Proven Techniques (& Strategies) You Can Use To *Start & Finish Writing ANYTHING**

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By **Tayo K. Solagbade**

Are you like most people who want to write, but struggle to do it? Then this article can help you. How many times have you come up with a title for an article, blog post, report, book, or speech/talk, but failed to finish it?

In this report, I share a number of techniques (and strategies) that I personally use individually, and in combination, on a regular basis to start and finish writing my articles, books, reports, blog posts - and even speeches/talks I have to deliver!

The over 1,500 write-ups available on my website (www.spontaneousdevelopment.com) were written using one or more of the methods I discuss here. I learnt about some of these writing strategies from reading advice by other writers. The others I conceived and

developed for my own use over the years. Where the latter is the case, I have taken pains to mention it :-) If you have any doubts in your mind about reading this report to the end, drop them now. What you WILL learn/discover from reading this piece will enable **you get much more writing done to COMPLETION than you currently do**.

Guest posting is currently trending as a reliable and cost-effective way to quickly build name recognition, market place credibility and traffic/subscriber base online. To succeed with this unique strategy however, you must be capable of producing a reasonable volume of 100% original write-ups to be given away as guest posts to high quality blogs/websites.

But that's just one side to it. You also need to maintain a decent reserve of equally original content on your own website or blog, to further "woo" visitors that are bound to come looking for more, after reading your *amazing* guest posts. Net surfers tend to be very click-happy, or in a hurry. If they get to your site and feel disappointed, they'll leave just as quickly as they came. You cannot let your efforts go to waste by failing to provide matching "meaty" content on your site.

What I'm saying in essence is that successful guest posting takes a lot of work i.e. good quality writing. Some people cannot spare the time to do it. So they hire others.

Whatever approach you adopt, the ideas offered in this report can help you. If you're not doing the writing, pass it to the person who is. There's value to be had here.

The strategies I describe below, will enable you churn out more good quality and ORIGINAL write-ups in less time and with less effort, for you to use as guest posting, to create e-books etc.

Five (5) Strategies for Preparing Yourself to Become a Writing Ideas Generator™!

Just before we start talking about the actual strategies you can use, let me intimate you with a creative thinking strategy I employ to make myself constantly able to generate potentially interesting or useful titles or topics to write about on a daily basis.

The truth is even if you start and finish writing it, *if your chosen writing topic (and content) is not one that will interest and benefit readers*, you are unlikely to get the positive exposure and resultant rise in credibility that you desire, in the mind of your target audience.

So, remember this at all times:

You must continually analyze the activities you engage in (what you see/read, hear etc), to identify potential writing topics. For instance, look out for those issues you feel strongly about, which often make you wonder, "*Can't someone write something about this?*" or silently scream "*There's got to be a better way to do this!*" Review popular websites that cater to the needs of your target audience.

You can also write to share your discovery of a new way of doing something, or an experience you had - good or bad - which helped you learn something that turned out useful etc. Aim to write on topics that relate to issues you have a passion for, and which - if you were woken up in the middle of the night - you would be able to speak about, almost without having to think.

In my opinion, **sometimes your subject does not even have to relate directly to your area of expertise**. I believe that as a business person, one must demonstrate an awareness of his/her environment. Evidence of this would be demonstrated by your ability to write about current affairs or issues in

society in a way that enables you apply your professional expertise or specialized knowledge to contribute to development of people and society.

Make doing the above a habit, and you will be amazed at the speed with which you'll subsequently be able to generate a constantly growing list of new topics. You'll consequently have to work doubly hard to write content for each article topic, even as you spontaneously add more topics to the list. Believe me, this will happen!

Now, on to the strategies for preparation:

The actions described below are to be done continually, till they become deeply ingrained habits.

1. Find/Use YOUR Best Time to Write

You may find that the best time to write will be during periods when your work demands have slowed down. That could be after close of work, if you are not too tired. Or it could be when business is actually slow! At this time, rather than dwell on that fact, do some writing and get your stuff out there for more marketing exposure which could lead to more traffic and/or new business.

But ultimately, you will need to study and get to know yourself and what works for you, then do it. We are all different human beings, with different rates/styles of learning and preferred ways of doing things. Appreciating this fact will make you realize you need to develop a system that you can easily carry on with, for as long as you need to.

