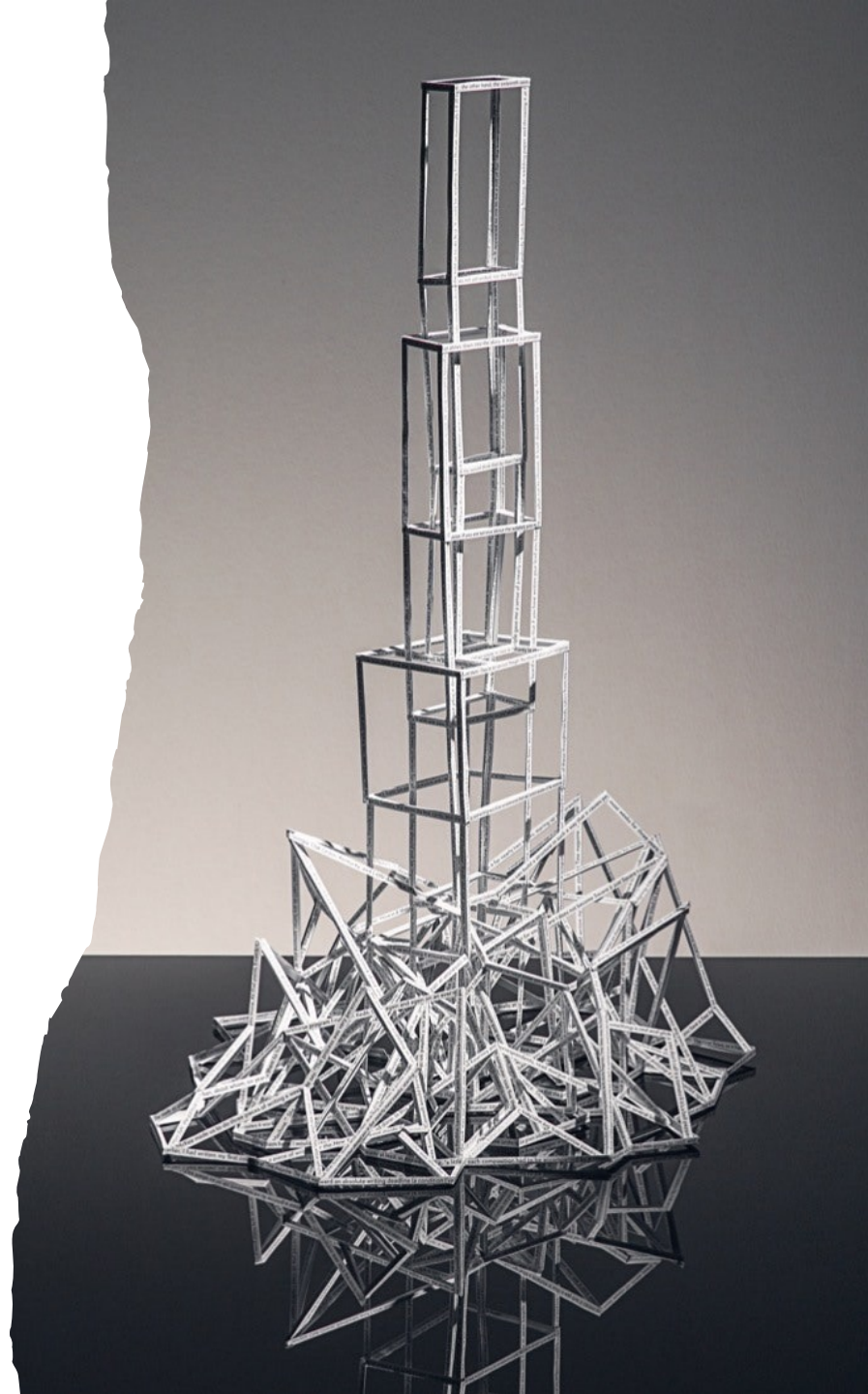
- What is your main point?
- Are there text pieces which are irrelevant for the main point?
- Does the text answer the target group's questions?
- Does the line of argument hold?



