



PREPARING PERSUASIVE DOCUMENTS

Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff

We understand that good writing equals good lawyering. We also understand that all attorneys and judges do a fair bit of reading as part of their jobs—and their attention is a valuable resource. And we understand that if a document is readable, the reader is more likely to remember the content and the document is more persuasive.

Persuasion depends on

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Document
Design

Editing

Polishing

Design

- Fonts: Legibility & Credibility
- Fonts: Point Size
- Spaces After Sentences
- Underlining v. **Bold** or *Italics*
- Justification
- Symbols
- Summaries
- White Space
- Visuals

Editing

Avoid Confusion	Add Coherence	Fix Bad & Boring Sentences	Clarity
Statement of Facts Argument	Introductions Transitions	Abstract Subjects Weak Verbs Cluttered Sentences Surplus Words Lack of Variety	Word Choice Word Placement

Polishing

Format	Grammar	Typos	Sloppiness
Headings Paragraph Length Block Quotes	Style Structure Tense	Homophones Numbers Symbols Capitalization	Punctuation Citation

Thank You!

Many of these tips can be found in

- Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, *Words on the Page: Font Matters*, The Advocate (May 2014).
- Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, *Typography Matters: Document Design*, The Advocate (Nov/Dec 2014).
- Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, *Beyond the Basics: Typographic Symbols in Writing*, The Advocate (May 2016).
- Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, *Writing for E-readers: Tips & Tricks to Craft Effective Briefs*, The Advocate (Mar/April 2017)
- Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, *Start the New Year Off Write Editing Better*, The Advocate (Jan 2020).