2. Enlist the Support Of Trusted Others

Depending on how self-driven and disciplined you are, you may find it useful to enlist a trusted person, who has empathy for what you wish to do, to periodically ask you about your progress. It could be your best friend,

business partner, spouse or mentor. Agree a date or a specific interval when s/he will ask you how far you have gone. You can also think up "sanctions" s/he can impose on you if you do not "impress" e.g. if it's your spouse s/he could say you get "no dinner" :-)

When you know someone is expecting to see the finished write-up, you are not likely to let yourself fall too far behind in your writing plans. Do this for long enough, and you should eventually be thanking THAT person for getting you to the point where you can carry on your own - setting and meeting challenging writing deadlines all by yourself.

3. Create Quiet Time for Deep Thinking

To ensure you really come up with an original piece of writing, you need to dig deep within yourself. Again, people differ. Some may not need to do this, but I have often found it useful to withdraw from people (even if only "mentally"), so as to reflect deeply about an issue or topic I consider of writing potential.

During this time, you'll be able to generate unique ideas for discussing the subject and come up with original perspectives for analysis, solutions etc. Of course, if you have chosen a subject you have little knowledge about or experience in, you are unlikely to come up with much that would be of any use. That's why I said choose a subject you feel strongly about and/or have a passion for. **Human beings are never at a loss for words when they have to contribute to discussions about issues they feel strongly about**. Ever noticed that?

There's one more thing. Only after doing this step (i.e. deep thinking on your own) should you pick up ANY previously written material – whether authored by you or anyone else - to read on the subject you want to write about. It can take you days, weeks or even months, depending on the topic, to get enough ideas. You will get multiple ideas of topics to write

about. Some you will easily flesh out discussion points for, others you may not. **And ideas for writing will come at just about anytime and anywhere!** That's why a pen and a good notepad may have to be your daily companions. *These days I find it more convenient to store them in my Blackberry memo pad, or in notepad files on my laptop.* Just keep writing the topics down for later review via the techniques I'll describe later on.

If you fail to do this, you could end up not fully exploring your own ideas – effectively missing out refreshing insights you can add to the subject, for your readers' benefit.

Remember, **you write in order to make people think you are credible, knowledgeable, and have something useful to offer, which your competition may not.** If they read your write-ups and keep thinking, "*Well he never seems to say anything that has not been said before*", you are unlikely to get much of what has been called "share of mind" amongst them!

4. Know Who You Are Writing For

This is very important. If you fail to clearly picture in your mind, the profile of your intended reader or target audience, you may end up writing something that will not interest them. And they will not read - or finish reading - it. That means you'll get little or no return on your invested time and effort. Get your trusted other(s) to read your drafts, and give you feedback to help you modify accordingly. Over time, your ability to tailor your writing to meet the needs of your intended audience will bring you more success.

5. Have a Compelling Reason(s)

When you are invited to deliver a keynote address at the Chambers of Commerce sponsored event in your community, it's likely that the topic will be chosen for you, and you

will be familiar with type of audience you will be speaking to.

In this sense therefore, the desire to ensure you do well on that day, can motivate you to do all that is necessary to start and finish writing your speech on time. However, for the person who has to write for herself as a means of self-promotion and marketing, depending on potential website visitors or prospective clients to send you requests for new topics would be unwise. You therefore need to **_find_** a compelling reason to inspire you to regularly publish new writings.

My "compelling reason" is that I want to share what I know – from "doing" - with others so they can discover how to succeed in pursuing their valued goals, by applying techniques similar to those I describe. I also want to achieve significant recognition and credibility as a freelance writer and entrepreneur.

That way, when people see an offer from me, of say an e-book for sale, **they will be more likely to spend less time worrying about who I am or if what I offer can really help them, and more time asking how they can order it**, if they happen to be interested.

My "reasons" are so compelling for me, that I simply cannot help thinking about how to achieve them every day. Sometimes I feel like my head is going to burst, as new titles for articles, or discussion points for chosen topics keep fighting their way into my brain everywhere I go! It can be quite an exciting - but sometimes scary experience - really!

Find your reason(s) and use it (them) to keep yourself motivated to finish your writing.

6. Always Set a Target Date

Even though I touched on this earlier, in reference to your trusted "others", it's still worth mentioning again. You need to set specific target dates to finish writing say "ten

(10) new articles". I do this all the time. That's why I am able to churn out volumes of original content on my websites, and also for different clients in real estate, hospitality, fitness, education, charity, medicine and other fields.

