



New E-book

Writing for the Future

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Futures Discovery Publications
January 2011

First published 2011
Writing for the Future

ISBN: 978-600-90008-3-X

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Printed in Futures Discovery Publications[©]

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0: Foreword

Writing for the future is an exciting experience (and perhaps a fabulous job), especially for the futurists. In fact, the futurists explain their thoughts and ideas through writing articles, books and blog posts.

Generally speaking, writing is an effective tool of self-expression and many writers use this tool successfully to express themselves in their related societies. As a futurist, you may be interested in expressing yourself and your experiences among other futurist colleagues or futurist societies. There are some simple secrets that may help you improve your writing, especially when you are going to write professionally about the future.

Specialization in writing, just as in medicine or law, helps focus writers and allows them to build an identifiable “brand.” Writers who have developed professional specialties have treasuries of effective practices which can offer tips for writers seeking a niche. But we are living in an era engaged with such questions: “What will the media of the future be, and what kinds of writing will they demand? How can we explore the effects our bit-sized culture is having on our work, as well as the new narrative that is being formed at unabridged speeds around us?”

To answer these questions, we should remember that advances in science and technology have changed the societies almost overnight. Writers and reporters have to document that change, as they have done in the past. But to do their job, writers will need to understand and to a certain extent foresee—or predict—the future.

In my point of view, futurist writers equipped with creative arts are today striving to shape next generation of writers. I applaud them, and perhaps join them. It is time to be a modern creative writer, and as the scientific fiction writers have shown us, we should not underestimate the effect of the arts in writing futurist articles or books. At the same time, increasingly I have come to see the limitations of writing as a unique art. I have found

that the art of writing should be accompanied with other arts, especially the creative ones. In modern times, we impose limits on the artists, and as we do so we draw walls around our subcultures. The creativity is portrayed in art and art can be found not just in cultures, but also in subcultures that are usually underestimated.

In my new e-book available at: FuturesDiscovery.com for free, I've summarized some of useful tips of effective writing for the future. The book is designed in 19 short chapters, each chapter dedicated to a topic.

Life is a journey toward the future. If you agree with the idea that "writing about the future" is an art, you're warmly welcome to the second chapter of my e-book. In the third chapter, I've given a summarization of what the futurists believe. Fourth chapter is a collection of questions answered by W. Warren Wagar, a well-known futurist and writer. In the fifth section, a code of practice is provided for futurist writers.

Common mistakes in exploring the future are detailed in the sixth chapter. Seventh part of the book is dedicated to the importance of having a plan before doing any kind of writing. The eighth chapter is on finding bright ideas around the future. Then I've offered ten points on "How to Write an E-book?". If you are interested in web-based writing, the tenth chapter is eagerly waiting for you to be read. And if you like to know how you can improve your writing through using useful softwares, chapter eleven is suitable for you.

The reality of self-publishing is another topic that is of futurist writers' interest nowadays. Besides, you may like to know how to get your books published, or become a published author. You can find necessary information in this regard through chapters 12 to 14. Three next chapters are chapters of numbers, including: 5 Steps toward Fast Writing, 3 Essentials to Plain English, and 10 Ways to Remove Your Writing Anxieties. I've ended the book with the future of books and inspiring quotes.

Please check: <http://www.futuresdiscovery.com> for the e-book and share your comments with me at: info@futuresdiscovery.com Thank you.

1: LIFE IS A JOURNEY TOWARD THE FUTURE

What you have just read, that is the past. What you are reading now, that is the present and what you are going to be reading next, that is going to be the future.

And what am I going to write next? You will never know until you read on. Are you interested to read on and find out?

It is just this simple and this is how life has always been. What the future will bring, nobody knows and it is for you to find out.

You see. Life has always been a journey. To embark on this journey, you have to know where you are heading for. And where to be heading next? You have to ask yourself at this very present now and when you eventually get to where you want to be, you ask yourself again where you are going to head next and the next and so on.

Just think about it. You are here right now (The Present) all because of what you have done in the past. Your past leads to your present now and your present will lead you to your future. This is the way of life. Perhaps you might not have really thought about this. But since you are here now, why not just ask yourself. Are you happy with things right now? Are you satisfied with what you have at this present?

Great if you are happy. If this is what you want, keep moving on. Enjoy your journey! But if you are not, what are you going to do about it? What are you going to do to make your journey an enjoyable one?

Now, life certainly isn't a short journey. I don't suppose you would want to move on aimlessly not knowing where to go? Without any proper plans and direction, you will just end up getting more lost in life. And nobody but only you yourself knows what you best want for yourself in life.

But remember this. In this long journey, there is bound to be obstacles and challenges you will face. But it is with surprises that make life interesting?

When watching a movie, it is all those unexpected twist and plots that make you want to keep following and to find out how the show will end? Life can be just like a movie too. Don't you want to find out how you, this leading role in your movie will be at the end of the show? Or rather, you are actually the scriptwriter, the director and the very actor. You decide and run the whole show.

At the end of the day, what matters is you enjoy this very journey of yours.

Think of it this way. It is just like planning a holiday for yourself. What may be fun for some may not just be fun for everyone. Some prefer the shopping type holiday while some prefer the scenic type, to be in touch with the great Nature.

Which do you prefer? You decide and plan for yourself what would be a fun and enjoyable journey for you and you do what you like. It is only when you enjoy your journey will you always have something to look forward to in life, isn't it?

And that is exactly what you should be doing. Life is a journey and not a destination. There is still so much more waiting for you to explore. Where would be the final destination of life? Nobody knows but one definite thing for so, no way it is going to be here (The present)

Explore on. Create that future for yourself...

Notes: <http://www.valuablecontent.com/articles/26913/1/The-Past,-The-Present-and-The-Future>

2: THE ART OF FUTURIST WRITING

During my childhood and teenage years, I came to love the mysterious and scientific fiction books such as Jules Verne's *"Around the World in Eighty Days"* and *"A Journey to the Center of the Earth"*. I felt unprecedented ambiguities and exquisite sense of the rhythms of life found in those books. I have moved beyond mysterious and scientific fiction works, but many times I return to them for my personal revival. Having such background, I usually follow an unbleached realism in my works!

For me as a writer, science fiction became a kind of touchstone, and in time I noticed that such works contain words directed toward people in my own profession. Over the centuries human history has seen many examples of the creative arts used in scientific fiction books. Not long ago we lived through perhaps the most momentous change in modern history. It will take historians years to sort out all the reasons behind the contemporary phenomena.

Many futurists equipped with creative arts are today striving to be the new generation of writers. I applaud them, and perhaps join them. It is time to be a creative writer, and as the scientific fiction writers have shown us, we should not underestimate the effect of the arts in writing futurist articles or works. At the same time, increasingly I have come to see the limitations of writing as a unique art. I have found that the art of writing should be equipped with other arts, especially the creative ones. In modern times, we impose limits on our artists, and as we do so we draw walls around our subculture. The creativity is portrayed in art and art can be found not just in cultures, but also in subcultures usually underestimated.

We cannot expect art always to educate and inspire as well as to portray. In the words of Alan Paton, literature "will illuminate the road, but it will not lead the way with a lamp. It will expose the crevasse, but not provide the bridge. It will lance the

boil, but not purify the blood. It cannot be expected to do more than this; and if we ask it to do more, we are asking too much.”

Keats said that literature sometimes demands of us Negative Capability: the ability to accept multiplicity, mystery, and doubt without reaching out for the illusory comforts of certainty and fact. What about futurist literature? There is more to find. It demands a kind of capability, and that does not always sit well with the folks who distribute “futurist art” or those who consume it. For this reason, among others, some necessary futurist works never find their target.

Toward the end of his life, Paul Gauguin painted a huge triptych pulling together all his styles of art. In an extraordinarily unsubtle move, he scrawled across the painting, “Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going?” That triptych, now hanging in the Boston Museum of Art, poses a grand summation of Gauguin’s work and a grand summation of the questions to which modernity has no answer. Soon after completing the work, Gauguin attempted suicide.

Loren Eiseley, a rare individual who demonstrated skill both in science and in art, sums up the answers to Gauguin’s questions discernible from science:

In a universe whose size is beyond human imagining, where our world floats like a dust mote in the void of night, men have grown inconceivably lonely. We scan the time scale and the mechanisms of life itself for portents and signs of the invisible. As the only thinking mammals on the planet—perhaps the only thinking animals in the entire sidereal universe—the burden of consciousness has grown heavy upon us. We watch the stars, but the signs are uncertain....

Lights come and go in the night sky. Men, troubled at last by the things they build, may toss in their sleep and dream bad dreams, or lie awake while the meteors whisper greenly overhead. But nowhere in all space or on a thousand worlds will there be men to share our loneliness. There may be wisdom; there may be power; somewhere across space great instruments, handled by

strange, manipulative organs, may stare vainly at our floating cloud wrack, their owners yearning as we yearn. Nevertheless, in the nature of life and in the principles of evolution we have had our answer. Of men elsewhere, and beyond, there will be none forever.

We resemble the frogs at a marsh croaking, “We’re here, we’re here, we’re here!” Eiseley goes on to say. We do not know why we croak, or who indeed is listening; like frogs, we croak by dumb instinct.

In one of Miguel de Unamuno’s ironic stories, a character confronts the author with this startling fact: he, a creation of human thought and genius, is more demonstrably real than the author, a product of blind animality. Unamuno thus diagnosed a fatal flaw in modern humanity’s conception of self.

Civilization once looked to art as the means of passing on wisdom from one generation to the next. The act of writing was invented, after all, to convey the sacred: permanent things must be passed on in a permanent way, hence the hieroglyphs on Egyptian tombs. But a civilization that no longer believes in permanent things, one that holds to no objective truths, resorts to de-construction, not construction.

