

Really Useful Style Tips

1. Be precise.

- ❌ **Adidas Canada made a very big profit last year.**
- ✅ **Adidas Canada's profit rose forty percent in fiscal 2006.**

Avoid all-purpose adjectives like **unique, significant, important, meaningful**. All are meaningless unless the reader is told why and to whom something is unique, significant, important, or meaningful. Also, remember that **unique** and **perfect** are absolutes; there are no degrees of uniqueness or perfection. Something is either unique/perfect or it is not.

2. Don't be redundant.

- ❌ **As well as being costly and financially extravagant, the project is reckless and foolhardy.**
- ✅ **The project is both costly and foolhardy.**

3. Don't be wordy. Never use six words when one will do.

- ❌ **A large number of athletes, both recreational and elite, practice some type of a warm-up activity prior to exercising. The goal of warming-up is to prepare the athlete physically and mentally for exercise.**
- ✅ **Many athletes, both recreational and elite, perform warm-up activities to prepare physically and mentally for exercise.**

the reason for this is the fact that
due to the fact that
at this point in time
consensus of opinion
when all is said and done
in the eventuality that

the reason is
because
now
consensus
[omit]
if

4. Avoid 'it is' and 'there is' beginnings.

- ❌ **It is certain that needs will increase.**
- ✅ **Needs will certainly increase.**

5. Be direct: where possible choose active over passive verbs; personal subjects over objects.

- ❌ **The materialistic implications of Darwin's theory led to a long delay before it was published.**
- ✅ **Darwin delayed publication of his theory for a long time because of its materialistic implications.**

6. Avoid clichés.

- ❌ **Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) exists in today's modern society as the most common entrapment neuropathy diagnosed and treated.**
- ✅ **Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is currently the most common entrapment neuropathy diagnosed and treated.**