How to Measure Your Success

Knowing what's working and what's not will guide you to better focus your writing efforts for optimal results. You will find it useful to measure the "interest" your target audience in each of your write-ups. I discuss below, 6 different ways you can go about doing this.

(a). Rating Scales: You can publish your articles or blog posts with rating scales (e.g. clickable one to five star buttons) that your readers can easily click to assign a score. Social media share buttons also offer useful measures of quality and popularity.

(b). Reprint Permissions: Requests for permission to use your write-ups are a good sign that your work is considered of value. You can encourage requests by inserting a "reprint permission" statement at the bottom of articles or posts for interested persons.

Here's one I use at the end of my articles:

"Except otherwise stated, as long as no alterations are made to articles, and provided the author's copyright (and contact) information is included, permission to use them for publication is granted to any interested persons, groups or organizations. To obtain permission to re-publish certain sections please click here to submit your request."

BOOK PUBLISHED
In 2008, after requesting – and getting - permission from me via email, India's ICFAI University included my article titled "**Are Your Employees Happy & Satisfied With Their Jobs? (A Ten Item Quiz That Can Help You Find Out)**", in a book they published titled "**Employee Morale: Concepts and Cases**" - now on sale for Rs 425 at
http://www.infibeam.com/Books/info/sangeetha-k/employee-morale-concepts-cases/9788131419953.html - see item 14 on sales page

(c). Guest (& Blog) Posts Statistics: There are many tools available online today, for quick and easy measurement of website performance. Measure the "popularity" of the different posts on your blog, and discover what topics most interest your visitors - then write more of them. Apart from those you publish on your website, **you can also submit some original write-ups to well recognized sites or blogs (as guest posts)**.

If your guest posts hit the mark, many readers will follow the links you provide to visit your website. Documenting your guest posts' related **traffic**, **subscriber sign-up**, **back links** and **social share counts** can help you gauge how well your write-ups are doing.

The above mentioned metrics were suggested by Grant Hensel in his insightful guest post titled "**5 Guest Posting Strategies you can Steal**", which was published on **Oni**balusi's www.youngprepro.com/blog/.

I was especially intrigued to read Grant's suggestion that writers create an MS Excel spreadsheet to track – in separate columns - the earlier mentioned performance metrics for each individual guest post. He also advised adding an extra column for documenting everything you did to promote each post.

That's not all. Grant went further to recommend attaching a dollar value to each metric, so you can indicate what each visitor or subscriber is worth to you in dollars.

I got excited when I read Grant's ideas regarding using MS Excel to monitor performance of guest posts, because back in 2004, I developed an automated MS Excel-VB driven **Article Analyzer** for use in measuring the performance of my articles published on Ezinearticles.com. *(See the box on the right for details about the app)*.

Having said that, it is important to point out that my article analyzer does NOT

An MS Excel-based Article Readers' Interest Index (RII) ™ Analyser

The app enables an articles marketing author download (with a mouse-click) TOTAL VIEWS for his/her published articles from an online web page which the program then uses to auto-compute the Readers' Interest Index (RII)™ - or "Cumulative Views Per Day(CVPD) Post Publication" - for each article. It caters for over 1,000 articles - covering more than 100 weeks (or 2 years).

The key benefit is this application was built to help an author choose what article titles to write on next by using the computed index for already published articles to determine what visitors are most likely to be interested in reading. I actually developed this tool for monitoring my Ezinearticles.com articles at **http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Tayo_Solagbade**.

The "RII" value indicated the degree of popularity of each of my articles. The application also auto-generated line and bar charts comparing the articles' performances at the click of a button.

By way of interest, Ezinearticles.com have since changed the format of their author profile pages, so the automated web page data retrieval into my application's spreadsheet is unlikely to work as before, unless I make changes to the code.

*For now however, I'm still **reviewing my use of article marketing** in light of recent Google algorithm modifications*.

You can request a demo of the existing app: send your request to me via RII@tksola.com

I also wrote and published an article about it (and the Readers' Index) at Ezinearticles.com:

http://tinyurl.com/RIIArticle

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cater for metrics outlined by Grant. I only mention it here to validate his suggestion that **MS Excel can be used by writers to measure online performance of their write-ups**. You can create and manually update your own MS Excel spreadsheet. To get you started, I've created a ready-to-use template

(using Grant's ideas) that you can download at: http://tinyurl.com/GPMonitorDownload.