On the modern landscape of decaying civilizations, some futurists still cling to a view that ascribes meaning and worth to individual human beings. The novelist Reynolds Price once said there is one sentence above all that people crave from stories: *The Maker of all things loves and wants me.*

Does our art of futurist writing show such a sense of love and wanting?

Notes: Philip Yancey, *The Writer as Artist*, <http://www.philipyancey.com/writing/writer-as-artist>

3: WHAT DO THE FUTURISTS BELIEVE?

As a futurist writer you need to know what other futurists believe. Obviously, I can't speak for all futurists, but the futurists I know share some common beliefs about the future. Understanding these beliefs may be helpful as you think about your own future. One scholar/futurist, Dr. Wendell Bell, has summarized these core beliefs in a list of twelve assumptions that futurists make when they consider the future. Bell's two-volume, *Foundations of Future Studies* (1997) is a classic among futurists.

I'm not going to go into all twelve of Bell's assumptions, but I will discuss three beliefs that I think are at the core of futurist belief and most important to individuals.

1. The future is not predetermined

Bell and other futurists add the qualifier "totally" as in "not totally predetermined." OK. But the important point here is that if the future is not totally pre-determined, there is more than one possible future. There are alternative futures. There may be good futures, bad futures, unimagined futures... but there is more than one future. This concept of alternative futures leads us to scenarios. The scenario methods (there are at least a dozen variations) are all based on the concept of alternate futures.

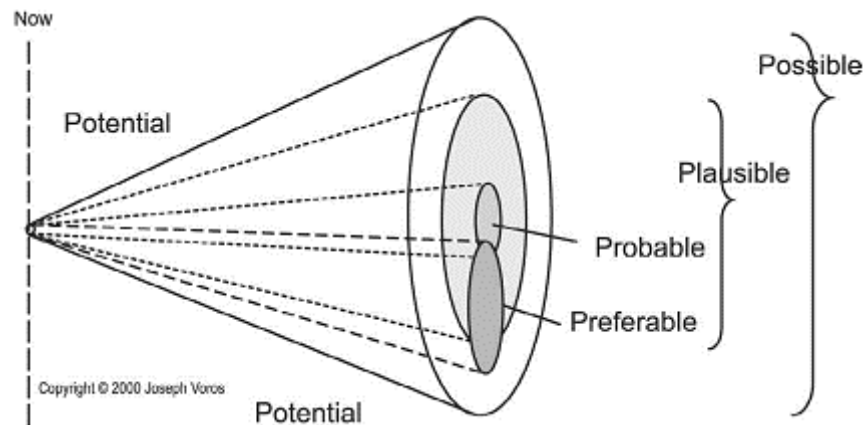
2. Some futures are better than others

Some futures may be really good and others may be really bad. Do we have choices? If you could choose your future, you would probably choose the future that is best for you. Futurists call this the "preferred" future. By itself, this belief seems small, obvious, not really too important. But, when combined with the third belief, preferred futures take on considerable importance.

Joseph Voros distinguishes between five classes of alternative futures to help organize and clarify the range of

possibilities. Illustrated in his “futures cone” below are potential, possible, plausible, probable, and preferable futures.

The Futures Cone



Source: Joseph Voros, A generic foresight process framework (2003)

Potential futures

This is the universe of futures thinking in which all the classes of futures exist, including those not yet imagined. Intentionally general, this is the term many futurists prefer when speaking broadly about alternative futures as a whole.

Possible futures

This class is based on the question, what *might* happen? It is the broadest of all the classes in the ‘potential futures’ universe because it remains open to the use of new knowledge – knowledge we do not yet possess – to achieve things that are currently out of reach but not necessarily ruled impossible.

Plausible futures

This class is based on the question, what *could* happen? It is limited to our current knowledge of how things work such as physical laws, cause and effect, and how the world operates. For example, Voros (2003) suggests that an attempt to fix the global economy by replacing the equivalent of dollars and cents with hugs and kisses would seem implausible to most people.

Probable futures

This class is based on the question, what is *likely* to happen? Most often, it is viewed simply as an extension of the present from the past and a continuation of current trends into the future. Many people never get beyond this approach to thinking about the future. However, business as usual can suddenly change when discontinuities occur. Some trends also disappear unexpectedly. Reading and extrapolating trends is useful but all by itself gives rise to a smaller class of futures than the previous two.

Preferable futures

This class is based on the question, what do we *want* to happen? The preferable future is different from the previous classes in that it is more emotional while the others are largely concerned with informational knowledge. The preferable future can also cross boundaries and choose from probable, plausible, and possible futures.

3. Actions we take in the present can influence the future

Notice that statement says “can” not “will.” No promises! This is why strategic plans contain an action plan. Exploring the future does not change anything. Exploring the future, with scenarios for example, only tells you what may be or could be. Developing strategies and making plans does not change the future. Not until actions are taken can change begin.

Contingency plans do not change the future. They provide strategies for dealing with the future when it arrives. And this is one of the key faults or weaknesses of strategic planning. The future does not begin to take direction or change until action is taken. That’s simple.

To achieve a preferred future, or your vision of the future, you must take action. You can make great plans and develop excellent strategies, but until you act on either your plans or your strategies, they are simply wishes for the future.

In my first personal strategic plan, about ten years ago, I determined that I wanted to write. Be published. I had known all my life that I liked to write and wanted to write, but I hadn't. I put writing in my plan and started taking action. I'm writing now. I've been published, even paid for writing. That will continue to be a part of my future. But it wasn't until I made the decision to act, and write.

Futures methods work. You can make decisions about your future, now. You can act on those decisions. That is how you make your future.

Notes:

<http://yourpersonalfuture.blogspot.com/2008/01/basics-what-futurists-believe.html>

<http://www.agri->

<http://www.agri->
[peri.ir/AKHBAR/cd1/FORESIGHT%20METHODOLOGY%20&%20FORECASTING/FORESIGHT%20METHODOLOGY/related%20articles/philosophy/A%20generic%20foresight%20process%20framework.pdf](http://www.agri-)

4: 24 QUESTIONS REPLIED BY A FUTURIST WRITER

Thinking about the future in a systematic manner makes theoretical foundations of futures studies. Many questions have been replied by the futurists or experts of other fields, yet the most fundamental ones may be listed as following. The list is not complete, as it is just a selection from an e-book "The Next Three Futures" by W. Warren Wagar, but it addresses many of those questions which have been occupied the minds of many people for a long time.

1. Why we study the future? We do not study the future so that we can know in advance just what is going to happen, but rather to create a better future for ourselves and for others.

2. How is our future? Our future is fundamentally undecided, and therefore unpredictable.

3. Can we influence the future? Yes, we can. Our power as ordinary people to influence the future of the world at large has recently received unexpected support from the mathematicians and computer scientists studying chaos.

4. How are we responsible for the future? The scientists studying chaos talk about the "butterfly effect"—the fact that a tiny action such as the movement of a butterfly's wing can have enormous effects on a complex and apparently random system. This means that when we as individuals make choices we are inevitably making choices for the entire human race. This knowledge should give its all an added sense of responsibility for what we do.

5. What has been a burden to make better futures? Short-term thinking aimed at immediate benefits to oneself or one's class has, of course, always been a major obstacle to the creation of a better future world.

6. Why people want to learn Futures Studies? They want to know what to expect of the time in which they, and their children, and their children's children, will spend the rest of their lives. They want to know if they can help make the future better than it might otherwise be. ... Only the future lies open to human enterprise. Only the future can be changed.

7. What is the great challenge that the futurists face with? The challenge is demonstrated in such questions: "Is there really such a thing as the future? Can it be known? And if so, can our study be a science, or at least scientific?"

8. Do futures-oriented scholars produce knowledge? Of course not. Self-respecting futurists do not claim to know anything at all about the future. As the Yale sociologist and futurist Wendell Bell commented in his letter to Gregory, speculations about the future and even predictions well grounded in present-day scientific knowledge cannot be defined as knowledge, as long as the events or trends foreseen remain in future time. What futurists do, rather, is to construct visions of plausible alternative futures: plausible in terms of the best currently obtainable knowledge of nature, earth, and humankind.

9. How the future should be studied? The future, like the past, must be continually reexamined and rediscovered.

10. What are two great challenges in futures? In futures research, however, since the future has not yet happened and, to some indeterminable extent, lies within the power of living men and women to shape, scholars must grapple not only with probabilities but also with desirabilities. They must confront the question not only of what might happen; but also of what should or could be made to happen.

11. Which kinds of futures research do exist? 2 kinds: Empirical and normative.

12. What is the real reason to study the future? Man is fortunate, when the desirable and the probable coincide! The case is often otherwise, and thus we find ourselves trying to bend the course of events in a way which will bring the probable closer to the desirable. And this is the real reason why we study the future.

13. What is the place of wishful or apocalyptic thinking in futures studies? Wishful thinking and apocalyptic hyperbole have no legitimate place in futures research, no matter how lofty the motives of the researcher.

14. How futures studies can be divided? Futures studies may be divided into “hard” and “soft,” corresponding to the distinction between the methods and perspectives of the (so-called) exact sciences and those of the humanities. We need both hard and soft futurism to capture the full range of human possibility.

15. How hard and soft futures research approaches find their advocates? In futures research, the “hard” approach is favored by scholars who engage in economic and technological forecasting, and the “soft” approach by those primarily interested in cultural and political change.

16. How do hard and soft FS researchers perform their inquiries? Hard futurists analyze, for the most part, short-term trends in business, industry, communications, demographics, resources, and other areas that lend themselves well to rigorous quantification. Soft futurists focus on trends, often longer-term, in society, governance, politics, thought, religion, the arts, and other areas more amenable to qualitative analysis.

17. What kind of science fiction applies in “scenario” technique to investigate alternative futures? There is a more durable and serious variety of science fiction, which consists of detailed anticipations of real worlds coming into being, often transformed by new technologies, cultures, or institutions and ways of thought.

