



Issue No. 1, November 2005

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first issue of **EC Buzz**, the newsletter dedicated to clear writing and banishing buzzwords. Each issue will feature three writing tips and a buzzword that deserves to be banished.

Let me know if you have questions or ideas for upcoming issues.

Happy writing!



Elizabeth Cockle
Copywriter and Buzzword Banisher

In this issue...

- Three Simple Ways to Spice Up Your Writing
- Buzz Off : *Think outside the box*
- Parting Words

Three Simple Ways to Spice Up Your Writing

1. **Use verbs.** Verbs add life and action to text. Use verbs instead of nouns whenever possible. Many “-ion” or “-ment” words can be changed to verbs. Thus, “development” becomes “developing” and “establishment” becomes “establishing”.
2. **Break a few rules.** Many of us learned in school not to start sentences with “or”, “and”, or “but”. This rule works well for school essays and serious business documents. But in marketing materials, which need to stand out, sentence fragments easily catch readers’ attention, especially in headlines. Like any attention-seeking technique, use sentence fragments sparingly for the best effect.
3. **Use a thesaurus.** Repeating words makes for boring text. Luckily almost every word has at least one synonym. When you need to find a substitute word, reach for a thesaurus or visit thesaurus.reference.com. Because synonyms can have subtly different connotations from your original word, double-check with a dictionary to ensure your message has not changed.

Buzz Off : *Think outside the box*

This buzzword phrase has reached oxymoron status. It used to mean an openness to new ways of thinking. Through overuse, it now implies almost the opposite.

Instead of writing – or saying – “We think outside the box”, bring in one of the following:

- “We always look for new and better ways to do the job.”
- “We’re known for our fresh thinking.”
- “Our clients are consistently impressed by our original ideas.”

Is there a buzzword you would like to banish? Send your suggestion to writer@ecwriting.com, then look for your buzzword and name in an upcoming issue.

Parting Words

“Vigorous writing is concise.”

– William Strunk, Jr., author, *The Elements of Style*