



50 Time-Tested Writing Tips for Spreading Your Ideas

Removing Writer's Block Through Motivation!

by Takuya Hikichi

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Message from the Author

Hello, my name is Takuya Hikichi. I am a native of Japan, living in Arizona USA. Almost all of my publications are written in English, enabling to reach audience internationally. I have authored and co-authored several books in areas of sales, marketing, and entrepreneurship. You can subscribe to my popular newsletter, Action Taker's at <http://www.AskTak.com>

In the meantime, please enjoy this Ebook!

To your success,



Takuya Hikichi

Takuya Hikichi

You can contact me [here](#)

Removing Writer's Block Through Motivation!

Introduction

People write for a variety of reasons. Some because it's a deep, heartfelt passion and others because they enjoy the challenge. Still others write because they want to make a name for themselves.

And then, there are folks that write...

...to make some money!

Like me. :o)

No matter what the reason, writing is a talent, whether blessed with natural ability or developed through writing courses and workshops.

Looking back in history at some of the greatest writers known to man such as Shakespeare or Edgar Allan Poe, or to the novice writer just starting to put pen to paper, all writers experience the same things:

- Every writer struggles at one time or another with writer's Block.
- Every writer longs to find out what to write about in order to be successful as an author.
- Every writer must learn to be organized and take action to complete their assignment.
- Every writer needs to be motivated, inspired, and use unique methods for developing new ideas.
- Every writer wants their creativity to be tapped into and released for their readers to enjoy and learn from.
- Every writer has a goal of providing some kind of useful information for others to benefit from.

And the list could go on.

There are a LOT of Ebooks available that explain "how to write an information product."

But, there are few that cover WRITING TIPS that aid Ebook authors in WRITING THEIR MATERIALS and helping them through the common struggles and needs that all writers experience.

That's why I wrote this Ebook. And that's why you are here.

I want to provide writers, from all levels and writing styles, with some unique and traditional methods to become the best writer possible.

And you want to BECOME the best writer possible. In fact, if I could write, so could you – I didn't grow up speaking English all my life, and I just learned as an adult and speak it at native proficiency.

So if you know how to speak English, you can do it.

It's a journey we'll take together.

I'm about to share with you ***50 Time-Tested Writing Tips for Spreading Your Ideas***. Regardless of what your goals are for writing an Ebook, these ideas are guaranteed to make the WRITING of your Ebook easier and better.

Let's begin by looking at WHAT to write about...

Removing Writer's Block Through Motivation!

Section 01: Hot Topics To Write About

Everybody wants to know WHAT to write about. What is it that people want to read? What are the "hot topics" that you know will generate some interest if you write about them.

Even though the Internet has changed the face of the world -- how we shop, communicate, do business, research and just about everything else -- it hasn't changed what we WANT. There are classic (and absolutely TIMELESS) topics that are always going to be hot topics.

Here are ten of them. If you want to know WHAT people want and WHAT you should write about, then find something related to these topics...

Making Money.

This one isn't ever going to go away. You can just go ahead and etch it in stone, it's here for the long haul. We all want to make money (if for no other reason than to be charitable and give it away to someone else) and some of us (I won't mention any names :o) are half-crazed for information on how to make money.

If you can show people how to make money (in a legal, moral way, of course) I can assure you, they will buy it. I guarantee it.

Internet marketing / doing business online Ebooks are some of the hottest information products available anywhere in the world.

So, show 'em how to do it.

Self Help / Personal Growth.

Another classic topic for writing is what has commonly been referred to as "self help" or "personal growth." People want to improve their lives. Some struggle with addiction and need help in overcoming the struggle. Other people have low self-esteem or feel depressed. Some people don't know how to deal with relationship problems and want to know how to save their marriage. The list could go on and on.

I'll make you another guarantee: show people how to better their lives and they'll buy from you. No question about it.

We all have things about our personalities that we would like changed. Whether we're shy in public or have a horrible temper or don't know when to keep our mouths shut, there are things we'd like to improve.

And that's an Ebook waiting for you to write.

Weight Loss / Fitness.

Even though obesity and illness are at the highest levels ever, people are working hard to reclaim their health and fit bodies. Gyms are overflowing with sweaty people and stores are selling out of vitamins left and right. Health and fitness is a writing subject that you can never go wrong with.

Heck, I'll be your first customer. :o)

The point is this: we, as a society, want to be healthier and we struggle with being out of shape.

It's no wonder that diet and exercise is a multi-billion dollar industry.

Might as well get your piece of the pie.

Dating / Relationships.

What another great topic for an Ebook. There are dozens of ideas you could use for this one that could each become best-sellers...

