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**WRITING FOR COMMUNITY SUCCESS E-NEWS:  
TIPS, WORKSHOPS & MORE**

**June/July 2006 (Issue #28)\***

Founder: Dalya Massachi, M.A. (bio at end)

Please forward this e-newsletter to interested friends and colleagues!

This free e-newsletter is archived on the web at:

[http://www.dfmassachi.net/Writing\\_for\\_Community\\_Success\\_Newsletter\\_home.html](http://www.dfmassachi.net/Writing_for_Community_Success_Newsletter_home.html)

\* Look for the next full issue of the WCS E-News in August!

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**A) AROUND THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA: 6/28 in Santa Rosa**

I will be the keynote speaker at the June Luncheon Program of the Association of Fundraising Professionals Wine Country Chapter. Join me as I present my "10 Tips for Successful Grant Proposals" at the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County ( 153 Stony Circle, Suite 100 in Santa

Rosa). The program runs from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. and the cost is \$10 for AFP Members; \$15 for Non-Members (payment at the door). To reserve a spot right away, email [afwccRSVP@yahoo.com](mailto:afwccRSVP@yahoo.com) or call (707) 838-9996. Please indicate your choice of a veggie or carnivore lunch.

**PS:** Are you looking for a speaker for your next meeting, conference or other event? I would love to help you out with a presentation on a writing-related topic of pressing interest! Just click [here](#) for more information.

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### **B) CLIENT SUCCESS STORY: Tens of thousands of web hits, great press coverage**

Congratulations to Elaine Lissner, Director of the [Male Contraception Information Project!](#)

After taking a private workshop from me last year, Elaine worked with me to send out press releases about emerging — and promising — male contraception methods. In early April, our release on the web yielded a huge blog response and almost 100,000 Google results on our key search term (vs. about 600 before the press release went out). Then, in early May, we released “New Male Contraceptive Targets Sperm, Not Hormones” and attracted the attention of the Playboy magazine advice columnist, a major Canadian newspaper chain, and the Discovery Health Channel.

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### **C) IN THE WCS STORE: Membership in the Society for Nonprofit Organizations; Write-in-the-Dark LED Pens**

1) [Society for Nonprofit Organizations \(SNPO\) Membership](#): Writing for Community Success has partnered with SNPO, and is pleased to invite you to become a member! SNPO's mission is to provide new and established nonprofit organizations — throughout the US and globally — with resources that can help them to accomplish their missions more effectively.

With over 3,500 individual and organizational members, the Society is one of the oldest and largest nonprofit management support organizations in the country. Membership is only \$39 - \$115 per year, and includes:

- **Nonprofit World Magazine:** A comprehensive leadership, management, and governance publication for the nonprofit sector. It contains concise and timely articles on a wide variety of subjects (including marketing, communications, and fundraising). Members also receive access to a research archive with over 700 searchable and printable articles dating back to 1996. Test it out with **2 freebies** of your choice!
- **Funding Alert:** Current grant listings, sorted by category and delivered to your email inbox every month.
- **Product Discounts:** Choose from over 100 nonprofit products, including videos, cassettes, CD-ROMs, and books offered in the "Resource Center."
- **Free Job Listings:** Attract job applicants on the national career site, [www.NonprofitCareers.Org](http://www.NonprofitCareers.Org).

- **Discounts on Distance Education/Training:** Award-winning nonprofit educational programs, with CEUs/Certificate available upon completion.
- **Preferred pricing on Directors & Officers Liability Insurance** (Organizational Members only.)

For more information, just click [here](#).



2) ["Write-in-the-Dark" LED Pens](#)

With this popular pen, you'll never again have to fumble around in the dark to capture your inspirations! People across the country have used this valuable pen for keeping dream journals, working outside at night, taking notes in a dark room, etc. Price: \$6.99 each, or 3 for \$17.99 (f.r.e.e shipping & handling). Bulk discounts are available for orders of 10 or more. Get more info at: [www.dfmassachi.net/penlight.html](http://www.dfmassachi.net/penlight.html).

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**D) WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING: Reader notes from far and wide**

A dip into my e-mailbag:

*"Writing is so easy for normal communication, but much different when mechanics become important. I know it drove my journalism professor nuts... Thanks for your suggestions; love your newsletter."* — Gil R., Assistant Human Resources Director, Michigan

*"Thanks for your information. I'm enjoying and learning from your correspondence."* — Krishna U., Nepal

**And in response to my current ["Write Right with Dalya" column](#):**

*"Great advice. I have been struggling with writing and this article has helped me get back to basics as a means of moving forward!"* — Anne Kinzel, JD, Health Care Reform Consultant, Iowa



E) **ASK DALYA**

**Question:** How can I make my writing clearer?

**Answer:** Your job is to make sure your reader never has to guess what you're trying to say.

Don't make your reader stop to wonder what you mean or re-read your paragraph. It's distracting and can be fatal to your effort to communicate your message.