18. What is the only difference between the scenarios of professional futurists and the novels and stories of writers of science fiction? In the stories of writers of science fiction, story line is more centered on the lives of imaginary characters, and more fully fleshed out, with attention to artistic as well as scholarly values.

19. What is world-system theory? It was developed by the sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein and others in the 1970s as a way of explaining processes of social change in the post-medieval world. Simply put, world-system theory holds that over the past five centuries the most advanced capitalist countries have created a single global economy with an integrated division of labor.

20. What is a futurible? The possible becomes futurible, “only if its mode of production from the present state of affairs is plausible and imaginable.... A futurible is a descendant of the present, a descendant to which we attach a genealogy”.

21. Who “founded” the study of alternative futures? The English novelist H. G. Wells. His book, "Anticipations" was the first comprehensive and widely read survey of future developments in the short history of predictive writing.

22. What are five layers of futures-relevant thought? Divination, Revelation, The idea of progress, Historicism, and Social science.

23. What is a world view? A conception of the nature of cosmic area human reality that discloses the meaning of life. World views

furnish answers to the largest questions that human beings can ask about their condition.

24. How the futurists' world views have been shaped? Images of the future hinge on the “world view” of the futurist, defining a world view as “a comprehensive set of values, basic assumptions about the way the world works and derivative understandings of complex events and processes. It implies as well derivative prescriptions with respect to individual, social, and political behavior.” The values held by futurists do structure their images of the future.

Notes: "The Next Three Futures" by W. Warren Wagar

5: A FUTURIST WRITER'S CODE OF PRACTICE

One of the most important challenges facing a futurist writer is having a clear view of his/her conduct. Every now and again we're struck by calls from enlightened people for professional futurist writing to have a code of practice.

Dr. Michael Jackson at Shaping Tomorrow.com provided a code of conduct for professional futurists that had been published on their website since 2002. The same code can be regarded for the futurist writers, too. Thanks to Dr. Jackson's nice effort, he had suitably amended it to be a generic code. It is regularly asked for by new writers so it has real value in demonstrating best and next practices.

As a futurist writer you may seek to achieve the highest standards of corporate governance in all that you write and endeavor to live up to the following policies at all times.

You may strive to:

- promote the benefits and use of strategic foresight for the benefit of humanity;
- share future-oriented knowledge, mental models and different approaches among analysts and decision makers offering mid-long-term perspectives in business, politics and society;
- connect silos, challenge mindsets, develop instincts to share and encourage collective analysis of possible futures;
- contribute to the understanding of possible futures of business, government and society, through taking a global perspective;
- initiate public dialogue about possible futures;
- support business, governments and societies, in creating their preferred future;
- seek a widespread educational presence at every level; courses and programs in every school and college worldwide with ongoing assessment;

Assumptions

You may believe that:

- the future is open;
- everyone is a futurist;
- futures can be influenced by human choices and actions;
- futures thinking is largely about what to do now;
- futures thinking is very much about balancing the demands of the present against those of the future;

Guidelines

You may follow the guidelines that future studies ought to:

- focus on interacting dynamics that potentially create fundamental change over 5 to 25 years and more;
- be trans-disciplinary, due to the complex nature of the future;
- be non-manipulative in both the framing of questions and the creation of strategically relevant implications and outputs;
- promote participation and affirmation of the people concerned;
- be based on scientific principles, by using adequate methodology, peer reviewed analysis and transparent assumptions;
- produce practical results and new options supporting the decision making process;
- facilitate the creation of a sustainable world;
- inspire, engage, enable, irritate and spur the imagination.

Suggestive Values

You may act first as a global citizen, seeking always to do good for everyone.

You may focus on:

- Long-term strategy, not just short-term gains
- Strong corporate governance
- Sound risk-management practices

Suggestive Beliefs

You may:

- believe people are basically good and wanting to contribute to a better world.
- believe everyone has something to contribute and we inspire, engage and enable them to do so.
- recognize and respect everyone as unique people and try to help them use all of their talents at all times.
- encourage everyone we work with to treat others in a similar fashion.

Notes:

Michael Jackson, <http://shapingtomorrowmain.ning.com/forum/topics/professional-futurists-code-of>

6: COMMON MISTAKES IN EXPLORING THE FUTURE

As a writer who is eager to write professionally on futures, you should be aware of pitfalls that may be in your way toward exploring the future. John Mahaffie, the leading futurist has made a list of common mistakes (though un-scholarly study of the dos and don'ts of foresight), enough worthy to be shared with you. He thought it was time to offer a one-stop place to see the key thoughts on the pitfalls of foresight, so he has offered an “unlucky 13” mistakes you can make when exploring the future.

1. Presentism—interpreting the future or future possibilities with present-day attitudes and values. Imagine fifty or a hundred years ago, a view of 2010. Could an African-American be president? Certainly not. Back then people would be sure that most Americans would not support that. So a view of today, from back then, probably wouldn't include an African American president. In fact, any one change happens along with all sorts of other change. As we think about a particular change, we have to remember that values and attitudes, and lots of other conditions in the future will also be different.

2. Over-optimism—Assuming that change will happen faster than it likely can. Usually this means a technological change that will, in fact, be held up by social forces, but the reverse is also possible. Personal or organizational interest in the expected change often drives over-optimism. You like it, so you assume everyone will like it, and it will happen. Technology enthusiasts are especially prone to this. They may look forward to a big technology advance and know why it is technically possible. They are less likely to remember that we have to be ready as a society for the change too.

3. Over-pessimism—Assuming change will happen slowly or never. Our sense of “that will never happen” is rooted in

experience—it is often hard to make a desired change. So we may assume that change won't happen, or will take a long time to happen. But there are breakthroughs in technology and society all the time. We get slow change, but it is punctuated by times of sudden or rapid change. We can't let our pessimism and past experience blind us to the possibilities that things could happen quickly.

4. Extremism—Mistaking a visionary idea for likely. An example is the Singularity, the assumption of a quantum change in society because of a rapid coming together of the effects of technology. Extreme and sudden change is rare though not impossible. But even the big waves of change we've experienced, World War II, the Sixties, the Internet, the Post-9-11 world, have unfolded in a society with mainly continuity. In other words, even significant change is part of the evolution of society. And just as the Spring Paris fashions finally arrive at Macy's in a muted form (e.g. somewhat bigger shoulder pads, rather than enormous shoulder pads), we should recognize the visions of what is possible will usually bring us less-pronounced change.

5. Underinterpretation. It's easy to come up short in assessing what a change might mean. Usually, there is a conventional wisdom, or an obvious implication of a change. With a technological change, it is what the innovators first develop the technology to do. What's so much more interesting, and often has much more impact, is what other things we use the innovation for. For example: the mobile phone was not invented as an alternative for cash, but in more and more places, it has become the means of payment for shoppers. While we watched the spread of cellular telephones, we thought we were seeing a revolution in personal communication: people talking to people. But it has meant much more than that.

6. Superlativitis. Use of always, and worse, never. It's tempting to decide something is impossible—it will never happen. It's also tempting to decide something is eternal—it will always be true. Those absolute words are often clues to an overreach. I have a favorite quote from one of my favorite writers: “No one is ever going to sit down and read a novel on a twitchy little screen, ever.” —E. Annie Proulx (1994). I can highly recommend Annie's fiction writing, but I cannot recommend her futures thinking. Though she said this in the mid-1990s, well before the arrival of the Kindle, the Nook, and the iPad, it was clear even then that the nature of reading, of the novel, and so on were changing, and that we were likely to arrive at new ways of enjoying literature. Happily for ebook readers, despite her misgivings, Annie Proulx's work is available in ebook format.

7. Looking for an answer—Expecting specific predictions about the future. It would be great if we could simply predict the future, but we can't. At best we can narrow the range of things we have to consider possible, identify a set of alternate possibilities. We can even identify what parts of the unfolding future we might shape for outcomes we want. But people crave answers, and the temptation is powerful to draw overly-specific conclusions about the future or look for an overly-specific answer.

8. The tyranny of sunk investment—We have trouble, especially inside organizations, in seeing past the current systems we worked hard to put in place and pay for. It's tough to let go of the thing you've put so much money or effort into. While often this is literally a sunk investment of money, it can also be a psychic investment—something you've given so much effort and attention or “love” to, it's hard to let go. While we cling to such things, the world tends to change around us.

9. Parochialism—We instinctively use our own point of view to understand others. We live our lives inside our country, our

culture, and our community. We bring one person's view to most things we do, and it's hard even to take the point of view of our own friend, child, or spouse, let alone understand someone on the other side of the world. But more and more things make it valuable or essential to try to understand the perspective of people with far different lives.

10. Force fitting to categories. Exploring change, such as through environmental scanning requires you to establish some “buckets” – some topics or categories which you can use to collect information that suggest important forces and trends. A good practice is to use a set of open, broad categories such as STEEP—society, technology, economy, environment, politics. However, what we tend to do is discover a few things of a more specific nature, and then continue to find things that reinforce those. For example, when you have “discovered” the importance of nanotechnology, you may decide to collect things on that topic, and you are sure to spot more about it as you read and research, and add to the category. It will gain in apparent importance, sometimes at the expense of another topic. You will see what you are set up to see, and could miss spotting other information and insights.

11. Accepting the given framing: Peanut butter goes with jelly, and the way those two are linked makes it hard for us to think of peanut butter and something else. The way something is framed and understood can block our thinking about it in a new way. Particular stakeholders on an issue are the most vocal and most published and they set the issue and discussion agendas in how they write and talk about a topic. Their framing of the topic can become the way everyone thinks and talks about it. The most politically-clever know how to set and shape the issues agenda on purpose to control the discussion. It's particularly important when this is happening to step back from the discussion as it is being framed and argued, and look at the bigger picture. That may mean

totally reframing how you look at it. That's where 1). Breakthrough thoughts are likely to come from, and 2). You can move the discussion off the partisan and politicized basis. We need to allow ourselves to separate things in our thinking that have long been connected: food and season, sex from reproduction, etc.