How to avoid divorce court.
How to make your marriage last forever.
How to be more romantic.
How to pick the perfect mate.
How to get people to notice you.
How to use online match making services.
How to be a great father / mother.
How to be a great husband / wife.
How to raise great kids.

I mean, we could go on and on and on here. Play the energizer bunny if we want to. There are dozens of ideas for this topic and the information sells like crazy. Why? Because if we have positive, enriching, growing relationships, we are HAPPIER. And since we can't buy happiness in a bottle...

...we buy your Ebook instead!

Everyday Problems.

Let's face it, we all face problems everyday in our lives. And often we don't know where to turn or what to do next.

For example: If someone is facing foreclosure, do you think they would be interested in finding information on how to avoid it? You betcha.

I know of one guy who wrote an Ebook about BAD BREATH and is selling the thing like crazy. It's an Ebook on BAD BREATH for goodness sake! And yet for folks who are struggling with the problem (and I am told it is a common problem - - I guess I've just been lucky :o) they gladly shell out the \$20.00 to find a cure.

Everyday problems. They are a headache for US, but they are a product waiting to be created by YOU.

Think about things that people deal with every day that are *annoying, cost money and time*.

Hobbies and Crafts.

Hot selling items in any bookstore or online as Ebooks!, are information products about hobbies or crafts. People love making things themselves and getting the self-gratification of a job well done. You could do some quick research on the Internet to see what some of the most common hobbies and crafts are and come up with some unique ideas.

Some might include woodworking, door wreaths, stained glass and any type of do-it yourself information. Things like improving your golf game, a guide to stamp collecting, antiques and so forth.

Recreation is a huge part of our lives. We all like to spend time enjoying a hobby. And, we spend a lot of money supporting those hobbies as a society (My wife is a major contributor :o)

Hobby related information products are most always a big hit and certainly warrant consideration when choosing a topic to write about.

Recipes.

Talk about a HUGE industry -- recipes are IT! I didn't realize how big they were until a guy I know started making \$30,000 a month selling a recipe Ebook (That's a nice chunk of change, don't you think?).

I did a bit of research and found out that recipes are searched for MILLIONS of times each month.

Anything getting that much attention is money waiting to be made for an Ebook author. I have plans myself to start tapping into that market. I feel like I'm throwing away money every month that I don't have a recipe Ebook on the market! Perhaps Japanese food recipe.... That would probably my thing.

You probably are good at cooking something as well.

Definitely something to look into.

UFOs.

I was never a Star Trek fan and I didn't watch a single episode of the X-Files, but UFOs and unexplained phenomenon are HUGELY popular online. I'm not sure exactly what the fascination is, but these folks tend to be die-hard fans and are passionate about the subject.

Any group of people who have that much interest is a group of people who ought to be offered an Ebook.

Online Shopping.

What tools are available? Where can you find price comparisons? Are there free trials available? Demos? Where are the best deals? Are there any meeting places for like-minded shoppers? Can I browse?

Shopping is becoming a larger and larger industry online (It already is HUGE) as more and more people are buying online, and as people buy more and more.

Some kind of resource directory for shoppers would be a great Ebook, I believe. How to find trustworthy merchants online. How to find the best prices. How to get special deals and discounts. Etc. Etc.

Tips and resources and webpage links -- HOW TO SHOP ONLINE...great idea for an Ebook.

You could even get "nichey" and create an Ebook on how to shop for "golf accessories" or "fitness stuff" or "Christian materials."

Or, if you're really smart, you'll create an entire series of Ebooks! on how to shop for just about anything. One Ebook at a time, for dozens of different categories.

Technology.

I bought a digital video camcorder. I brought it home. I looked at the 300 page manual.

I had no idea how to use it.

If you had an Ebook available summarizing in simple details how to use the various features of the camcorder, I'd have paid you \$100.00 for it!

And I'm sure I'm not the only one.

Technology is great -- but it can be a bit overwhelming. And, who the heck has 3 days to read through a manual to figure out how to use the darn thing you bought, even if it isn't overwhelming to you? I don't.

I'd rather pay someone to show me how.

And that's a market you should consider going after.

There are hundreds of software programs, video games, computers, electronics, etc. that folks would love to be able to figure out how to use QUICKLY AND EASILY. So, you write tutorials and show us how it's done.

And we pay you.

And we're all happy. :o)

Seriously, I think this is one of the biggest industries for information products that is currently untapped. A sharp writer could make a fortune here.

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Section 02: Generating Ideas and Research

So, you know what "topic" to write about, but how do you come up with WHAT to write about that topic? You may have identified "making money" as your topic, but what will you write about "making money"?

Will it be Internet related? Stocks and bonds? Direct mail? Home-based business? Fundraising?

