

“Be Your Own Editor” Checklist

The questions below reflect easy-to-overlook aspects of editing. Before releasing a document, verify for yourself that you have considered each item.

Content

Purpose: Stated clearly? Specific requests for action or information?

Information: Accurate and complete? Right amount of detail?

Impact

Evidence *Case Studies*

Facts/Figures

Design

Format: Enough headlines, sidelines, and lists? Deadlines and action items highlighted?
 White space to frame ideas?

Presentation: Would a chart, table, or graph be more effective for certain information?

Structure

Paragraphs: Begin with a topic sentence? Transitions within and between?
 Focused on one topic? Limited to 5 to 6 lines?

Sentences: Varied in structure and length? Streamlined to 15 to 20 words?

Tone/Style

Words: Simple, specific, and straightforward? Terminology familiar to readers?
 Free of affectation and stuffy outdated language? Headlines designed for impact?
 Acronyms explained?

Style: Personable, upbeat, and direct? Active voice?
 Appropriate for the audience? Positive approach?

Proofread

Grammar, spelling, and punctuation accurate? Should someone else review this?
 Typographical errors corrected? If this is a repeat mailing, is new data highlighted?

Other *Enter your own editorial “trouble spots” to double-check and prevent.*