12. Single-trend thinking—can include jumping on a fad bandwagon, or being too interested in a specific force or trend in society. Our society and our world are complexes of forces, trends, shaping factors, players, etc. No change has a single cause. No one trend defines our future. To understand what's happening and get a sense of the directions of change, you have to look at broad range of things, and avoid looking at everything through the single perspective of a big factor or trend. For example, in too many businesses, a commodity or product price is the factor that drowns out other factors that ultimately may be more important.

13. Asking the wrong question. It is common to look at change from a routine point of view, asking how the usual factors are changing. This is a way of monitoring conditions, and regularly ask "how are we doing". We all do it. A company that asks "how can we grow our market share in the next three quarters?" Is asking the routine question they probably always ask. Their question assumes that conditions remain the same, no great change unfolds in the game space in which they play. But what if there's a big change, or challenge to the core of the business? A disruptive technology? Imagine the owners of Tower Records planning their next few years of strategy, ignoring the new player in the music game—download music sales and iTunes. Tower Records went bankrupt in 2006.

Lest you think I am claiming to have this all figured out, please understand that I know about each of these pitfalls because I have made these mistakes too. I continue to try to learn

about what mistakes can happen and why, and welcome your thoughts on this.

There is much to be learned from a couple of rich areas of inquiry: heuristics and cognitive bias.

Cognitive bias

Most of the pitfalls I've described are simple foresight versions of cognitive biases. For a little more on that, I recommend, for some fun with a purpose, a high school teacher created a cognitive bias song for his AP Psychology students. The biases he explains in the song are nearly all potential pitfalls in the work of exploring the future. So, despite the outward silliness of this little ditty, you can learn from it.

Finally, a book by Jerome Groopman, *How Doctors Think* (2007) taught me some clear lessons, from the context of how doctors assess the patients in front of them, which fit closely to our experiences in interpreting the future.

Notes: John B. Mahaffie, <http://foresightculture.com/13-mistakes-you-make-when-exploring-the-future/>

7: PLANNING BEFORE WRITING

Writing for the future is an exciting experience (and perhaps a fabulous job), especially for the futurists. In fact, the futurists explain their thoughts and ideas through writing articles, books and blog posts. Generally speaking, writing is an effective tool of self-expression and many writers use this tool successfully to express themselves in their related societies. As a futurist, you may be interested in expressing yourself and your experiences among other futurists and futurist societies. There are some simple secrets that may help you improve your writing, especially when you are writing about the future.

In this available e-book at FuturesDiscovery.com, I've summarized some of useful points of effective writing for the future and I hope they may be useful for you and everyone who is interested in futures studies, research & work. In this section, I show the importance of having a plan in mind before doing any kind of writing, including writing about the future and futuristic topics.

There is an old saying in project management, "People don't plan to fail; they just fail to plan." But plans aren't just restricted to project management. Strategic management has its plans. And so does writing articles, books and e-books.

Here are 5 reasons you need to plan before writing your future oriented note:

1. Are you sure your written work will have a reader?

There is no reason to write an article or anything else unless it is going to be read. You're in the futures business (futuring) for a reason and having a reader is central to achieving that reason. One of the things you need to plan and identify during the planning process is your target reader. Who is going to read your article? What are they like? What do they do? There are a number of pieces of information you need to identify your target reader and the market they represent.

2. Are you sure your readers will find your works interesting?

But it isn't enough to just identify your reader. You need to know as much about them as you can. Specifically, you need to know what their problems and fears and dreams are. Then you need to target your article to solve their problems, especially regarding undesired futures. That's how you keep your reader actually reading.

3. Does your article or book have focus?

Really this issue belongs to both the design and planning phases. In design you will ensure that your article or book makes sense. That you don't go off talking about things that don't really matter. In planning, you determine the subject you are going to be talking about. You lock that subject down. You determine how much of the subject you are going to write about. You determine what you aren't going to talk about. This restriction also provides for focus. It allows you to concentrate on only part of your subject.

4. Do you know what you will end up with?

There are a number of alternative futures your article or book can end up in. For example are you looking for a short e-book? Less than 20 pages. Are you looking for a full sized e-book? About 60 pages. Are you looking for a full length book? About 100 pages? Do you want your book to be digital only, or both digital and physical? Do you want to sell your book yourself or are you going to use Amazon or another bookseller? All these will affect what your book looks like and how long it is.

5. What alternatives are there?

E-Books aren't the only possibility for you to publish your works. You could take the same information and turn it into an 8 CD home study course. Or turn it into a DVD series... either in interview or webinar format. Or even in a training format. In fact, why not consider doing it as a live seminar? Each of these

alternatives needs their own content map (i.e. design) but they can all work off the same topic map (i.e. information).

Expert writers who write attractive articles or books on the future (usually) have clear plans and follow their own designed plans carefully during their writing endeavor.

8: FINDING BRIGHT IDEAS

Finding bright ideas is a real challenge in writing about the future. Think about this question: What ideas are set to transform our understanding of the world around us and our relationship with it? Scientific and technological advances have always responses for you. You may find interesting ideas in new scientific events and debates to shape your ideas to write a new article or book.

Think about global challenges such as the future of food and feeding or the climate change. Design new ways for controlling these challenges or reducing their negative effects. Although the future has been getting better for most of the world over the past 20 years, the global recession has lowered the level of people's welfare for the next 10 years. The global financial crisis and climate change planning may be helping humanity to re-think its assumptions and move from its often self-centered adolescence to a more globally responsible adulthood.

Futurist books or articles should be extraordinarily rich distillation of information for those who care about the world and its future. They should describe in non-technical language what the educated person should know about the world and what to do to improve it. One of the interesting topics that a group of futurists are working on it is: Building Collective Intelligence Systems. Through such systems people will be enable to solve their current and future problems more effectively and wisely. Another topic is emerging environmental security issues. You may be interested in developing new ways to control these issues, talk about them in your articles and books.

A futurist writer is a person who is interested in Futures Research and gaps which are evident in this regard around the world. Study the state of futures studies in your country and publish a report such as what I had written a few months ago about my own country, Iran available at:

http://www.futuresdiscovery.com/newsletter/Hejazi_Iran_May_2010.pdf

Consider areas in which humanity is winning, areas in which humanity is failing. Analyze their problems and think about methods by which they may be able to solve their problems. Study the situation of Internet users in the world. What are their challenges and opportunities? Do you know that there are people around the world who are living on less than \$1.25 a day? How can we remove poverty in an appropriate way in different societies? There is always a threat of uncontrolled growth of population in non-developed societies? What kind of problems this phenomenon may cause in the future and how can we face that?

There are numerous multilateral environmental agreements, but a limited number of them are considered. How can we enforce them and make them capable of solving the global problem of climate change? One of the most useful sources that you can find real topics to write articles and books around them is "The 2010 State of the Future" composed of the studies conducted in 2009–10 embracing a cumulative work of the Millennium Project since 1996 and details of the studies. Available at: <http://www.millennium-project.org/millennium/2010SOF.html#new>

Take a look at its topics and I'm sure you'll find interesting issues to discuss. The remaining job is developing these topics through offering new and innovative ways or methods. It depends on your personal perspective and art of writing.

9: HOW TO WRITE AN E-BOOK?

The hardest part of writing an e-book is starting. And there are two reasons most people don't know how to begin and they don't know what to do.

You are far more likely to successfully write and publish your book if you follow these tips before you write a single chapter.

1. Write your book's working title. It helps you focus and answer the readers' questions about the topic. The title you choose can be the difference between a product that sells well and one that doesn't. A powerful title or headline should grab a person's attention, interest and take action. Titles that have an emotional appeal and solve a common problem tend to do extremely well.

Go to a bookstore or the library and look at what titles appeal to you, question why, then compile your own list of generic titles you can use to make choosing a title easy.

2. Write your book's thesis. The thesis should be a sentence or so stating the audience's main problem and how your book will solve it. A thesis is a formal document whose sole purpose is to prove that you have made an original contribution to knowledge, you have identified a worthwhile problem or question which has not been previously answered, and you have solved the problem or answered the question. Your contribution to knowledge generally lies in your solution or answer.

Your thesis is a sentence or two stating exactly what problem you are addressing and how your book will solve that problem. All chapters spring forth from your thesis statement. Once you've got your thesis statement fine-tuned, you've built your foundation. From that foundation, your book will grow, chapter by chapter.

3. Most of us have knowledge we could put into an e-book. And yes, there really are people out there who want to know what

YOU know. (And yes, thousands of people have made good money by selling their knowledge in the form of e-books.)

Ask yourself, is it relevant? Then write it! Does it present useful information? Does it have the potential to positively affect people's lives? Is it lively, humorous? Does it help answer important questions? Does it create a deeper understanding of human nature?

4. Who is your audience? How much can you reasonably expect them to know about the subject before picking up your book? Usually they are pretty knowledgeable about the general problem, but they haven't been intimately involved with the details over the last couple of years like you have: spell difficult new concepts out clearly.

Don't make the readers work too hard! This is fundamentally important. You know what few questions the examiners need answers to. Choose section titles and wordings to clearly give them this information. The harder they have to work to discover out your problem, your defense of the problem, your answer to the problem, your conclusions and contributions, the worse mood they will be in, and the more likely that your book will need major revisions.

5. Write your reasons for writing this book. Your readers all want to know why you wrote this book. Be prepared up front, so you will shine when opportunities come your way. Once you have your thesis, before you start to write, make sure there is a good reason to write your book. Ask yourself some questions:

- Does your book present useful information and is that information currently relevant?
- Will your book positively affect the lives of your readers?
- Is your book dynamic and will it keep the reader's attention?
- Does your book answer questions that are meaningful and significant?