And when you narrow it down to the actual subject, what kind of information will you share in the Ebook?

That's what this section will hopefully help you to decide by exploring some ways to generate ideas and to do some research.

Brainstorm To Get Other Folks' Ideas.

Whether you get family members, a group of friends, or other writers together, brainstorming is a wonderful way to beat Writer's Block. When you are stuck, make brainstorming fun. You can sit and just start throwing ideas out or make a game by putting ideas in a hat and then passing it around to read or act out.

We call this a "mastermind" session.

And you'd be absolutely amazed at how productive it can be. Folks throw out ideas that you never even thought of. They offer opinions that you weren't even close to considering. Why? Because they think differently than you do. And that can be a good thing.

Are you having trouble with generating ideas for your Ebook, or expanding upon what you are already writing about? Get a group of folks together (or even ONE person is a start) and ask questions. Explain what you are writing about and ask for suggestions, ideas and opinions.

Voila -- with the wave of a magic wand, you've got more ideas and a fresh perspective to write from.

I know. I know. When I say "research" you envision some guy up late at night with fifteen books open, 5 empty Coca Cola cans (he needs the caffeine to stay awake!) and an anxious look on his face.

Research scares the heck out of most folks. It sounds too much like doing a term paper for a trigger happy high school English teacher with a red pen in her hand!

But, it doesn't have to be that way. Let's look at some (slightly less painful) ways of getting ideas for your Ebook.

Collect Ideas.

I am what I refer to as an "Idea collector." I collect ideas to use later in my writing.

When something grabs your attention, no matter where you are, write it down and capture as much information as you can. Thoughts could come to you at any time. You might be grocery shopping or at your son's soccer game. The best thing is to be prepared and always keep a pad of paper and pen with you. Or, even better than that is to have a small hand-held voice recorder.

You'll be amazed at where inspiration hits you. For example, when sitting at your child's outdoor sporting event, focus on things going on around you. Perhaps you see a child playing off by himself in the dirt and you watch as another child around the same age slowly and shyly approaches wanting to make a friend. Before long, they have bonded and are now sharing their toys together. Write the scenario down and later think about ways you could use that story to illustrate a point when you are writing your Ebook. A pad of paper and pen (or the voice recorder) will soon become your greatest companion.

NOTE: And the "ideas" you collect don't necessarily have to apply to your CURRENT writing project. I collect ideas that sit in my "idea file" for months -- even years -- before I ever use them. But, they are there when I need them, always giving me something new to draw from, and something new and fresh to spawn ideas.

Use Childhood Memories.

Here's a great exercise. Sit down with a pad and paper and start writing down childhood experiences. Start with a specific age and think about the school you attended at that time, the friends you hung around, the style of the clothes you wore, a favorite pet, anything you can. You will be amazed at how many ideas you can develop that can be useful to you in writing, or that spawn other ideas for your Ebook.

Just as you revisited your own childhood, talk to other family members or friends and ask them to share stories about their upbringing. For example, one writer asked a close friend from Israel about her experiences as a child during World War II. What unfolded was a wonderful story of determination, as the friend shared how her family had withstood persecution and survived horrible

ordeals. Just like that a new chapter to an Ebook was added, "How to Overcome Opposition: 7 Secrets From A Survivor."

Wow -- it's amazing how looking at childhood memories (and ALL past experiences) can be used to develop ideas for use in your Ebook content.

Make a List.

If you aren't sure how the exact content of your article will come together, you might consider writing out a list. Just start writing down different words associated with the subject you want to write about and in most cases, when you finish this exercise, you have quite a bit of information that you hadn't considered before.

For example: As I was writing the Ebook you are now reading -- I needed 77 ideas -- so, what did I do? I started jotting down a list of things to include. As I reviewed the list, other ideas popped into my head (the next idea "Use A Dictionary / Thesaurus" came from THIS idea of "Make A List").

Just start writing down a list of things your reader would be interested in knowing. Doesn't matter if some of them don't make sense -- write them down anyway. As you look back over the list, those seemingly unfitting ideas might launch into other related ideas that you CAN use. Write down everything you can think of, and then decide what you can use.

You'll almost always find 10-15 new ideas to write about -- which can turn into a lot more content.

Listen.

Listen to people. Whether you're shopping, at the job, or in the gym, listen to what people are saying. What subjects are being discussed? What seems to be important to other people? Many times, you will get ideas based on everyday discussions. Having good listening skills is a huge benefit to writers.

Don't forget the kids. Kids are innocent and provide a sincerity that is often missed with adults. If you have children of your own, nieces or nephews, or friends with smaller children, sit down and just talk to them. Believe me - you will hear all kinds of things that will soon get you out of Writer's Block. They possess such great imaginations that they will actually help yours kick into high gear.