THE STRUCTURE

Questions you can ask your text while writing:

- Are the title and headlines signalling the content?
- Do you get motivated to go on when you read the introduction?
- Is there coherence between the title, introduction, the main text and the conclusion?
- Is there enough meta text or too much?



THE LANGUAGE

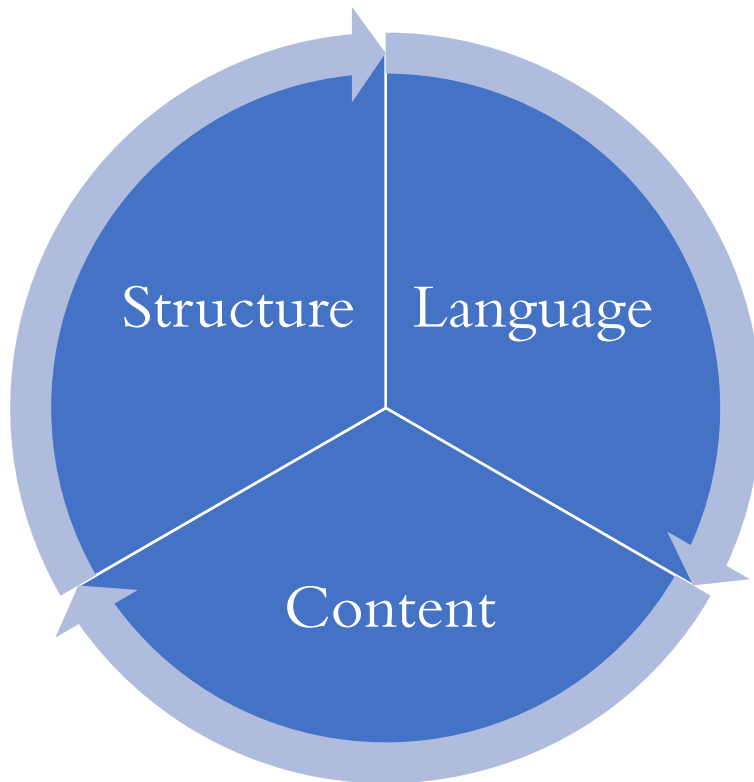
Questions you can ask your text while writing:

- Is the text easy to read out loud?
- Do you mix active and passive voice?
- Are the sentence constructions too complex?
- How is my tone of voice (formal/informal)



DEFINE YOUR NEXT WRITING GOAL

- IS IT RELATED TO STRUCTURE, CONTENT OR LANGUAGE?



- Content: ideas, claims, line of argument
- Structure: sequence of ideas and sections
- Language: precision, active vs. passive voice



15 MIN. BREAK



PEER FEEDBACK WORKSHOP

WHAT IS FEEDBACK?