6. Write down your publishing goals for this book. Do you want to give it away to members of your family or a particular group? Do you want to sell it? Do you want to promote your business? Do you want to bring quality traffic to your website? Do you want to enhance your reputation? How many copies do you want to sell your first year? How much money do you want to make each month? What publishing format will you choose—self-publishing, traditional publishing, Print Quality Needed or Print on Demand, or e-book?

Do you want to sell it as a product on your website, or do you want to offer it as a free gift for filling out a survey or for ordering a product? Do you want to use the chapters to create an e-course, or use your e-book to attract affiliates around the world? The more you know upfront, the easier the actual writing will be.

7. Organize the parts of your book. In one file, keep your introduction; in another, your index or resource section. Include your bibliography and keep a file of all people you will quote in your book who may give you a testimonial later. Keep each chapter in its own file labeled correctly so you can find it within minutes.

8. Write down your chapter's format. Readers expect a clear map to guide them. They like consistency. In non-fiction, each chapter should be approximately the same length and have the same sections. Decide on the format of your chapters. Perhaps you plan to use an introduction to your chapter topic, and then divide it into four subhead topics. Or you may plan to divide it into five parts, each one beginning with a relevant anecdote.

To make your chapters sparkle, use stories, anecdotes, headings, photos, maps, graphs, exercises, tips. Readers like easy-to-read side bars in boxes.

9. An outline is a general plan of the material that is to be presented in a speech or a paper. The outline shows the order of the various topics, the relative importance of each, and the relationship between the various parts.

All outlines should begin with a thesis statement of summarizing sentence. This thesis sentence presents the central idea of the book. It must always be a complete, grammatical sentence, specific and brief, which expresses the point of view you are taking towards the subject. There are many ways to arrange the different parts of a subject. Sometimes, a chronological arrangement works well. At other times, a spatial arrangement is best suited to the material. The most common order in outlines is to go from the general to the specific. This means you begin with a general idea and then support it with specific examples.

10. Professional book cover design is essential because readers, retailers and reviewers glance at a book for only a few seconds before they make a choice. Make sure it's your book they're choosing.

Make up a front cover in your book's early stages. Keep it by your workstation to inspire you. To sell your books, your cover and title have around four seconds to hook your buyer. Covers are more important than what is inside. Browse the bookstore and copy a few ideas to get you started.

Writing a book is so much easier when you approach it in small bites. As soon as you get these ten parts written you will be able to start asking more specific questions that become your chapter headings.

Setting up your e-book from the idea conceptualization stage to the selling stage can't be completed overnight but it is definitely something that can be done by anyone regardless of your technological background. If you can use a word processor then you can create an e-book.

10: WEB-BASED WRITING

I have always perceived futurist books and magazines as the vehicle to my immortality. There's just something deeply gratifying about having a tangible item bearing my byline, an item that will surely be praised for its cultural impact when discovered, completely preserved, in the 24th Century.

Seeing my name and words on the Web, however, somehow lacked seriousness. Perhaps in the back of my mind I believed that good writers make it into traditional print markets while everyone else has to settle for the Internet. But now I'm finding that the Web has a lot more to offer writers in terms of exposure, compensation, and maybe even respect. And for the written word, it's probably the most reliable vehicle to immortality, ever.

1. Personal homepage publishing

Whether you're a seasoned author or a small-time freelancer trying to get your foot in a few doors, the Web can be used to your advantage. Personal homepages are a good place to start even for the unpublished writer. Novices can present work in a professional-looking format, attract some traffic, and get feedback from visitors that can stroke the writer's fragile ego (or shatter it to pieces because it's just so easy).

"Self-publishing, or having your own website, doesn't have the stigma that it does in the offline world," concedes, a veteran of print and Web publishing. But he adds that new writers typically gain very little exposure via personal homepages because their sites are rarely seen by anyone but themselves. "Unless you're writing for an established site or you know how to promote your site through the search engines or reciprocal linking," he adds, "you'll be exposing yourself to the online equivalent of an empty room."

Nonetheless, having a homepage with writing samples and a resume can be a useful tool for marketing yourself on the Web. Even published print writers are to be avid online readers and to

make use of Internet writing opportunities. Established writers can also generate ongoing publicity for themselves by making articles and books available for sale on their personal homepages.

2. Writing for webzines

Writers might also take advantage of opportunities to write for online magazines, some of which pay well. The nice thing about webzines is that you can e-query, e-submit, and get an e-response without all the hassle of traditional mailing methods for manuscripts. Then you can see your name in e-lights within a reasonably short period of time.

Webzines are also an excellent place for beginning writers to get experience. This is not to say that online magazines compromise editorial quality (though there is a bit of that going around), but the online market is generally less competitive than the traditional print market and there are literally hundreds of new electronic publications emerging on a regular basis. Writers may receive payments in subscriptions and memberships from less established sites, or monetary payments from a penny to a dollar per word from the more well-known sites. "It's kind of a crapshoot," says, a former Web writer for computer games. "Although ideally you should try to work your way toward the bigger sites that accept freelance submissions." Bigger sites (usually) equal bigger payments.

3. Website hosting

"Hosting" a website area or community is another way for writers to write what they love, get decent exposure, and perhaps even get paid for it. If your passion and expertise is cooking, for example, you might find an online community that needs a host for their food section. Providing a consistent service of this type can also help you establish a stronger online presence. This kind of arrangement usually requires entering into a contract stating that the weekly article you write is not being used elsewhere. Some writers may balk at this agreement, but many are taking

advantage of yet another opportunity to get their writing and their names known on the Web.

A HTML Guide, agrees. One of the benefits of her position, he says, is that he's forced to stay up-to-date in his field of interest. "I was moving into HTML and Web development in my career," he explains, "and this was a great way to keep writing while still doing Web pages." If you opt for this sort of arrangement, however, you'll probably be doing it for the love of writing more than the money.

Despite his day job in the web industry and over three years writing on the Web, he admits that he still has yearnings for traditional publishing. "I guess I want to know that my books are tactile objects that will sit on store shelves," he says. "A bit of an oversimplification probably, but pretty close to the truth." He speaks for many of us hesitant to see the craft of writing go completely online. Yet the Web awaits, and the Web needs writers.

Notes: How to Write on the Web,

http://www2.xlibris.com/authors_lounge_QA_howto_writeweb.htm

11: SOFTWARES FOR WRITING

Pity the literary masters that were never able to benefit from a few mouse-clicks and a thinking machine. It's hard to believe all those great works were written by candlelight with pen and ink and a wrinkled sheet of paper, or even banged out on an old typewriter. Imagine the curses uttered! So as we aspire to greater writing heights, we may as well take advantage of the latest inventions that are supposed to make our writing lives easier.

Ink Link: <http://www.inklinksoftware.com/>

Ah, what a relief to be done with files and folders and scattered documents and lists. User-friendly Ink Link lists your manuscripts and organizes them by date, title, and subject. You can keep track of which publications you've submitted to, and note dates of return or acceptance. You can also record resources used for each manuscript, keep track of expenses and income, and generate financial reports for when the IRS comes a-knocking. Ink Link can also automatically generate regular reminders, publication resumes, and follow-u letters.

Triumphs: Polite little messages when you exit: "Must you leave?" "Is this goodbye?"

Tragedies: That I haven't had Ink Link throughout my writing career.

Final Draft: <http://www.finaldraft.com/>

Familiarity is a nice thing, and what you'll notice about Final Draft, if you're using a PC, is that everything looks pretty much like Microsoft Word. The pull-down menus are basically the same, with a few additions and specialized functions for the screenwriter.

Final Draft helps you write your screenplay by automatically formatting things such as dialogue and scene headings. (The "industry" won't even consider your script unless it's formatted properly, so let Final Draft do it for you.) You can click on nifty

little gadgets like the ScriptNote to post an "invisible" note at any point in the script. Generate screen reports, access an extensive and searchable names database, and use Revision Mode to track and highlight changes. You can also drop text from other documents into a Final Draft document and it will automatically format it for you.

Triumphs: The "About Final Draft" credits feature a nice little lineup of well-known Hollywooders, so you get the feeling some good research went into developing this thing. Plus it's made for use with a Mac or PC.

Tragedies: What Shakespeare wrote without Final Draft. Other screenwriting softwares you might be interested in are Movie Magic Screenwriter 2000 and Dramatica. Movie Magic allows you to write, edit, and view with a partner on the other side of the world, if that's the case, and Dramatica's got a pretty cool website in addition to software for sale.

StoryBuilder: <http://www.svsoft.com/>

Fiction writers take heed. StoryBuilder gets you going in the outlining stage of writing. For character sketches, you can click and choose each character's role (antagonist, protagonist, etc.), and profile each by selecting various characteristics from "habits" to "likes/dislikes" to "psychological traits." Tools like "Problem Definition" get you to think through the central conflict (well, StoryBuilder thinks it through for you, actually; you just choose which category your problem falls under), like "person vs. himself," "person vs. fate," and so forth.

Based on customized profiles you've selected for your characters, as well as plot and setting, StoryBuilder poses "Key Questions" for you to think about while writing — questions that should be answered by the end of the work.

Triumphs: The "Quotes" option. Every time you click on this button, you get a different quote from a famous author about the craft of writing.

Tragedies: That you can't just write your story with the StoryBuilder software for side-by-side inspiration and comparison.

StoryCraft: <http://www.writerspage.com/software.htm>

If you're looking for a recipe for success, StoryCraft is based on the Jarvis Method, a tried and tested writing methodology. To get started, you'll find an area for understanding story "concepts" through real examples and explanation. You then have an opportunity to fill in the concept of your own story. After visiting each page and filling in the appropriate information for your work, you are bounced to a window that lets you start taking serious notes and begin describing and designing your story.

Triumphs: Full-page note-taking screen, as opposed to the usual micro-screens.