Attend a workshop. Listen to a teleseminar or conference call. Sit in on a class. Do an interview. Absorb information that other people are sharing and extract IDEAS that you can use yourself.

Analyze Data.

Conduct some analysis with people who can contribute to the topic you are writing about. Do a survey. Take a poll. Ask questions. Have them ASK YOU questions. Compile all of the information and you've got even more ideas for writing your content.

For example: I know of a marketer online who wanted to put together an Ebook for newcomers to the web to help them learn how to do business online. He had a half dozen or so ideas about what to share, but that was all. He knew that "newbies" have a lot more questions than that! But, he didn't know what they were -- being an EXPERIENCED web marketer, he took a lot of "basic" things for granted.

So, what did he do? He sent a [SURVEY](#) out to people on his newsletter list and the lists of his online marketing friends.

The result: Over 200 questions that newbies wanted answered!

That's around 195 more "ideas" than he started out with.

And that's also a GREAT way to come up with new ideas...ask questions and have folks ask you questions.

Read. Read. Read.

An excellent way to get the writing juices flowing again is to read. Look at magazines to get ideas. Often times, an article will be well written but it might only touch on a portion of a subject. An example might be that you open up an interior decorating magazine and spot a wonderfully written article on making quilts. The article talks about things that a quilt could be used for and some basic instructions on how to make one. However, without plagiarizing that article, what other things about quilts could be written on. Perhaps historical information could be added, or locations of museums. People might be interested in knowing the best type of fabric to use. Many people start a good article but only cover a small portion of the subject matter.

One of my favorite things to do to generate ideas for my writing and to overcome the dreaded writer's block is to spend a few hours in my favorite bookstore. I love to browse through books and look for ideas. Again, we're not talking about stealing someone's content, we are talking about finding ideas which you can write your own original content.

Visit a bookstore. Or a library. Or a magazine stand. And just browse through materials relating to what you are writing about. And you are almost certain to find some great ideas to write about.

Watch TV or Movies.

TV is another source for ideas. As you know, television covers anything and everything and if you're struggling with Writer's Block, there will be something that will help spur your mind into action.

With 598,000,281 different stations to watch, you're bound to find something helpful! :o)

If you want to write an Ebook on snakes, sit down and watch the Discovery Channel. You will gain a ton of important information and once again, you can determine what wasn't covered. If the show covers the detailed information on the top 10 venomous snakes in the United States, why not do research on the next five.

Ideas are often found by using the ol' remote control!

Play The Alphabet Game.

Here's another great idea generator exercise. Starting with the letter "A" in the alphabet, literally start thinking of events, places, people, items, verbs, etc., that start with that letter, which are related to your Ebook topic. The goal is to go all the way to "Z." This is a great way to shake loose Writer's Block.

For example: if you are writing an Ebook on internet marketing, here are some ideas...

A = affiliates
B = build a list
C = conversion
D = digital products
e = ezine
f = follow-up
g = google.com

And you would complete that all the way through Z.

Do you think any new ideas could be generated from such a list? Of course!

Try it -- you can thank me later. :o)

Look Around.

Look around your home. Are there special momentums, pictures, smells, colors that bring a thought to your mind? Sitting in a chair in your living room or family room, start at one side of the room and slowly look at each item. Obviously, everything will have a meaning. Perhaps it was a sculpture purchased when you were in Paris, or a candleholder given to you as a gift from your kids.

This is another visual exercise that helps to pull ideas into your mind when you're struggling.

A variation of this is to get out your photo book and revisit the experiences of the past. They say that a "picture is worth a thousand words." Hmm. A couple dozen photos and your Ebook will be done. <smile>

But seriously, looking through photo albums spawns a lot of feelings and memories that can be very helpful in generating ideas for your content...

If you are writing an Ebook on dieting and see a picture of you and your friends hiking, it could easily launch into creative ideas for exercise (hiking, backpacking, park trails, mall-walking, mountain climbing, etc.)

If you are writing an Ebook on planning vacations and see a picture of yourself at an "off-the-path" restaurant which could easily give you more ideas about "looking for the hidden gems" on your trip. (take the old highways instead of the interstates, stop in all the small towns and explore, here are 10 places you should check out, what to look for, etc.)

Additionally, by reliving your own memories through photographs, it gives you more personal stories and experiences to share -- giving you MORE content for your Ebook, further establishing your expertise on the subject, further enhancing the reader enjoyment and better illustrating a point you are attempting to make.

Use the Internet.

The "information highway" is at your fingertips. Just about anything you could want to know is only a few clicks away.