If you need help automating your Excel spreadsheet to do the above tasks or more, contact me via my Excel Heaven website at:

www.excelheaven.spontaneousdevelopment.com

(d). Search Engines Ranking: Your success rate in guest posting for instance, will be reflected in increased or progressively increasing search engine traffic/ranking i.e. more people would find your website easily. Consider using tools supplied by your web host, Google and/or Alexa.com to ascertain the search strings/terms and keywords or phrases used by your visitors, to find you through the search engines.

(e). Responses to Special Offers: In the body (or at the end) of your articles or posts you could make attractive offer(s) of additional information, or say a low introductory price for your product or service, that readers can take advantage of. The number of responses to such offer(s) would give you a measure of how much mileage you got out of your article(s) or guest post(s).

Specific Writing Techniques You Can Use

The techniques described below are to be used in conjunction with the strategies described above.

In my experience, you may sometimes begin a writing project using one of these techniques, and get stuck at some point (say, due to the so called "writer's block"), only to pick up your pace by switching to another technique, instead of having to wait till you can continue using the former technique.

I provide practical examples as I progress.

1. Use A Mind Map

This is my number ONE tool! I use it every day to keep myself sane :-) As I mentioned earlier, you will - if you follow the advice offered here - likely get to a point where you are constantly battling to scribble down multiple suggestions of ideas and discussion points for different article titles in your head! I go through this every day. Some people use tape recorders to capture their thoughts when driving or busy. Others use pen and paper. Just ensure you DO NOT lose those ideas!

Know this. If you fail to write them down YOU WILL FORGET most, if not all. Anytime that has happened to me, I always felt like I had lost a huge sum of money. Losing money gives a bad feeling. That bad feeling taught me over the years to ALWAYS remember to write them down.

Google "*How to use a mind map*" for links to online resources that explain how to use this powerful tool. About two years ago, I helped out a client who had a phobia for speech writing by "Googling" the string "**How to write a speech in five minutes using a Mind Map**". The results returned were most helpful
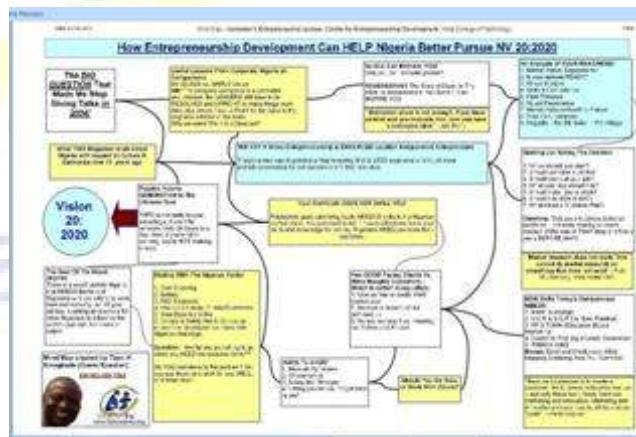
to him! You can also Google "Tony Buzan's books on Speed Reading and Mind Mapping".

How I Use Mind Maps. I write my chosen topic in a circle in the middle of the blank side of a used A4 sheet of paper. Next, I draw

lines from the circle labelled with the different sub-headings I think up. Smaller multiple arrows leading from each topic are drawn for each point I want to make under each subheading. As appropriate, I add acronyms, notes to remind myself of examples, analogies or anecdotes I want to include, etc. Typically, by the time I am drained of all my ideas for that article title, the A4 sheet of paper will be covered with my scribbling. This could take from a few minutes to a month! Depends on the topic, how inspired I am, and my work schedule.

The old fashioned method of sitting in a quiet corner with my pen on paper suits me best. Maybe that's because I work in a country where electricity supply still remains quite erratic, since there are times when I do not have access to the PC :-) *You can visit http://www.visual-mind.com, to download a copy of the mind mapping software called Visual Mind™ - It's quite user friendly.*

The mind map saves you time in recording the ideas that come to you. Yet when you look at the short phrases, keywords or acronyms in the web-like mass of linked lines, you are still able to make sense of it, and even use it to generate additional ideas to develop the map further. As a speech writing (or speech making) tool therefore, it can be simply invaluable.