Tragedies: An overview stuffed into a little box that requires scrolling. Plus, if you're used to mind-numbing click-and-choose, wading through "The Syntax of the Story Concept" might be ... well ... mind-numbing.

Writer's Software Companion: <http://www.novalearn.com/>

What lonely writer couldn't use a companion in those darkest creative moments? The Companion starts off with a customized "pep talk" based on a questionnaire regarding personal writing habits, accomplishments, and challenges. To get the writer's wheels spinning, a catalogue features 5,000 character names, male and female, organized alphabetically with a special emphasis on unusual and foreign names.

The overall Companion approach is tutorial-sequel. Users get a lively read through areas such as "Strong opening scenes" and "Middles: Getting unstuck." To keep the writer involved, examples and exercises are always available. A "My Notes" section allows you to jot notes to yourself under each respective topic area, and an index organizes them for you.

Triumphs: "Improving When Not Writing" reminds the diligent writer to be a good reader, keep a journal, and pay constant

attention to other peoples' lives in order to tell a better story. Also of note is "Help with 24 Most Common Writers' Problems" and "Half-truths about Marketing," including an enlightening criticism of the old cliché: "write what you know."

Tragedies: That I couldn't come up with one.

There are plenty of other good programs out there for writers, many of which can be found at The Writers Store and can even be downloaded directly from the Web. If you're new to the software concept as an accessory to your writing, try out some demo versions before choosing the right program for your needs.

Notes: Software for Writers

http://www2.xlibris.com/authors_lounge_QA_howto_softwarewriters.htm

12: THE REALITY OF SELF-PUBLISHING

Printing of the actual book that is, book printing is the most important step in the publishing of books process. It is reproducing the original text and images by using a printing press and this process is done by a book printer. Self-publishing or self book printing comes into the scenario when the author opts to print and market his/her book in his/her own terms.

The advantages of self-publishing are numerous to the author because, traditionally the publisher took control of the author's content and changed it as he/she saw fit. Here, the author is responsible for the entire process of publication of the book. The author is responsible for the editorial control of the manuscript, author maintains all the rights to their work and they have to hasten the printing of their book. The advancement of technology has seen various authors achieve their dream of having their work being published.

Authors know that whether they publish entirely on their own or through a publisher, the ultimate success of their book will solely depend on them. With publishing firms, there is only a small portion on their budget driven into the book's promotion and so authors have opted to shoulder the responsibility of their own publishing process.

Self-publishing is offered by the self-publishing service providers who have come up to liberate the hurdles experienced by authors in the hands of traditional publishing and the tasks of self publishing. They give the authors a vast knowledge in new ideas without taking control of the authors' manuscripts.

Authors gain a lot of services from the service providers, including: copy editing, international book number registration, book design and marketing. They are market-driven so they don't edit the book or determine the book style thus the author maintains authority over the book. They allow almost anyone willing to publish at a fraction of the fee charged by conventional publishers.

Self-publishing has seen an end to bulk production without a ready market at that particular time, forcing storage of the material which took up lots of space. The stored books were also prone to damage. In self-publishing printing is done on demand. The books are stored digitally and printed on demand.

Book printing costs have drastically reduced because of this print-on-demand system. It has eliminated the wastage of countless copies of books which has seen the initial costs of publishing become small to the author.

There is a lot of confusion lately regarding the definition of “self-publishing.” Many authors think they have self-published, when in fact they have not.

1. Subsidy Publishing

Subsidy Publishers often refer to themselves and “self-publishing” companies, and offer “self-publishing” services for authors. They intentionally obfuscate the definition of the word, because they are running from the term “vanity press.”

Subsidy Publishers take money to publish your book for you. They act in many ways as a traditional publisher might, however, they do not put their own money on the line and their primary customer is the author, not the book buyer.

When you publish via a Subsidy Press, they are technically the Publisher of Record because they own the ISBN number. They cannot (and will not) sell you the number, give you the number, or assign ownership of the number to you. As long as they own the ISBN, they are the publisher. You did not self-publish. You paid someone to publish you. The only way for you to own the ISBN is for you to buy it from the only ISBN broker in the US; Bowkers.

One major disadvantage of Subsidy publishing is the Price Per Unit of the final product. Subsidy Publishing is not efficient, and the cost per individual book printed that you will pay will be so high so as to price it out of your market. You must have the flexibility to price your book based on a competitive market, not based on production cost.

Another disadvantage is the negative effect a Subsidy Publisher owned ISBN will have on your chances of getting reviewed by the major pre-publication reviewers. It is very difficult to get a book reviewed by the major reviews. If your book is subsidy published, your chances become zero. They will not consider it.

This is not to say that there are not situations where subsidy publishing would not be a suitable choice. If you have a book of local, or family interest and you know you will be able to sell a certain number to a group of people regardless of the cost, then it may be the way to go. Also, if you are just looking to see your book in print and aren't worried about selling them to large numbers of people, then you might also select a subsidy publishing (this is, by definition, vanity publishing. If that is your interest, it's probably best to accept it and publish accordingly).

However, if your intentions are in any way to market your book and make money as a publisher, I urge you to consider "true self-publishing."

Some subsidy presses include: PublishAmerica, AuthorHouse, Lulu, Xlibris, and many others.

2. Self-Publishing

A self-published book is one that has truly been published by its author. There is a long tradition of very successful authors who have gotten their start by forming their own imprint and publishing their own books.

Self-publishing entails more work, but in the end the results will be much more satisfactory. You will have had control over the creative process, as well as all budgetary concerns.

You will have purchased your own ISBN, and will thus be the Publisher of Record. You will have sought out a cover and layout designer whose work you like and respect. You will have hired a printer that is able to offer a Per Unit Cost that will allow you to set a cover price that matches your market. You will make an actual, reasonable profit on the sale of your book. You will own your own imprint, and will be considered a "small press," or

“independent publisher,” and so will have a chance of getting reviewed in by the major publications.

Self-publishing is not to be taken on lightly. It is, in essence, starting a new business. This can seem like a daunting task, when done concurrently with the release of a new book. However, as compared to subsidy publishing, it is the only way to publish your book in a way that will give it a chance of success in the extremely volatile publishing world.

There are many really great books on self-publishing. You should select a few and study them before making any decision as to how you are planning on publishing.

3. POD, or, Print On Demand

There is also some confusion as to the term POD, or Print On Demand. Many authors refer to subsidy publishers as “PODs.” This is entirely inaccurate, and will cause you some embarrassment when talking to the indie publishing community.

Print on Demand is a printing technology used by many publishers of all stripes. Indy presses, small publishers, subsidy presses, church cookbooks, even some of the traditional publisher’s backlogs, all utilize Print On Demand technology.

Notes: Brad Grochowski, AuthorsBookshop.com

13: GET YOUR BOOKS PUBLISHED

Writing a book is not as difficult or daunting as it sounds and can easily be turned into a very profitable home business. Writing doesn't require a lot of expensive equipment or a huge financial investment. In fact the only tools you will really need are a computer, a word processor and a good amount of uninterrupted dedicated time. I'm guessing the latter is probably the most difficult thing for most of us to come by but there are some ideas it might help to remember.

Writing a book doesn't all have to be done at one time or in one sitting, so don't be discouraged by the idea that you might only have a few minutes to dedicate to your book every day. No matter what your topic may be, making a clear outline for your book can be roughed out with only a few minutes of brainstorming. Once you learn how to put your workflow in order writing about any subject becomes a breeze. And finally, your book doesn't have to be 300 pages long to be a bestseller or very profitable for you!

When it comes to writing there's really nothing to it but to do it. It's the process of publishing that can be your biggest stumbling block. These days when it comes to publishing you have three major options.

1. Traditional Publishing. Traditional publishing means once you finish writing your manuscript you submit it to a publishing house through a third party called a "literary agent". Most traditional publishing companies such as Random House or Simon & Schuster will NOT accept or read manuscripts submitted directly by authors but instead rely on literary agents to read and pitch them the gist of your book.

On top of that, not every literary agent will review every type of books or story so if you intend to go the traditional route you will have to shop for and petition an agent to represent your work.

2. Independent Publishing. Also known as “self-publishing” means that you can get your manuscript published by a self-publishing house without the need to find an agent to read and promote your work. It’s a lot easier for beginners to take this route as there are far fewer frustrating obstacles and there is a substantially faster turnaround time to see your finished book in print.

However there are some important differences to consider between traditional and independent publishing. In general it probably won’t cost you anything up front to find an agent and get your book published traditionally other than time. Most legitimate agents WON’T charge to read your manuscript or submit it to publishers, but the down side is that the publisher and the agent generally get to keep about 90% of the profit from your sales.

On the other hand it will cost you upfront to have your book published independently. The bright side is there is no lengthy approval process, you get to keep more of your own profits and you can usually see your work in print within about 3 months from the time you submit your manuscript.

3. Online Publishing. Your third option for publishing is convert your manuscript to PDF format once you finish writing it on your computer and upload it to online bookstores. You can do this in combination with your printed book IF you choose to go with an independent publisher, but you will likely be on a contract that prohibits you from selling your book elsewhere if you decided to go with a traditional publisher.

Once you have your book uploaded to a website it will be available for sale immediately at whatever price you decide to charge for it. With online publishing your book could literally be for sale and earning you money within minutes of the time you finish writing it without any hassle, approval process OR setup fees.

After you finish writing and publishing your book the only thing left to do is market it. Just think of how good it will feel when you can introduce yourself as an author.

Notes: Tips to help new writers get their books published,
<http://publishabook.percepizone.info/tips-to-help-new-writers-get-their-books-published/>

14: BECOMING A PUBLISHED AUTHOR

Becoming a published author may sound a dream to you, but it can be realized if you are really eager to become one and take your decision. Once you do that, then you work on where you want to go and what you want to accomplish? In my case I just knew how to type my ideas and turn them into e-books. I had come to realize that if I was going to get a job with promise for promotion, I needed to at least be able to type my books personally.