At any given time, there are millions of people around the globe on the Internet. If you are looking for something in particular or trying to locate information on a person, place, or thing, the Internet has it. The key to good Internet research is know where to go and how to search.

Although there are hundreds of search engines on the Internet, some of the larger ones will give you the most information. Some of the top sites are Google.com and Yahoo.com.

Each search engine has what are called spiders or crawlers that go out and search the Internet. They then bring the information back and is sorted and indexed. When a person conducts a search, the results are coming from the indexes that have been built.

To obtain information, simply type in what you're looking for in the search field and that's it. Searches consisting of two to four words get the best results.

I always recommend starting here.

Visit the Library.

The library has been around for many years offering archived and new information on millions of subjects. New technology has allowed most libraries to offer better search tools, thus resulting in better results.

If you need to locate information about a specific event that happened in 1957, you can go back to the archived microfilm and locate that very information. Old newspaper stores, obituaries, weddings, and births can all be found. Although the Internet has become the number one tool for conducting research, the library is still a viable source and in some instances, is still better.

Plus, you've got an assistant at the Library -- the Librarian! Ask her (or him) for help finding what you are looking for (much of it is even computer driven these days).

Conduct Interviews.

Find some interesting people in your church, school, work, or even family and friends who have had a unique experience in life and conduct an interview with them. Sometimes we think we know someone well until we take time to talk to him or her – really talk.

For example, one young woman interviewed her own mother. She thought she knew everything about her and her life but during the course of the interview, she discovered cherished pieces of her life that she didn't even know existed. Her own mother had her ears pierced at age eight, in 1935, by Chief White Feather, the grandson of Chief Sitting Bull. He lived in Indiana down the street from her and took a real liking to her. The daughter had no idea! Interviews will unearth all types of buried treasures.

And look for EXPERTS in your field of interest. Ask them a handful of questions and then use the entire interview as an actual part of your Ebook.

Use Other Languages - Translations.

This is a fun exercise and a wonderful way to come up with new ideas. Take words that you like, research them in other languages, and then translate them.

As an example, the word “hip” in Spanish is Cadera (Ka-dare-a). That has a nice sound. Look at various languages such as German, Italian, Spanish, French,

etc. If there is a word that's significant to your book or article such as "cliff" or "ocean," conduct some research and see how those translate.

The Latin term "Carpe Dieme" ("Seize The Day") became the focal point of the wonderful movie "Dead Poets' Society." An expression from another language can turn into an entire chapter of your Ebook (or even your next movie :o)

Explore and see what you can come up with.

Try Freewriting.

This exercise is powerful and a wonderful tool. Set your timer for 10 minutes, have a pad of paper and pen in front of you, and just start writing. (Or the ol' computer, if you're like me.) You can write using sentences, words, poems, stories, whatever you want. Just write and don't stop until your timer has gone off.

This allows your mind to express itself freely without any limitations. When the exercise is complete, dedicate some time to sit back and read what you wrote. Some of it you may remember while a lot of it will surprise you. This is a great way to organize thoughts and strengthen the mind.

And you'd be amazed at how many absolutely mind-boggling ideas come out of these brain storming sessions. Really you would.

But don't take my word for it.

Try it yourself.

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Section 03: Outlining and Organization

I'll be honest with you up front -- if you don't create an in-depth outline, get yourself organized and stick to the plan, you're going to have a hard time writing your Ebook.

The reason I can write a new Ebook every month is because I STAY ORGANIZED. It's that simple. It isn't creativity. It isn't writing ability. It isn't some special power or magic wand. It's ORGANIZATION.

So, let me share a few of my favorite tips with you to keep you on track...

Get Organized.

I can tell you from experience, you gotta get organized and stay organized if you want to write an Ebook. Each time you get ready to write something new, ask yourself some very simple questions.

- What is the focus of this book, article, newsletter, etc.?
- What is the message that I want to get across to the reader?
- What makes this writing different or special?
- What is the order in which I need to divide categories?
- Is this a believable idea and if not, how can I make it believable?
- What kind of research do I need to perform?

Once you've answered those questions honestly, you will have better focus to begin. I cannot stress the importance of getting and staying organized. I just don't know any other way to write than to have a gameplan and to stick with it. I'd be lost without doing it.

I've bought (and used, mind you :o) more planners and organizers than probably anyone else on the planet. Find me an office supply store and I'll likely come out with a new planner. They love to see me coming.

But, it's money well spent. It is critical to my success as an author -- simply because it helps me to stay on target and complete my projects.

Understand your Goals.

When you get serious about writing, sit down and actually write a mission statement. Identify why writing is important to you, what you expect to get out of it, and what result you want from your writing.