View a larger version of the Mind Map I used during the entrepreneurial lecture I delivered as Guest Speaker at Yaba College of Technology's Centre for Entrepreneurship Development on 3rd May, 2012 at http://tinyurl.com/yabalecture.

In 2003, as a volunteer member of a Youth Development NGO, I attended the send forth ceremony for a set of graduating secondary school leavers who had undergone a special one year coaching program. Suddenly, I was told I had to give a 15 minute speech to the parents in another ten minutes. "*Sorry, it was*

a last minute decision", the project coordinator said.

No previous warning. No even a hint. And that's life, really! I realized a Mind Map was the only thing that would help me get through it looking like I knew what I was talking about. About 5 minutes later I had one drawn up.

Not long after, I was speaking - periodically referring to a crumbled sheet of paper spread out on the table in front of me. I did not feel like I was the same person who was only told about the talk a few minutes before!

This report was prepared using a Mind Map, about 48 hours before I wrote it.

Even if you decide to discard everything else you read in this report, believe this:

Mind Mapping can make your writing feel effortless, and quite pleasurable. Becoming proficient at using Mind Maps for your thinking, learning and writing, will boost your productivity dramatically!

2. Prepare a Dummy Presentation

Imagine you want to give a presentation to a very important group of people who are likely to use your performance as a key factor in deciding whether or not to hire you to execute a project for them in your area of expertise. Pretend you have to prepare a set of presentation slides based on their chosen topic. Let's say you have only 20 to 30 minutes to speak, after which you will have to take questions.

Ask yourself the following questions:

a. What are the most important things you need to mention/discuss, that will show you KNOW your subject - and possibly get you a standing ovation. Write those down.

b. What are the likely objections some members of your listening audience will have? Write those down too.

c. What are the proposals you want to make for action the audience may need to take Write those down as well.

d. What is/are the most important lessons you want your audience to remember about YOU and YOUR presentation topic (AFTER they have departed from the venue) that will make them tell others? Write those down too.

Go through the collection of bullet point ideas you now have, and arrange them in the logical order you would want to present them, if you had to speak. Now, sit down in front of your PC and use those notes you generated to type out a draft of your article or post. Polish and refine it, till you're sure it's ready.

3. Develop And/Or Use A Writing Template

Although this technique is easily applicable for other purposes (like writing of articles/books), I have found it particularly useful for writing quick proposals in the workplace. Back in paid employment, I was a highly self-motivated employee who chose to function as a positive change agent. In this regard, I was very much into the habit of writing proposals. In many cases, my proposals were written to senior management, sometimes resulting in changes being effected in the way things were being done. (Read my article titled "*Achieve Recognition and Attract Career Advancement Opportunities By Being A Change Agent*" to learn how I used my proposals to influence positive changes in my last workplace.)

In writing my proposals, I had a format or template that I always started with, which I then modified to suit whatever my intended purpose was. The format I used was based on an understanding I had developed of my intended target audience: **Senior Corporate**

Executives in the technical function. These were usually highly numerate individuals with prior lower management experience in the technical function they now oversaw. This meant they had many managers reporting to them - which implied many reports to read, many minutes to attend etc. They were very busy people, and time was often not something they had in generous amounts. Such people therefore naturally lacked patience for lengthy proposals.

But I felt I had a few ideas I wanted them to consider, and which I was determined to have them respond to/take action on. So, I developed a format that enabled me present my entire proposal at anyone time on ONE A4 sheet of paper, in a straightforward manner, sticking only to relevant facts and/or notable exceptions. The top of the paper, always had the company name, date, my name, department etc. Next was the proposal topic. Then the body of the write up comprised the following sub-headings:

(a). The Current Situation **(b).** The Problem Identified **(c).** The Alternatives Proposed - or sometimes **(d).** The Solution Recommended

I used the above sub-headings to highlight key technical issues in such a way that my proposed solutions would be easy to evaluate in terms of direct and measurable benefits that could be derived. I still have a photocopy of one of such proposals that I wrote, that was sent to me with a scribbled note from the senior executive, asking my direct boss to discuss the proposal further with me.

The point of the foregoing is to suggest that you develop a format or template of your own that will stimulate your thinking better, so that you quickly generate an outline and content for your article topics. One advantage I find this technique confers on the user is that of brevity. It also helps you to critically analyze what your purpose for writing is, and what you need to say to achieve that purpose. It helps

you work within a fairly defined structure that discourages rambling. Even though you may not need to stick to one page in your article writing, it is likely to keep you conscious of the need to avoid drifting in your arguments.