- Definition

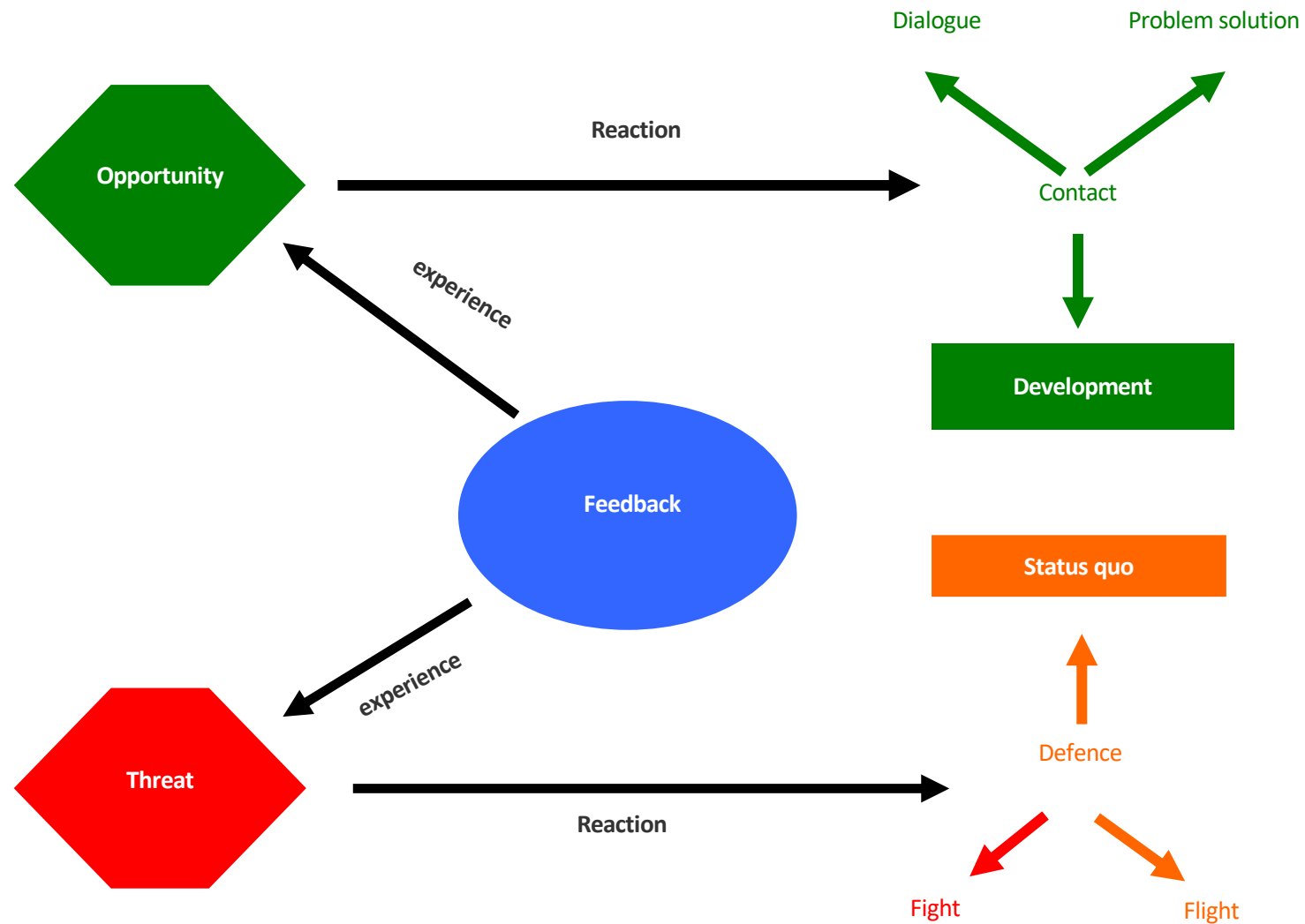
Feedback is a response you give with the *intention* to contribute in a *constructive* way to other people's development

- Purpose

Improve overall performance by developing your strengths and improving your weaknesses