Do you want to earn money?

Do you want to experience a sense of accomplishment?

Do you want to be recognized as an expert?

Do you want fame or credibility?

Do you want to share your knowledge and experience to help others?

Do you want ALL OF THE ABOVE? (And then some!)

When you need motivation, look at your mission statement and re-read what it was that opened your heart to writing in the first place. For the writer that finds great success, it's perfectly fine to be proud of your accomplishments and awards, but don't get so caught up in things that you lose sight of why you started writing in the first place. A mission statement will also help keep you grounded.

Find a Significant Audience To Sell To

The biggest fear of most writers is that their Ebook won't sell. And that's a good fear to have because it forces you to take some time to RESEARCH and find out if your Ebook is something to pursue at all.

The biggest mistake you can make as an Ebook author is to invest time and energy into writing something that no one (or very few people) want to read, or are willing to pay to read.

Before you write a single word of your Ebook, find out if the information you are going to share is "sellable." Determine if it's information that is valuable to a significant number of people. If your Ebook is something you are going to sell in the \$20 - \$50 range, then you need to make certain that there are at least 10,000 potential customers out there. You're going to need to sell a substantial number of Ebooks! to earn some decent profits, so make certain that you have plenty of people who are potential customers.

If you are going to sell a very "nichey" product for a higher price tag of \$100 or more, then obviously you won't need as large of an audience to choose from.

Determine Your Own Unique Approach.

What makes you DIFFERENT? Why should a customer buy from you instead of your competition? Are you faster, better, cheaper? Do you offer more? More for less?

From the beginning, you need to find some way that you separate yourself from the rest of the package, something that makes your Ebook more advantageous to the potential customer than anyone else's. You want them to buy from YOU, so why should they?

One of the things that I like to do -- and then stress in my sales letter and ads -- is that I offer 100% original, exclusive information. In other words, if you want this information, you gotta buy it from ME, because NO ONE ELSE HAS IT.

If you can create an Ebook that is structured in such a way that no one else is offering it, then you force folks to buy from you if they want the information. That's a powerful concept, so don't take it lightly. One of the most important things you can do is determine WHY someone should buy from you, and then work on solidifying that as you write.

Exclusive information? Then write only content (at least portions of it) that no one else is sharing.

Exclusive format? Then structure yours in such a way that can only be found through you.

Exclusive offer? Then put together something that is yours and yours alone.

You separate yourself from the competition by eliminating the competition.

Have a Purpose.

I mentioned this briefly in another section, but certainly it applies here as well. To stay focused on your objectives, you gotta have a purpose. Something that drives you. Something that is waiting at the end of the journey -- at the completion of your project.

One young man started writing as a tribute to his loving parents who through unbelievable challenges had raised him with unconditional love and full support. As a way to thank them, he decided to write a book, hopefully have it published, and present it to them for their 50th wedding anniversary. Not only did he get his book published and completely surprised his loving parents, but he went on to a full-time career in journalism.

He had a purpose, a real purpose that drove him to succeed. Keeping your objective in sight is much easier when you're excited about your work and strive to succeed at your goals. The great thing is that you're never too young or too old!

Heck, even if the purpose is "Nah, nah -- see I told you I could do it!" -- that's something to stay focused upon. One of the most invigorating things in life is to do something that someone told you couldn't be done.

Write Objectives Down.

This is an extremely important step and one that shouldn't be missed. If you don't write your objectives down, you will quickly lose sight of them. Keeping them as a visual will help you achieve them.

The most important objective is to identify **WHAT YOU WANT TO SHARE** with your readers. What is it that you want to share with those who download your Ebook?

And, more importantly, have you done that?

Staying on track means looking back over what you've already written and determining if it does meet your objectives. In other words, if you want to give your readers a step-by-step plan for losing weight, does your writing do that? If it does, keep moving on. If it doesn't, then what areas need further explanation or additional information?

Working Title.

Choose a title to get you going. I always like to entitle the product before I even start writing on it. It helps me to organize all of my ideas towards supporting the main theme of the Ebook. That's what a title for an information product is -- it's a statement of the main theme of the Ebook.

You can use the TITLE to help you create your actual chapter headings. For example: If you are writing an Ebook on becoming a better golfer, you might entitle it "How to Become a Great Golfer." Your organization for the Ebook might include chapters such as...

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Great Golfers aren't afraid to take risks.  
Great Golfers develop their own unique style.  
Great Golfers invest in their game.  
Great Golfers blah blah blah
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The TITLE of your Ebook, in addition to helping you stay focused towards the theme, also helps you to organize the subheadings / sections of the Ebook by incorporating it into the actual chapter titles themselves.