4. Start A Series

This is probably the easiest technique anyone can successfully use to write and publish a book. I'll narrate a true personal story to explain how it works. In May 2002, I began offering a FREE one-hour talk - **Ten Ways You Can Use Self-Development To Create The Future You Want** - to various organizations that fit my target audience profile as a means of marketing my Self-Development talks, seminars and coaching programs to them. After delivering this talk to a number of audiences for about three months, I decided (based on the good responses and high ratings in the completed speaker feedback forms returned to me by those who attended), to convert it to an Internet email auto responder course.

My speaker notes were only bullet point outlines, so I knew I would practically have to write each of the Ten Ways (or lessons) the way I normally spoke about them to my audience. One afternoon I did that for the First Way, and set it up as the first of ten auto responder email course lessons accessible by activating my auto responder at http://www.getresponse.com. Next, I sent an email out to people already on my mailing list inviting them to sign up for the e-course, and requesting they recommend it to others, if they liked what they read in the first one.

By the afternoon of the next day, I noticed about five people had signed up. Then I realized I was in trouble. Now I HAD TO make sure the lesson for week 2 of the course was ready before the auto responder was due to send it out, else the subscribers would get nothing and I would look very bad. To cut the long story short, I found myself working very

hard to write each week's lesson well ahead, sometimes setting up lessons for two consecutive weeks in one week so as to buy myself some time to do other things!

Each lesson on the average came to about ten (A4) pages long, so you can imagine just how much work I had to do, to write them out, rather than just say them as I had done in my talks. As time went on, it occurred to me that I had technically written a complete book, with each lesson being a chapter of its own.

So, I decided to finish the job properly by putting in a preface, table of contents etc and making it available for sale online using Print-On-Demand publishers like Cafepress.com and Lulu.com.

Using my self-taught skills in Photoshop, I also designed a front and back cover to go with the Acrobat PDF manuscript I uploaded to the Print-On-Demand (POD) service provider's servers. Today, people purchase print copies of the **Self-Development Bible™** from one of my online stores located at www.lulu.com/sdaproducts. I've also bought copies, and sent one to a friend in Ghana.

The experience I gained from doing it all opened my eyes to income opportunities available to anyone via POD publishing.

Today, aside from the self-help manual, I have on sale an e-book containing 25 articles (including this report) on Self-Development, Entrepreneuring and Web Marketing in my online store. Every person who buys a copy of the e-book automatically gets reprint permission for each of the articles contained in the book in addition to access to other articles, in the members' only area of my website.

I have narrated the above experience to show you how I discovered that starting a writing "series" can help you start and finish writing a book. You could, for instance, publish an

article with a footnote or byline saying it is an excerpt from a forthcoming book.

Then you would work hard to finish the book by writing more articles on the same theme till you're done. You'll eventually end up with a set of published articles, and a new book ready for publication. Talk about killing two birds with one stone!

5. Prepare A Sales Advert

I once read an article in which the author proposed that to write a book, start by writing a sales advert for it. In order for the advert to be successful, it must contain details that will convince those who read it to buy the book.

The above logic - though unusual - is easy enough to understand. Basically, you would use the advert you have written to decide what to say/write in the article - or better still, a book. Let's take my **Self-Development Bible™** for instance.

On the back cover, the following is printed:

"..I honestly believe you are one of those who will succeed at anything he does. Your commitment and effort has been outstanding....Thanks for all your hard work since I've been here - you will be sorely missed. I don't need to wish you good luck, you have the ability to make your own luck..."

- Andy(R. Jones)*
***Operations Manager**, Guinness Nigeria Plc Benin Brewery(Handwritten comments in farewell/xmas cards sent to Tayo Solagbade following his resignation to start his own business)

Would you like something like the above written about you? Do you have any of the problems listed below?

a. Feel unfulfilled in your work or personal life?

b. Dread making mistakes or taking risks to pursue your dreams for fear of looking bad in front of others?

c. Experience frustrations because of a friend, relative, boss or colleague who makes things difficult for you?

d. Fear that sharing your knowledge/skills with others will make you vulnerable to being exploited by them?

e. Wonder what it would take to create the future of your dreams?