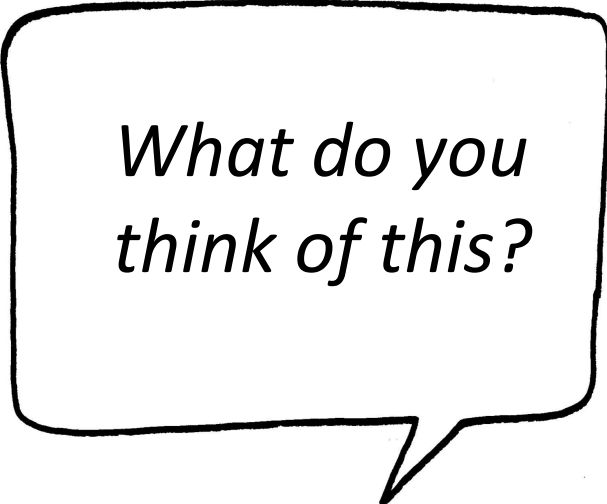


FEEDBACK MODEL



UNDIRECTED FEEDBACK

- Often unhelpful for the author
- Frustrating for the reviewer



*What do you
think of this?*

BE AN *ACTIVE* FEEDBACK SEEKER

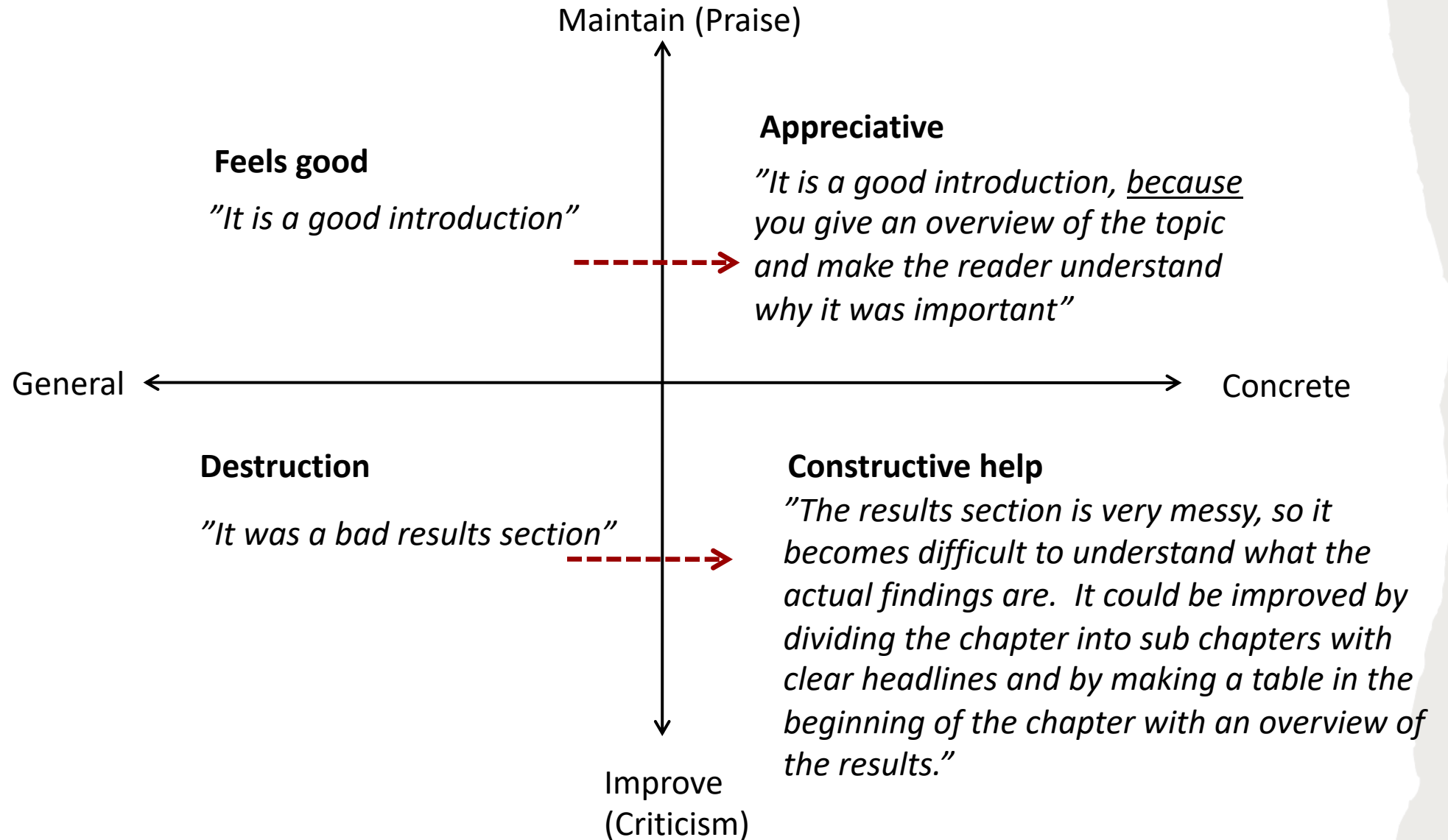
Tell the feedbacker what you need in a cover letter:

- 1) What is the nature of the text? (Method and theory paragraph, list of ideas for the conclusion...)
- 2) Indicate the maturity of the writing (preliminary, middle or final draft)
- 3) What are you pleased with in your text?
- 4) What challenges are you facing when writing the text?
- 5) What would you like to get feedback on? (flow, argument, use of empirical data, presentation of results, language)

HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK

- 1) Give *positive* feedback first.
- 2) Always point to *specific examples* in the text of the things that you talk about in your feedback.
- 3) Do *not apologise* for your feedback. Even though you may not know as much about the academic content as the author, your feedback will still be valuable to him or her.
- 4) Give your feedback as a statement, *not as an invitation for a discussion*.

HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK



DISTINGUISH BETWEEN
'CRITERIA-BASED' AND
'READER-BASED' FEEDBACK

CRITERIA BASED FEEDBACK

- Does the text have a logical structure?
- What are the requirements for the text according to the academic standards?
 - Does the text fulfil these requirements?
- Does the text contain sound argumentation and are all claims well supported?
- Are quotations correct and relevant?
- Does referencing follow approved academic standards, and are sources referenced sufficiently?
- Does the author take potential objections to the conclusion into account?
- Is the text precisely and clearly written?
- Are guides provided for the reader in the form of headings, boxed texts, etc.?

READER-BASED FEEDBACK

- What are my first impressions of the text?
- Are there parts of the text I prefer? Why do I prefer these parts?
- Are there sections where I get stuck or am unable to understand? Am I able to say what causes this?
- Is the style and tone of the text consistent throughout?
- Does the structure of the various sections improve the reading experience?
- What is the target audience of the text?
- Does it address me or a different type of reader?
- How does the use of examples or cases affect my perception of the content?
- How does the use of illustrations affect the reading experience?

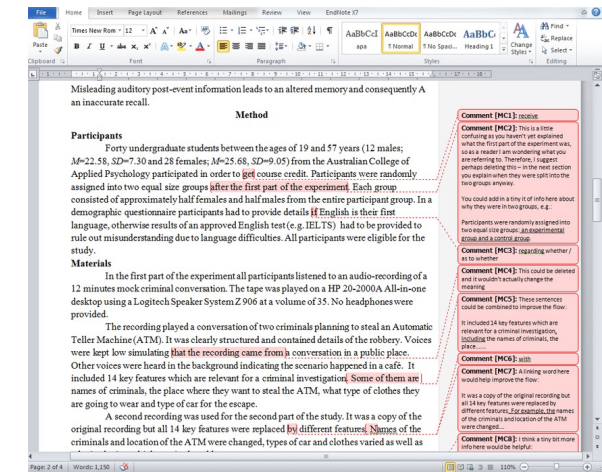
PREPARE FOR PEER FEEDBACK (10 MIN.)

- 1) Choose a piece of text (1-2 pages)
- 2) Reflect on what kind of feedback you need
- 3) Write a cover letter to your feedbacker