Thesis.

A thesis is one or several sentences that state the audience's main problem and then how your book is going to solve it. Go ahead and write your book's thesis, knowing that doing this before your book is written will help keep you on track much better. In this aspect, the chapters will all need to support the thesis so as you write, you will have that in your mind.

Basically, you are expanding upon the title of the Ebook. "How to Become a Great Golfer" is the title. Your thesis statement might be "How to become a great golfer in less than an hour a day by following 7 strategies of other successful golfers."

Everything you write works toward accomplishing what you state as the purpose of your Ebook. If it doesn't work towards that, then get rid of it. It doesn't belong in there.

Use The 4-Step Writing Formula.

Closely connected to writing your objectives down and then seeing if you are achieving those objectives (particularly in reference to WHAT YOU WANT TO SHARE with your readers) is to use the 4-step writing formula...

Step One: Write Out A List of Everything You Want To Share. That's right, just write down everything you want to share in your Ebook. I'm talking just start rambling on paper (or your computer screen). Everything you can think of that relates to the subject of your Ebook. Just a list of "ideas" you want to share.

Step Two: Write Everything You Can Think Of For Each Entry. For each entry on your list (I.E. Each "idea") write down everything you can think of. Explain each idea as thoroughly as you can. Share research, examples, case studies, quotes, tips, resources -- everything you can find for each section.

Step Three: Organize Your Thoughts. Take everything and put it into a logical order. If it's a tutorial, organize it chronologically in order of which steps come first. If it's a "tips" Ebook, categorize the tips. Put things in a logical order for your readers to be able to understand as they begin reading.

Step Four: Edit And Pad The Sections. Go back to each section and edit. Take out what doesn't need to be in there. And add more content to the sections that need further explanation.

Congratulations. You just wrote an Ebook. :o)

Outline Again And Again.

A common mistake of many new writers is that they are so eager to write, they want to dive into a project immediately without giving much thought to process or content.

Perhaps you have an idea but it's only half-baked. By using ideas that haven't been thought out very well you usually end up with a poor Ebook and a lot of frustration. (How many times have you quit a project and started a new one?) For this reason, if you are just starting to get involved with writing, you need to first learn about and understand the importance of OUTLINING your project.

I always start any writing project by constructing an IN-DEPTH outline. I jot down every idea that I want to share in the Ebook (original ideas and researched ideas) and then I organize it into a logical flow for actually writing the content.

BUT, it doesn't end there. As I am actually writing the Ebook, I continue to tweak the outline. I add more subpoints along the way.

----- Sidebar -----
Here's a "very simple" example:

Original outline...

3 Ways to Research Writing Projects

- 1. Interview experts*
- 2. Subscribe to newsletters*
- 3. Search keywords at search engines.*

Expanded outline #1...

3 Ways to Research Writing Projects

- 1. Interview experts*
 - A. Determine what you want to ask*
 - B. Identify experts*
 - C. Prepare contact letter*
 - D. Submit contact letter*
 - E. Conduct Interview*

Expanded outline #2...

3 Ways to Research Writing Projects

- 1. Interview experts*
 - A. Determine what you want to ask*

I could easily add many subpoints here describing what I would actually want to ask the experts concerning my writing subject.

B. Identify experts

I could easily add many subpoints here discussing ways to find out who the experts are and how to contact them.

C. Prepare contact letter

I could easily add many subpoints here explaining what to include in the contact letter, how to make it "worth the while" for the expert, etc.

D. Submit contact letter

I could easily add many subpoints here about the best ways to submit the contact letter (email, traditional mail, fax, telephone, etc.)

E. Conduct Interview

I could easily add many subpoints here describing in detail how to do the interview. (necessary equipment, interviewing skills, preparation, etc.)

----- Sidebar -----

The point is to continue EXPANDING each point and subpoint until you have covered everything that is needed in order to comprehensively and clearly share the information your readers need.

Once you have an IN-DEPTH outline, the writing is easy. Who couldn't write ONE PARAGRAPH about each subpoint? That's really all it takes.

Create a Plan of Action.

To help you achieve your goals and stay focused on the objectives, you should have a well laid out action plan. This plan will cover the steps you need to take to get you from where you are currently, to the ultimate goal of where you want to be.

Many folks tell you to set high goals and try to get to them. Personally, I think that's a recipe for discouragement. If you set ten goals and you only get to one of them, how do you feel? Like a failure. At least that's how I feel.

On the other hand, if you have ten REACHABLE goals and you nail them all, how do you feel? Like a success. And that feeling fuels you on to accomplish more and more.