As a first time author, what is your goal, either you desire to have someone publish your book, or you plan to do it yourself? If you are planning to have it done, who can get done what you need? You have heard about publishers. You know that is what you need. What you don't know is that there are different types that can be used to accomplish your goal. If you go on the internet and type in publisher, or publishing, you're talking thousands to millions, which adds to the confusion.

Where do you start? You need information that can help you to understand what each type does and how you can effectively use them to get where you want to go. Your research quickly reveals that one process is faster than the other, which has led to the rise of more and more publishing options.

Publishers are classified as traditional and digital. The traditional publisher buys the rights to your book, arranges for the printing and distribution, through marketing to the reading public. There are upfront costs prior to the traditional publisher buying the rights to your book. The digital publisher, sometimes called vanity presses, or self-publish, or print on demand provides all of the services of a traditional publisher to prepare a book for the market, with one exception, the author pays for all the services from idea to finish product, plus marketing.

What will work for you depends on how impatient you are and how much you are willing to invest. The traditional publishing method can take years. It will never be over night. You will spend

time sending query letters, attempting to sell editors on why your manuscript is the next best thing since slice bread. Yes, and rejection is a part of that.

There is no doubt the digital methods are faster. Having access to a great editor will make a world of difference using this method. Find an editor that would be willing to let you sample their expertise for a small fee so that you can get a feel for that person's capabilities.

The digital publishers will be most visible online. How will you know you are dealing with a digital publisher? If they charge a fee to produce your book, then you have a digital publisher. The traditional publishers will not be that visible online. You can access them through books like the latest writer's market, or get the online version. They contain some digital publishers as well as tips and samples of query letters you can use to work the traditional publishers' market.

With the digital publishers you are shopping for the best price, for the most services. What you want done depends on your manuscript need. If you need editing, or proofreading, then you look for those who can provide that service. Some also provide a marketing package. Don't be fooled by this by any means. Those marketing packages help you to position yourself to make book sales, but will not be an all out launch to sell your books. You will still have to actively work at marketing.

Once you have assessed the package, examine how easy it will be to upload it to their site. Some are more complicated. Work with digital publishers you can talk with periodically as your book is being produced. If they have no patience with you, this might not be the best choice. Spend your money with people who will take the time to help you to understand what they are doing for you.

Go over everything before you submit. Make sure you personally proof your final prior to submission. If you hire a proofreader and editor clarify what exactly they are going to do; get it in writing, either by you sending an email reiterating what

has been discussed, or asking them to send you something. You may want to find out if they will make the corrections. There may be an additional charge but it will be worth it. That way you can focus on the re-reading and not doing both functions. If you negotiate a flat rate, ask if they would include a final read as part of that service. Use the services of proofreaders and editors before you submit your manuscript to traditional publishers.

The best part of becoming a published author: If you decide you can't wait to be picked up by a traditional publisher and you want to self-publish, you can continue querying the traditional publisher. The door to the traditional publisher is not closed because you self-publish.

Though traditional publishers have cornered the market in the past, leaving many writers to give up in despair, the self-published markets have made splashes that have caused traditional publishers to race to the acquisition of some of these self-published works. There has never been a better time to publish a book. Get it done and enjoy the journey. It will be the best decision you ever made.

Notes: I Know Nothing About Publishing – Can you Help?,

<http://publishabook.percepizone.info/i-know-nothing-about-publishing-can-you-help/>

15: 5 STEPS TOWARD FAST WRITING

Many speakers, consultants, small business owners alike feel confident with communicating their message orally. They can spout their elevator speech with the accuracy of a scientist. But when it comes to putting it on paper, some grown men & women end up crying like a baby. It's not hard once you know exactly what to do. I promise; it's not. Here's what successful writers do.

Successful writers set up a system of writing. Destroy old myths and setup your system of writing in 5 easy steps.

1. It is easier than you think.

Many think it's too hard. First things first, you should first overcome fear of failure or procrastination. Most times the bottom line of procrastination is fear of failure. You can act now. Select step one of a good writing program and begin today. Action will destroy fear. Each successful step you take will deal a death blow to fear.

2. It is faster than you think.

New writers believe that they have to get away from everything to write a successful book. No you don't. I know several novelist and non-fiction book writers who had to write during a long commute to get their best book written and out to the world. They accomplished it because they systematically worked on their book until it was done. You can always avoid marathon writing. In the midst of your busy life, designate your time to write (work on your book) with a goal to completion (reasonable time to completion).

3. It is more usual than you think.

A person may assume that he/she can't keep up with where he/she is after interruptions of life. It is a common challenge to find your place after being interrupted with family, work and daily life. After all that's why many think you must get away to get it done effectively. Yet, there's hope for those who can't get away or

choose not to. Successful writers all over the world use the tracking approach. They succeed because they commit to doing a little each day. Set yourself up for success use the tracking approach. There are 2 methods you could use for your tracking. Time is the method where you commit to a writing a certain amount of time each day. With the cumulative factor involved your commitment doesn't have to be that much.

For example, to accomplish my book writing goals I commit to writing one hour a day in my most productive time. For me it is right after my meditation and reading time. With this method don't be overly concerned about how much you write, just keep the time commitment.

The other method is focused on output. Commit to writing a certain number of words or pages a day, perhaps 750-1,000 words or approximately three and a half pages double-spaced text. The key factor is to stick to it until completion.

You may ask how do I get started after interruptions or even in my daily allotted slot so that I don't spend a lot of time re-locating where I stopped? Start your daily writing session by re-reading the last words you wrote the day before. This will get you back in the flow.

The continued cycle of review will create a momentum that will keep you going to completion. Another piece of advice is to create a support system that will help isolate you from telephone calls and interruptions during your daily tracking session.

4. It is more irregular than you think

An amateur writer may assume that he/she has to complete each chapter in order. Wrong answer. It 's called linear writing. You don't have to write each chapter one after the other. If you get stuck on chapter two, you could be stuck a very long time. I think this type of thinking comes from grade school where we are ritually taught to do everything in order.

If you have been thinking that way stop right now, no need to raise your hand. You have my permission to work on whatever

chapter moves you or you feel passion bubbling for at the moment. Feeling stuck on a chapter, try another. There you have it now go with the flow.

Don't become chained to writing in order. Jump around and fill in the blanks. Review your chapters and whatever subject or topic you most drawn to, begin there.

5. It is more enjoyable than you think

You have not to stop writing until you feel it again. From what I said earlier you may have gotten the impression that you just write when you feel like it and quit when you don't. If so, no that's not what I meant. Unseasoned writers may play the martyr and push through just to put something on paper or give up and try again another day.

We would never get it done like that. When you get stuck simply close that chapter and pull out your chapter outline and choose another chapter. If you have been following this program, you have listed main points for each chapter. Select a topic from that chapter and begin there.

To maintain your momentum, keep your writing commitments. Go around writer's block by working on another chapter. For example, while writing this series of post in my website I wanted to finish my eighth post on "Writing for the Future", but I ran into a writer's block. Instead of breaking my momentum, I came down to seventh post about becoming a published author and began there. I was able to complete my time commitment of one hour and keep my momentum.

Writing a book is a journey. Most journeys go so much smoother with a map or travel plan. Taking the simple steps above will get you started and keep you going to completion. Start today then complete and release your significant message to the world.

16: 3 ESSENTIALS TO PLAIN ENGLISH

The three essentials of the English language are: *Purity*, *Perspicuity* and *Precision*.

By *Purity* is signified the use of good English. It precludes the use of all slang words, vulgar phrases, obsolete terms, foreign idioms, ambiguous expressions or any ungrammatical language whatsoever. Neither does it sanction the use of any newly coined word until such word is adopted by the best writers and speakers.

Perspicuity demands the clearest expression of thought conveyed in unequivocal language, so that there may be no misunderstanding whatever of the thought or idea the speaker or writer wishes to convey. All ambiguous words, words of double meaning and words that might possibly be construed in a sense different from that intended, are strictly forbidden. *Perspicuity* requires a style at once clear and comprehensive and entirely free from pomp and pedantry and affectation or any straining after effect.

Precision requires concise and exact expression, free from redundancy and tautology, a style terse and clear and simple enough to enable the hearer or reader to comprehend immediately the meaning of the speaker or writer. It forbids, on the one hand, all long and involved sentences, and, on the other, those that are too short and abrupt. Its object is to strike the golden mean in such a way as to rivet the attention of the hearer or reader on the words uttered or written.

17: 10 WAYS TO REMOVE YOUR WRITING ANXIETIES

Anxiety, apprehension, cold feet, consternation, dismay, distress, dread, fear, fright, horror, nervousness, panic, scare, strain, stress, tension, terror, trepidation, unease or uneasiness: whatever it's called, you've got it.

And the reason is ... you've got to write an article or a book!

Writing anxiety or 'writer's block' happens to all writers at some point in their writing lives. It may be that you don't know what to write about or, with your topic firmly in place, you don't know where to start.

At this point, procrastination sets in.

Doing anything, rather than actually writing, seems a whole lot better than putting pen to paper or fingers to the keyboard. Even walking the dog, in pouring rain and gale-force winds, has higher priority!

Try some of these ways to restore your writing equilibrium:

1. Avoid starting with a blank page. There's nothing more daunting than beginning from nothing. Work with a template. This will help you to stay focused on your topic. Download and print out some appropriate free graphic organizers from the Internet or use graphic organizer software, like Notate It, that will help you to rearrange and organize your thoughts in freestyle format.

2. Brainstorm your topic. Take some time out for creative thinking with a friend or colleague. You'll get some new twists on the theme, especially if they're not 'experts' in your subject matter!

3. Write an outline. Just set out a list of headings. They don't even have to be in order - you can always rearrange them later. Write each heading on a separate card or piece of paper and shuffle the result. A new order may emerge that you hadn't thought of, giving you a new slant on your topic.

