



# “7 Step Writing Process:” Affordable Real Estate Marketing

By Dr. Margot Weinstein, CIPS, TRC

When it comes to marketing your products or services, writing is still the chief form of communication in real estate. With growth of the Internet and web based communications (i.e. web sites, newsletters, online newspapers, blogs, eBooks, social networking sites, and email, you can have fun growing your business and your brand without spending a great deal of money on PR by learning how to write for your audience with my easy “7 Step Writing Process.”

## “7 Step Process Writing Process”

**Step #1: Organize.** The first part of the process is simply to organize your time, your workspace, and your focus. Although staring at a blank page can be scary, if you start the “7 Step Process,” you will learn to “Feel the fear and do it anyway!” as Susan Jeffers says, so you can become a successful writer. So start today by jotting down your answers to the following questions:

### My Focus

1. My purpose for writing is?
2. The principles, beliefs, or values that guide me?
3. I will keep my information?
4. How much time will I devote per week to achieve this goal?

**Step #2: Examine your talents.** In order to learn about yourself, your company, and find your niche, you should collect the following information:

### Research your Company

- What are our products and services?
- Who are our clients?
- What is our expertise?
- What are our current business costs?
  - Revenue
  - Profit

**Step #3: Learn about the field.** At this point in the process, you should do extensive research on your industry and your competition:

### Research the Industry

- What is the market opportunity with respect to geography and to industry?
- How can the market be segmented into logical customer groupings?
- What 10 new clients would we would like to do business with?
- What are the key industry trends that will impact our success or failure in the business for next 1-2 years?
- Who are our competitors?

**Step #4: Become an expert.** Today it is easier than ever for you to get an education so you can become an expert on your topic or topics. You can read everything on your topic, take courses or seminars, or earn designations, certifications, and degrees in your field. For example, I earned the Certified International Property Specialist Designation (C.I.P.S.) from the National Association of Realtors (N.A.R.) so that I could do international business deals. As soon as I completed the Designation, I was able to do more business with international clients as well as write articles on the topic for N.A.R. and for Chicago Association of Realtors (C.A.R.). Today, many of the C.I.P.S. courses as well as other real estate related courses are offered online.

**Step #5: Put your plan into action.** At this point in the process, you must complete a written work and decide where you would like to publish it. Below are tips to help you layout the piece:

#### **Formatting Tips**

1. Do an outline
2. Layout of the work:
  - A. Introduction. The introduction should summarize and tell the reader what you will tell them in the article. Within the first sentence or paragraph, you need what is called a "hook" to let your reader know if he/she should read the entire piece.
  - B. Middle of the Story. In the middle, you must tell the reader the story by giving examples and quotes that fulfill "hook."
  - C. Conclusion: Finish the article by telling the reader how what he/she has just read will help accomplish what you said it would. So you must summarize and tell the reader what you have told him/her in the story in a way that makes the story memorable.
  - D. Next, select a catchy title that is not too long.
  - E. Last, add your picture at the top the page and add a short biography with your contact information including email and web site address at the end of the story. (Ask your editor first if this is appropriate for the publication).

**Step #6: Be professional.** You will be surprised how many new opportunities you will receive if you work hard to complete every job as professionally as you can on your target date. Below are some writing tips that I suggest you follow regardless of where you decide to publish:

#### **Writing Tips**

- Length matters. Always follow the recommended length of articles/books where you plan to publish.
- Inform. Give your reader as much useful "new" information as possible for his/her business success.
- Tell the best information first, not last. This will capture the interest of your reader.
- Entertain. Your reader will lose interest if work is boring because it is filled with an abstract theory or unrelated information. A reader wants to be entertained and learn something new at the same time.
- Add a story. A story always helps a reader remember key points.
- Use only the quotes that add value.
- Provide only the statistics that are important to your audience. A few sites that are terrific are: N.A.R.'s web site at <http://www.realtor.org>; government sites including

<http://www.usa.gov>; local statistic such as your local Realtor Association, bank rates including [www.Bankrates.com](http://www.Bankrates.com).

- Use pictures, charts, tables, and jokes when they are appropriate.
- Double-check all your facts and make sure they are accurate. Always check the original source.
- Good writing often presents two sides of an argument.
- Write clearly and be concise.
- Be careful of your diction and grammar. A single word can change the meaning of your entire article. Real Estate Wiki is a terrific free online encyclopedia of real estate terms. Go to [www.realestatewiki.com](http://www.realestatewiki.com).
- Provide your reader with a good closing sentence or paragraph. And, the last sentence should always be memorable. You can do this by either making a great statement or give a quote that reflects the key thoughts in your work.
- Revise your work. Most authors do not write perfectly on the first draft. You can find many of your mistakes by reading your work outloud before publishing. You can also ask a friend, colleague, or a mentor to review your work before you publish it.
- Hire a professional editor when needed. A terrific company that provides online resources for writers is Elance. Once you join Elance, you can post your job and hire a professional who responds to your project at a bargain price. Go to [www.Elance.com](http://www.Elance.com).

**Step #7: Leverage your writing to grow your business.** After you have published your work, take a break and celebrate. Then, you should use the publication to grow your business by following the low budget marketing tips below:

### **Marketing Tips on a Tight Budget**

- Put your picture and contact information in the work.
- Post your work to your web site. If you publish with an editor, you must check first to see if you have his/her approval to use the entire work on your web site or post it on another site or must just use the link to the article.
- Send copy of the article or link to people in your contact list.
- Capture new sales leads that result from your website.
- Send your work to future editors/publishers to ask for new work.
- Use great PR sites to get mass media. Two terrific services that have free programs to send your information to mass marketing sites are PR Web at [www.prweb.com](http://www.prweb.com) or Ping that is a free, simple service that makes updating your social networks a snap by posting to many top social networks at once by going to [www.ping.com](http://www.ping.com)
- Refer to your work in your presentations at organizations.
- Offer to teach a course or seminar in your expertise at organizations.
- Continue to write articles on your area of expertise.
- Maintain an updated action plan to remain on track by completing the following:

#### **Your Action Plan**

1. What will my next step be towards my goal?
2. When will I start to complete my goal?
3. How long do I think it will take me to complete my goal?
4. What resources/people do I need to help me?
5. What results do I expect that will show me that I have reached my goal?

Once you have completed the “7 Steps Writing Process” you will be able to use your writing to get new clients and grow your business without spending a great deal of money on PR. In summation, you must always remember to offer your reader information that focuses on helping him/her be successful, because as relationship expert Dale Carnegie says, “**You can make more connections in two months by becoming *interested in other people than you* can in two years by trying to *get other people interested in you.*”**”

### About the Author

**Dr. Margot Weinstein** is the founder and CEO of MW Leadership Consultants LLC. She is a renowned international trainer, speaker and an award winning author in real estate. Dr. Weinstein’s programs combine her business know-how with over thirty years as a VP of a commercial real estate company, with her academic training as a career counselor, and her insights from her interviews with over 200 CEOs and superstars such as Sam Zell, Equity Group Investments and Barbara Corcoran, Corcoran Company. Her strategies in her books, “7 Steps To Find Your Perfect Career” and the “Commercial Real Estate Career Education and Resource Guide” are used at the University of Chicago, John Marshall Law School, and Cornell University. Dr. Margot can be reached at [www.drmargotweinstein.com](http://www.drmargotweinstein.com) or email: [drmargot@drmargotweinstein.com](mailto:drmargot@drmargotweinstein.com).

