

Subject: Week 84 learnings - The art of writing simply
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Dear All

In my role over years, I got many notes. I do notice a dip in writing skills. We say the PC is the reason.

I taught all the teams I led to use the Fog Index. This is a readability index.

The Fog Index was developed by Robert Gunning a US media man. I learnt about it when I saw my competitor P & G use one page memos. The origin of that memo was the US Armed Forces use of the Fog Index. The US Armed forces used it to ensure that mail was simple and clear.

It has helped me in my writing. Here is the formula. Start by using the note you wrote last:

1. Take any note you have done and take a sample of 100 words.
2. See the number of words and number of sentences. Divide one by the other and get average number of words per sentence. **AWS**
3. Pick the number of 3 syllable words in the sample and divide it by total words. This gives you the ratio of tough words. **TWP**
4. Add AWS plus TWP and multiply this total by 0.4.
5. **This number from 4 is your fog index.**

The ideal fog index is between 7 and 8. When you write with that index, then your notes are simple and clear. Science journals are above 15.

The Bible, Shakespeare, Mark Twain prose have a fog index of 6 (SIX). The news magazines Time, Newsweek, WSJ etc. have between 10 and 11.

Here are some tips:

- It takes a year to drop fog index by 2.
- When you write a note, keep sentences short.
- When you write, avoid three syllable words
- When you write, see if you can change a hard word for an easier word.

Enjoy, hope you write better now

Wr

Shiv

PS : If you take the first 150 words of this note, it is in ten sentences, aws is 10. The first 150 words have only 3 words with 3 syllables. The fog index is 5.2