GIVING PEER-FEEDBACK IN GROUPS

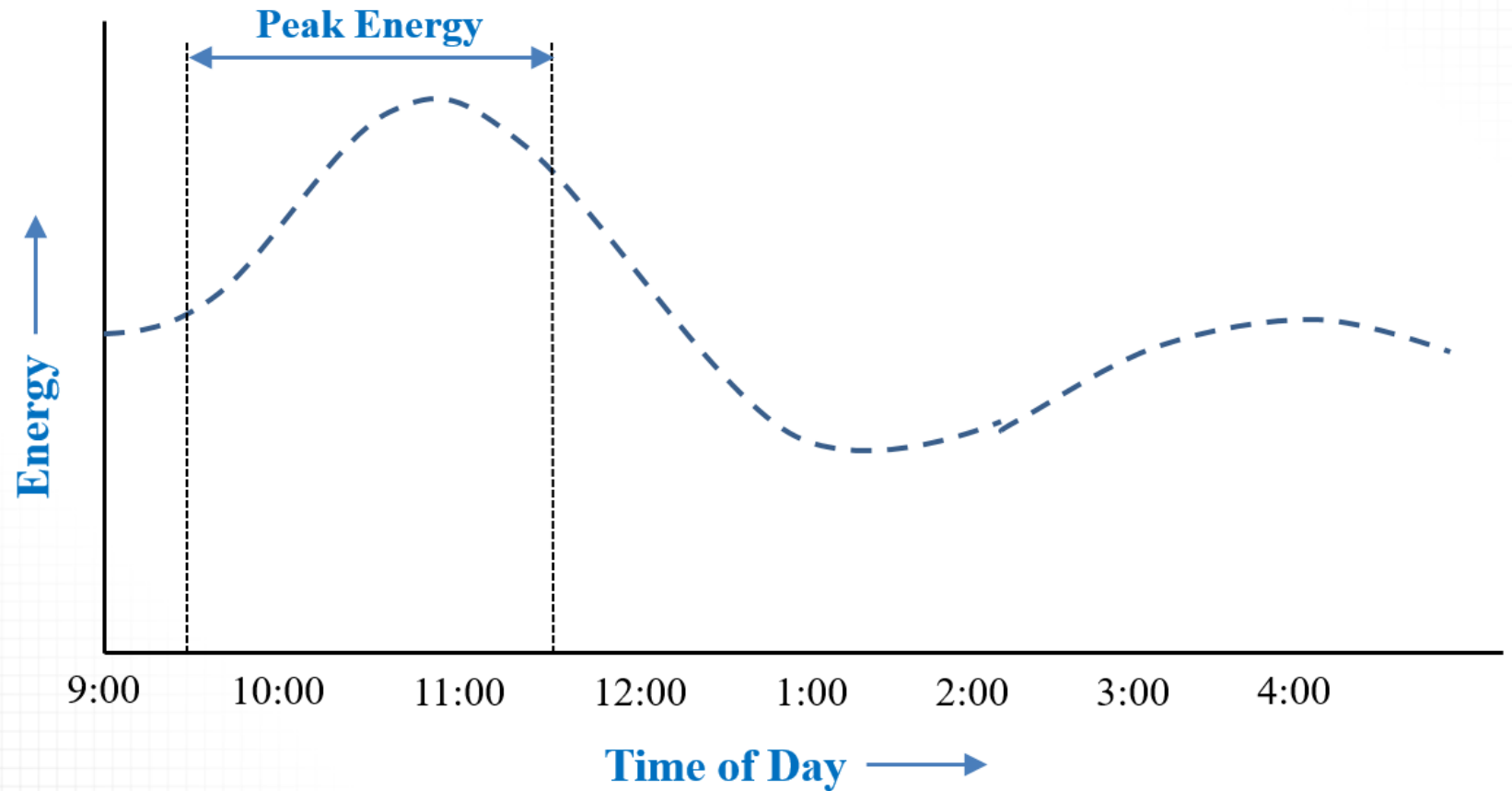
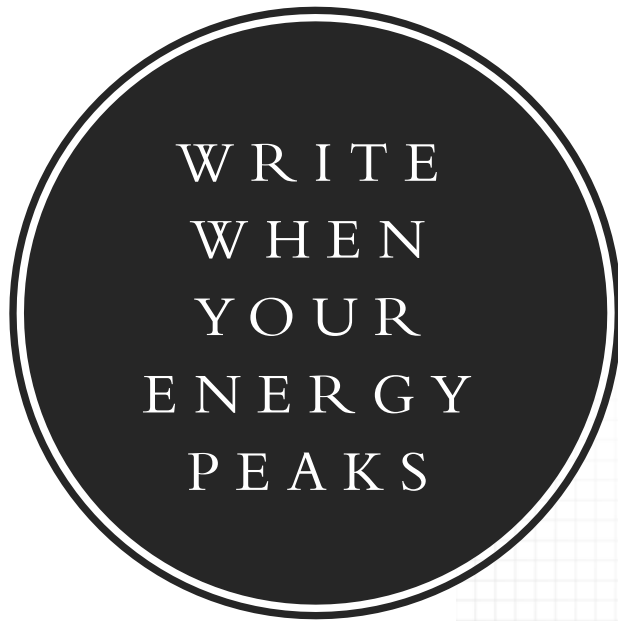
- 1) Make groups of 2-3 people
- 2) Send text and cover letter to each other – 5 min
- 3) Read each others' text and provide feedback – 10 min
- 4) Divide the remaining time between you and give feedback



DO YOU
PLAN YOUR
WRITING?



Daily Energy Curve



WRITING GOALS...

Always know your
next writing goal!



PLAN YOUR WRITING

- Make a plan for finishing up your current writing task

OR

- Create a writing routine





WRITING TOGETHER

How to make collaborative writing work well

IT IS WELL DOCUMENTED THAT PARTICIPATION IN WRITING GROUPS...