You know all about your program, but your reader doesn't. Clearly explain everything! Here are a few ways to do that:

- Avoid vagueness. Provide specific information, defining details, examples and illustrations (in words or pictures) whenever possible.
- Simplify complicated processes. If you're explaining a process or system, you will need to break it down into its components, step by step. Then show how the steps are all connected into a larger whole.
- Explain your thoughts as if you were speaking to a newcomer to the English language. Have you ever tried to explain something to someone whose first language is not English? Or to a person who isn't very familiar with your concept? That's great practice for ensuring that you are as clear as possible! Often, when we are too close to our topic we lose our perspective.

**Want more Q & A?** Check out back issues of the [WCS E-News](#) or my ["Write Right with Dalya" column](#) at Idealist.org.

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#### **F) WRITING TIP #53: Tell stories.**

You can liven up almost any document by telling stories of clients, volunteers, donors, staff members or other stakeholders. By creating a slice-of-life word snapshot or profile, you will put a face to your work in a way that gets beyond the mind-numbing statistics. Telling a brief account of a client's story can crystallize your work in your reader's mind. Talk about how the client has benefited from a connection with your organization (that is, the results he or she has seen or the experience of working with you).

What are some characteristics of a great story? Think back to English class...

- A beginning, middle, and end
- Memorable characters
- Interesting setting (time and place)
- Compelling plot or conflict resolution, maybe even with a twist

*Remember: Stories stick in your readers' minds, but facts can fly by.*

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#### **G) GREAT RELATED LINKS**

These outstanding links cover such inter-related topics as public relations, publicity, strategic

communications, media relations, marketing & branding, fundraising, online work, and much more. The information is available at no or very low cost. This month's picks:

1) Want help getting your organization's message out for fr.ee to 217,000 households across the City and County of San Francisco? Access SF helps you submit Public Service Announcements (PSA's) online through its Community Bulletin Board. Go to: <http://accessf.org/guide/bulletin/>

2) Folks are always asking me about good resources for "prospect research" (i.e., searching for likely funders). CharityChannel, one of my favorite web portals for nonprofits, just launched its newest public discussion list: CFRESEARCH. The new forum focuses on all aspects of corporate and foundation prospect research. Discussions are wide-ranging and tend to come from the perspective of prospect researchers, although proposal writers and corporate and foundation fundraisers are welcome. The list is open to all members of CharityChannel (for a nominal fee). To learn more, just visit <http://charitychannel.com/publish/?a=10132&z=72>

**Know a good communications-related website?** Send it to [dalya@dfmassachi.net](mailto:dalya@dfmassachi.net) and I'll share it with the well over 1,000 other Writing for Community Success E-News subscribers.

**Happy Writing!**

*Dalya Massachi*

**P.S.:** Not sure how Writing for Community Success can help you? Please contact me! If we're not a great match, I'll refer you to other outstanding community resources.

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#### **E-NEWS SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS**

- Please forward this e-newsletter to interested friends and colleagues!
- If you received this e-newsletter as a forwarded message or found it on the web, and would like to subscribe yourself, please click [here](#).
- Writing for Community Success respects your email privacy, and never sells or trades this e-newsletter list.
- Miss an issue? Check the [archive](#) of recent E-News past issues.
- Publish a newsletter of your own? For advance listings of upcoming WCS workshops or to excerpt content from the WCS E-News, just send a note to [dalya@dfmassachi.net](mailto:dalya@dfmassachi.net).

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## ABOUT WRITING FOR COMMUNITY SUCCESS

WCS specializes in helping professionals in the social sector — nonprofits, socially responsible businesses, and related organizations — advance their missions through great writing. Services include training, one-on-one coaching, and document tune-ups.

Founder Dalya F. Massachi is a widely published writer, trainer and consultant who appreciates the importance and complexity of social change work. For 15 years, her work with the social sector has focused on fund development and communications, and has included a wide variety of publications. Dalya has taught writing techniques to several hundred workshop participants and has coached dozens of professionals one-on-one. Later this year, she will publish "[\*Writing to Make a Difference: 50 Powerful Ways to Advance Your Mission & Boost Your Impact.\*](#)" She currently authors a regular column at Idealist.org, "[Write Right with Dalya.](#)" From 2000-2004 Dalya served as Founding Director of Bay Area International Development Organizations (BAIDO), and now sits on that board. She holds an M.A. in Communication & International Development.

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## HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

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~Helping powerful ideas take off.~

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