4. Use a whiteboard. Fix a large magnetic whiteboard on your wall and use it to rearrange your ideas. If a whiteboard on the wall feels too intrusive, try some inexpensive whiteboard software on your PC instead.

5. Break your task down into smaller chunks. From your outline, choose one heading and write. Then go on to another heading and write. It doesn't matter which order you write in, because it can all be rearranged later. Not only that, you're achieving your larger goal in a series of smaller steps and that makes it much more manageable.

6. Write in the way that you speak. It's friendlier to read and it's an easier and more natural way for you to write.

7. Don't worry about perfection too soon. Spell checking, indenting paragraphs, changing font size - this is the icing on the cake. Just let your writing flow and, just for once, forget the grammar. Perfection can come later - at the redrafting stage.

8. Think about your readers in a different way. You may be anxious that your article is not "good enough" to be read by your peers. Remember, even if your audiences are "experts", they don't know what you think about your subject. Nor does it mean that they know everything there is to know about a subject area. Target your writing towards an intelligent, enthusiastic, but non-expert, reader and your writing confidence will grow.

9. You've completed your writing. This is your first draft. The secret, now, is to redraft and redraft again. You'd be surprised at just how many things you'll want to say differently when the sun rises tomorrow! Read your article once a day, make changes then put it aside until the next day. In a few days, you'll read your article and find nothing to change. That's when you're ready to publish!

10. Believe in yourself. The first articles you write may not be perfect but the more you write, the better your style will become. It's like learning to walk - all it takes is a little time and lots of practice.

Note: Lynda Blake, <http://www.notateit.com/>

18: THE FUTURE OF BOOKS

Having long been an avid reader, a report on ‘the future of books’ was bound to catch my eye. As I’m sure you can guess, it talks about the emergence of e-books and their implications for the older relative: the hardcopy book.

It’s a fascinating read, which covers six key drivers:

1. Digitization of books (see our ease of publishing online driver)
2. Emergence of wireless e-book readers
3. Spread of wireless broadband (also have a look at our ubiquitous connectivity driver)
4. Generational shift - (explore this further with our attitudes to different generations driver)
5. Rise of user-generated content
6. And environmental concerns – this is still a somewhat superficial one, as it is not yet known for sure if e-books are actually more environmentally friendly than paper ones (think of the batteries needed to power e-readers for example).

1. Flying along the real-world journey

Although the Kindle is heralded in this report (and elsewhere I’m sure) as the first truly viable alternative to print in more than 5 centuries, what gets me really excited is where the technology may take this in the future. Currently e-books are represented as black and white text on a page: literally looking at a page with none of the experience of holding a real book and turning pages. But going forward, it’s likely that e-readers will become ever more sophisticated. They will be capable of showing e-books that have media embedded in them. You might be able to have a much more interactive experience with your book. For an example of what’s possible – have a look at [googlelittrips](#), where a high school English teacher in California named Jerome Burg has combined e-books with interactive learning features and the satellite imagery of Google Earth, to create Google Lit Trips - virtual “road trips”

that let students follow the journeys in works such as the Kite Runner (future of education anyone?).

2. Is the author the owner?

One of the interesting outcomes of this digitization of books is how it affects the idea of ownership and authorship. Currently many major publishing players use an e-publishing standard which does not include digital rights management (DRM restricts users from freely sharing downloaded content). This has led to others developing a platform that does include DRM.

So which path is the one to go down? Limiting what people can share online is arguably against the whole ethos of web 2.0. For example the existence of the times Paywall has signaled the deathknell for its articles being tweeted, which is also mentioned again by Jimmy Wales (the founder of Wikipedia).

However, there is definitely an argument for authors being able to reap rewards from their work. The question is, will the publishing world get dragged into the twilight of indecision and law suits, as happened with the music industry? The emergence of co-produced work may well be the answer to this.

3. What does this mean for civil society organizations?

So what might all this mean for you? There's great potential for small organizations to engage with e-publishing. Currently this trend is moving out of the early adopters phase and so is too 'new' for small VCOs to engage with effectively. It is something that should be figured into future plans though. As e-book readership grows and spreads into the sector, an e-book could be effective at reaching a wide readership and also a wider profile.

Developments in e-readers will see more potential for people to share their reading with others and interact with your publications. You may want to think about how you would handle this. It's a debate that is currently playing out in many organizations in relation to social media – *how much to control the message?*

It will take a while for the technology prices to fall: if you decide you want to go forward this way it might be worth looking to see if there are others who are also keen. Could you buy the technology collaboratively? Could you work together to share the expertise needed?

I wanted to go on and talk about the implications of this for print publications but I think I'll save that for another post! And it strikes me that this is rather in the spirit of 'the end of finishing' - what the report identifies as wiki books never being finished. Is this not just social media in the format of the book?

Notes: Kathryn, <http://www.3s4.org.uk/news/the-future-of-books>

19: INSPIRING QUOTES FOR FUTURIST WRITERS

1. THINK DIFFERENTLY

If we don't change direction soon, we'll end up where we're going.-Professor Irwin Corey, Vaudeville comedian

The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not 'Eureka!' (I found it!), but 'That's funny ...'- Isaac Asimov (1920 – 1992)

The only interesting answers are those that destroy the question.- Susan Sontag

I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones. -John Cage

One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries.-A. A. Milne

If they give you ruled paper, write the other way. -Juan Ramón Jiménez

It is a good morning exercise for a research scientist to discard a pet hypothesis every day before breakfast. It keeps him young.- Konrad Lorenz

2. TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR FUTURE

One day Alice came to a fork in the road and saw a Cheshire cat in a tree. "Which road do I take?" she asked. "Where do you want to go?" was his response. "I don't know," Alice answered. "Then," said the cat, "it doesn't matter." -Lewis Carroll

Either you're an agent of change, or you're destined to become a victim of change. You simply can't survive over the long term if you insist on standing still.-Norm Brodsky, entrepreneur, "Street Smarts," INC, February 2002, 44.

We are continually faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems.-John W. Gardner

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man. -George Bernard Shaw

You can analyze the past, but you need to design the future. That is the difference between suffering the future and enjoying it.- Edward de Bono

If you don't have a hook in the water, you're not fishing.-Old fishing saying, John McPhee, Founding Fish

Somebody has to do something, and it's just incredibly pathetic that it has to be us.-Jerry Garcia

Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal. -Henry Ford

3. DISCOVERY

Trust that little voice in your head that says "Wouldn't it be interesting if..."; And then do it. -Duane Michals, American Photographer (1932 –)

If you haven't found something strange during the day, it hasn't been much of a day -John A. Wheeler, American physicist (1911 –)

4. BELIEVING

It's kind of fun to do the impossible.-Walt Disney

I have learned to use the word 'impossible' with the greatest caution.-Werner von Braun

5. THINKING IN SYSTEMS

When one tugs at a single thing in nature ... he finds it attached to the rest of the world.-John Muir (1838 – 1914) American naturalist, My First Summer in the Sierra (1911)

The first day or so we all pointed to our countries. The third or fourth day we were pointing to our continents. By the fifth day we were aware of only one Earth!-Sultan Bin Salman Al-Saud, (1956 –), astronaut, interviewed on returning from a shuttle mission, 1985

It is well to remember that the entire universe, with one trifling exception, is composed of others.-John Andrew Holmes

6. THE WISDOM OF SPORTS

You can't hit what you can't see-Washington Senators catcher Cliff Blankenship scouting newcomer/pitcher Walter Johnson in 1907

7. THE WISDOM OF LITERATURE

It's a dangerous business going out your front door.-Bilbo Baggins, The Fellowship of the Ring, 1948, J. R. R. Tolkien (1892 – 1973)

Not all those who wander are lost.-Gandalf, The Fellowship of the Ring, 1948, J. R. R. Tolkien, also attributed to Aragorn, J. R. R. Tolkien (1892 – 1973)

“Now I'll give you something to believe. I'm just one hundred and one, five months and a day.” I can't believe that!” said Alice. “Can't you?” the queen said in a pitying tone. “Try again, draw a long breath, and shut your eyes.” Alice laughed. “There's no use trying,” she said. “One can't believe impossible things.” “I dare say you haven't had much practice,” said the queen. “When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.”-Through the Looking Glass, Lewis Carroll (1832 – 1898)

Things are only impossible until they're not.-Jean-Luc Picard, Star Trek: The Next Generation, episode #17, February 15, 1988, teleplay written by Hannah Louise Shearer.

You'll be sort of surprised what there is to be found once you go beyond 'Z' and start poking around! -Dr. Seuss (1904 – 1991), On Beyond Zebra, 1955

It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards. -The Red Queen, Through the Looking Glass, Lewis Carroll (1832 – 1898)

Notes: John B. Mahaffie, <http://foresightculture.com/quotes-for-foresight/>


The End?

No!

Start your *writing for the future.*



New E-book



Writing for the future is an exciting experience (and perhaps a fabulous job), especially for the futurists. In fact, the futurists explain their thoughts and ideas through writing articles, books and blog posts.

Generally speaking, writing is an effective tool of self-expression and many writers use this tool successfully to express themselves in their related societies. As a futurist, you may be interested in expressing yourself and your experiences among other futurist colleagues or futurist societies. There are some simple secrets that may help you improve your writing, especially when you are going to write professionally about the future.

Specialization in writing, just as in medicine or law, helps focus writers and allows them to build an identifiable “brand.” Writers who have developed professional specialties explain how they built their practices and offer tips for writers seeking a niche. What will the media of the future be, and what kinds of writing will they demand? How can we explore the effects our bit-sized culture is having on our work, as well as the new narrative that is being formed at unabridged speeds around us? The reality is that advances in science and technology have changed society almost overnight. Writers and reporters will document that change, as they have done in the past. But to do their job, writers will need to understand and to a certain extent foresee—or predict—the future.

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