Then this book can help YOU! It describes tested and proven steps you can follow, to achieve consistent personal or workplace successes - and ultimately gain recognition as a high-flyer everywhere you go. It is the written version of a one-hour talk offered by Tayo Solagbade. Here's what attendees of the talk have said:

"Your (talk) encourages people not to depend on sycophancy to achieve their aims. People are also encouraged to leave the level of mediocrity. One needs to look inwards and make use of one's potentials to reach the greatest heights. I hope this is not the last session we will be having with you" **– Ezemba C.I (Miss)**

The (talk) is very useful for those who want to up-grade themselves...The older generation who think they have come to the end of their career would find it very very useful to rejuvenate their attitude, interest and empower themselves to greater goals..." – **E. C. Sarsal**

"The Ten Ways on Self-Development inspire me to the marrow, and henceforth are going to be (the) guiding ideologies, principles and work concepts in my life" - **Oduye Olumuyiwa**

(Excerpted from back of Tayo Solagbade's Self-Help manual on Self-Development called The Self-Development Bible, titled "**Ten Ways You Can Use Self-Development To Create The Future You Want**". **Order your copy of the manual at** www.lulu.com/sdaproducts.)

Now, the above could (possibly with some "pruning") serve as a sales ad for the manual I eventually wrote. **Let's imagine I have not written it yet.** The problems listed

under **a.** to **e.** in the "sales ad" provide a fairly good basis for writing, don't they? The above testimonials are real ones, hand-written by persons who listened to my talk back in 2002. In your own sales ad, you could decide to write a dummy testimonial, in which a reader highlights useful value s/he got from reading your (yet to be written) book. That will then guide you to write content in the book that you expect will elicit responses close to that in your dummy testimonial.

It appears a bit clumsy, but given some thought and with practice, you may find it helps to think like this in generating ideas of what to say in your new book. Choose the topic. Then prepare the sales advert . Next write content that ensures readers of the finished book will agree, that its contents fully meet the expectations raised in the sales advert you wrote for it. This entire process requires you to be quite honest with yourself - especially in evaluating the work you have done. If you are not sure you can do this objectively enough, get someone you know – and trust to be objective and candid - to look through and give you qualitative feedback.

Finally, it might be useful to **ask yourself** this question about your sales ad. **If I saw this ad in a newspaper or on the net, would I feel an irresistible urge to purchase a copy of the book it describes?** If you get an emphatic YES, then write your book using that ad. If NOT, go back and RE-WORK IT.

6. Use Excerpts From Your Books

Writing can be an interesting experience. Whenever I write, I have noticed that sometimes there are points I would love to discuss further or elaborate on a bit more.

But when I look at the topic I am supposed to be focused on, I decide it might be better to leave them as they are. What then happens is sometime in the future, I come across that part of the article, report or book I wrote, and

realize some new experiences have given me even more ideas on it, that could make up a new article. Some days or weeks later, I would have written another article based on that new perspective.

Evidence that this happens is probably what is sometimes seen at the end of some articles. There the writer adds a heading such as "Related Articles", with a listing of click-enabled article titles or URLs.

One example. On my website there is an article titled _Should You Quit Your Job Or Start Your Business Part-Time?_ At the end, under the "Related Articles" heading, are listed some other clickable titles the person who chose to read the earlier mentioned article is likely to be interested in. They are:

1. When I Quit My Job, They Called Me Mad - And I Felt So, So Sorry for Them!

2. Why I Do What I Do The Way I Do It

3. Avoid Taking Lessons On Entrepreneuring From The Wrong Person(s)

4. Practical Guiding Philosophies For Entrepreneurial Success

From a website usability and web marketing point of view, adding such related URL links in the body of your writing is very likely to help you keep a visitor that fits your target audience profile on your website longer than if you had not used such techniques. And that may eventually lead to her becoming impressed enough to contact you about your product or service.

The good news is that Content Management Systems have a variety of plug-ins that automate or reduce the time and effort required to do the above. Wordpress especially has popular 3rd party plug-ins (some free) that for instance, create URLs

links to existing posts, for specific keyword phrases once they appear in a new post.

Tips for Editing (And Improving On) Your Write-Ups

1. Be Thorough - BUT Don't Over-do it!

Avoid typos. Use your word processor to spell-check, then "eye-spell-check" to be sure the right words are in the right places. Don't stop there. If possible, have someone proof-read it for you. For some reason, one or two naughty ones always "escape" getting caught by YOUR eyes, and only those other "helpers" just mentioned will save you!