Enables writers to increase both quantity and quality of texts

Increases motivation and confidence

Decreases anxiety and isolation

Increases text quality due to both receiving and giving feedback

Increases writers' metaconscious awareness of own process

Increases self-efficacy and self regulation



(Sarah Haas 2014)



HOW DO YOU WRITE TOGETHER?

Writing a common
product

Coming together to
support each other

IMPORTANT ASPECTS TO DISCUSS IN A WRITERS' GROUP

Who and why?

Purpose, Members,
& Leadership

Structure

Time, place,
frequency, duration

Activities

In-meeting
activities, between-
meeting activities

(Sarah Haas 2014)

SPEEDWRITE 5 MINUTES

- What is the most important thing you want to change to become a more efficient writer?
- Share at the tables



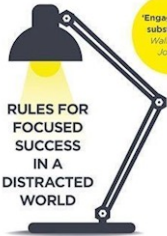


Thank
you

MORE INSPIRATION

DEEP WORK

"Cal Newport is a clear voice in a sea of noise, bringing science and passion in equal measure"
Seth Godin, author of *Linchpin*



RULES FOR
FOCUSED
SUCCESS
IN A
DISTRACTED
WORLD

Cal Newport
Author of *So Good They Can't Ignore You*

"Engaging and
substantive"
*Wall Street
Journal*

Air & Light & Time & Space

HELEN SWORD

HOW SUCCESSFUL
ACADEMICS WRITE

SRHE Society for Research into Higher Education
Advancing knowledge. Informing policy. Enhancing practice.

Writing in Social Spaces

A SOCIAL PROCESSES APPROACH TO
ACADEMIC WRITING

Rowena Murray

RESEARCH INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Open UP Study Skills

Writing for Academic Journals

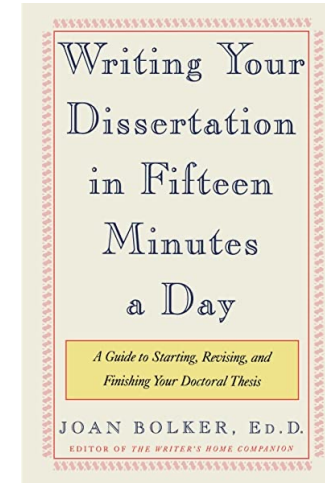
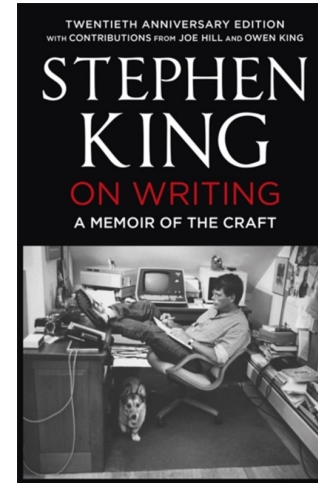
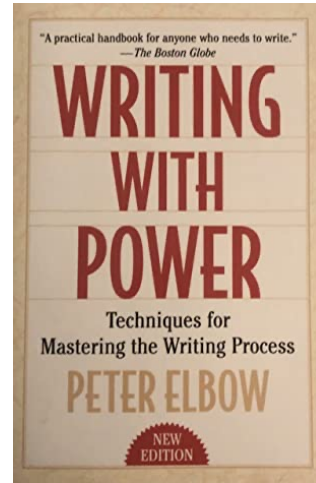
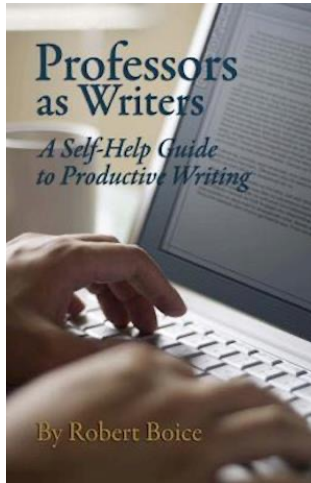
3rd
edition

- Streamline the process of writing academic papers
- Target a journal, find topics and develop arguments
- Make time to write
- Get to grips with using social media



Rowena Murray

MORE INSPIRATION



MORE INSPIRATION