Quick example: Been and being would pass your word processor's spell-check. However they cannot be used interchangeably in a sentence. Same applied to the use of "its" and "it's" Painful personal experience has taught me that this can happen.

Few - if any - of your readers will bother to contact you to confirm whether or not you actually know how to spell a particular word. So, don't give them any reasons to even begin to wonder. Watch your tenses. Review the flow of your argument and make sure it is natural and logical. Use punctuation properly.

It's true that aiming for perfection can lead to work that never leaves the table. However, effort must be also made - constantly - to achieve certain standards of writing that will impress your readers enough to make them accept you as the authority you claim to be (or seek to become).

2. Practice Continuous Improvement

Work hard on yourself, so you can become a better writer. Read wide, and reflect often - deeply too - on what you read. Improve your vocabulary. Use a dictionary. To find words with similar meanings, use a thesaurus. All this should enable you intelligently spice up your writing with variations that keep your prose from becoming boring.

*Here's a warning: **Don't write as if gunning for a Ph.D. in English :-)**.* As they say, **Keep It simple**. Avoid complex words that could alienate your readers. There will, very often, be a simpler word with similar meaning. A rule of thumb on the net is to make sure a sixth grader can comprehend your writing.

Summary

To profit from the strategies and techniques I have described in this article, you must choose to write on topics that you have a natural interest in, and an enduring passion for.

That's the only way to be sure of maintaining a burning desire, to improve your writing - and even develop your own unique strategies to keep going strong. Lastly, I must point out that I do not claim to have perfected the art of writing. What I have done here is to share with you, a number of ways by which I strive daily to become more proficient in my writing.

I do so, based on my understanding of success in any endeavor as being a "*never ending journey in the pursuit of excellence*" (i.e. a process of continuous improvement) that any individual can choose to embark upon.

I wish you greater writing success!

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Self-Development/Performance Enhancement Specialist – Tayo Solagbade - works as a Multipreneur, helping individuals, and businesses develop and implement strategies to achieve their goals, faster and more profitably.

Depending on his availability, Tayo accepts invitations to deliver customisable talks and keynote speeches on a variety of themes - including the following:

a. Self-Development, Workplace Performance Improvement, Spontaneous Coaching™

b. Using Natural Aquariums To Educate Students

c. Making Your Website WORK For You

d. Automating MS Excel To Boost Productivity

e. Cost-saving Farm Biz Ideas, Going from Salary to Self-Employment, Entrepreneuring etc).

Visit http://www.tksola.com to learn how you can invite Tayo, to speak at your next meeting/event.

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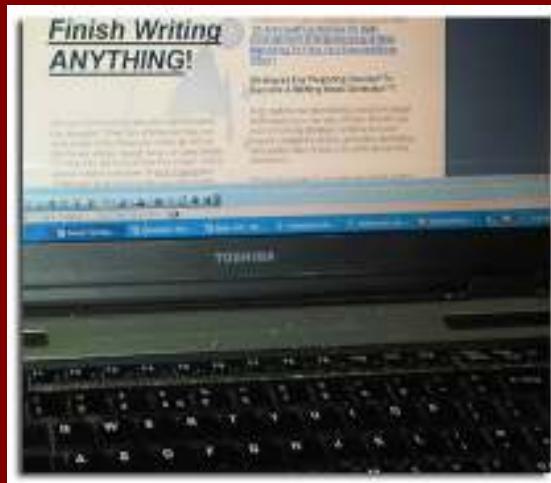
As a multipreneurial freelance writer, Tayo Solagbade's versatility, and use of in-depth research (on and off the Internet), equip him to quickly produce 100% original - and easy to understand – write-ups.

He has **over 10 years of experience** writing articles/blog posts, reports, technical and management research papers and training manuals, to **high standards in a wide variety of industries**.

When he's not amazing clients with his superhuman writing skills (wink), Tayo works as the creative force behind:

a). The Self-Development Nuggets blog:

www.spontaneousdevelopment.com/sdnuggets

b). The Public Speaking IDEAS blog:

www.spontaneousdevelopment.com/blog

Want Tayo to write for you? Submit **FULL details** of your writing project via this form:

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