I like to do what I call "above and beyond goal setting." I set myself realistic, reachable writing assignments and then I try to go "above and beyond" that goal. In other words, my goal for today might be to write 10 more tips for this Ebook. And I'll shoot for 15. If I get 15, then super-yippee! But, if I only get the 10 done (which is very realistic) then I still feel like I've accomplished something.

It's all mental. And I like to keep my mind happy and feeling victorious. :o)

Use a Checklist.

Another thing I love to do to stay focused on my objectives is to use a checklist. I actually write down my entire action step game plan for a project. And I do this in VERY DETAILED steps. Why? Because I get to check off completed tasks much more frequently...which again makes me feel like I'm accomplishing more.

I have checklists for everything. Part of that is to stay organized, because I have so many things going on at the same time. But, part of it is to MARK THROUGH the tasks I have completed. Nothing satisfies me more (well, there are a few things :o) than being able to see a sheet of paper with a whole page of tasks checked off as completed.

Use a checklist. I'm telling you straight, the more you are able to visualize that you've accomplished, the more you will stay focused and get your objectives accomplished.

Tackle One Goal at a Time.

Closely relating to that is HOW you tackle that checklist. While sometimes with writing it's important and necessary to look at the big picture and not so much the little things, when goal setting and staying focused, you might try focusing on only a few goals at a time. If you start looking at everything at once, you can become confused and frustrated, and might lose sight of where you want to be.

Instead, concentrate your efforts on THE NEXT ENTRY ON THE CHECKLIST. Don't look at the entire checklist, just what's next.

When we travel (which is a LOT) we take a look at the full map to see where we will be going and to get an idea of which way we'll be traveling. BUT, during the road trip itself, we focus on ONE ROAD AT A TIME. All we need to know is which way to turn NEXT. What's important during the journey is the next step.

Same thing applies to writing an Ebook -- yes, take a look at the whole map and see where you are going -- but focus on the next entry on the checklist. You can't complete the journey until you take the next step in front of you.

Establish Support Systems.

Maintaining some type of support system will help you keep it all together. Writing, although incredibly rewarding, can also be very frustrating. Keeping a strong support or buddy system in place will keep you focused and on track.

Keep people around you who will help you be accountable for your writing, people who know how to encourage, but also challenge. When you want to celebrate a success, pull in your support system. When you need a shoulder to cry on when something didn't go as well as you would have liked, again, use your support system. (Hey, we all need somebody to lean on!) Your support systems needs to consist of people whom love and care for you and share in your goal to succeed in writing.

But, you also want them to be HONEST with you. If a chapter stinks, it would be better to know about it NOW so you can fix it instead of publishing your Ebook and letting the world be your critic. I tell my friends up front: "tell me the truth, but go easy on me."

Celebrate the 1/4 Milestones.

Just as you will reward yourself for completing your Ebook, you should also celebrate what I call "1/4 milestones." They aren't big enough to be considered a milestone, so they are like a quarter-milestone.

If you have twenty chapters of an Ebook to write, after you've written five chapters, celebrate with something small. Then after the next five chapters, another small treat. This will keep you focused on your objectives and gear you toward that next milestone, and then on to the big finale.

For me, I like to treat myself to a nice big bowl of cheese dip and a bag of tortilla chips. And if you saw my picture, you'd see that I've passed a lot of 1/4 milestones in the past few years! :o)

But seriously, it's important to staying focused that you take the time to celebrate your achievements. They may not be "Climbing Mount Everest" significant, but they are equally as monumental to getting your product completed.

How about a few more organization and outlining ideas that you can use?...

Use Color Codes.

As you start putting your ideas and thoughts together, try to separate them out using colored binders or color highlighters. Keep all relative research for each chapter separate and devise a system to coordinate each section.

This will help you stay focused on one thing at a time and keep your thoughts organized. In addition, try a system using labels, in order to quickly and easily identify each section of the book. As you need to add or change something, you can very easily pull out the appropriate file and focus only on that.

Plan An Idea Family Tree.

If you have a general idea for a story, with this exercise, you will start writing your thoughts about how that story will branch out – pretty much like the layout of a family tree or business organization chart.

For example, let's say you've decided to write about Movie Making. Make "Movie Making" the top of the tree. Then move down to "subordinates" and list those. These could include "Directing", "Producing" and "Acting." Then you move down again. Now you might have "Movie Locations", "Era", "Subject Matter." This continues all the way down until the "tree" is complete and there are no more layers to add.

Once you've put everything out on paper, you may need to move a few things around but in general this will provide you with a good idea of how the story would flow, starting at the top and working all the way down to the bottom. You can do this exercise for no matter what subject matter you're working on.

It's a great way to plan the STRUCTURE of your Ebook and perfect for getting organized for your outline. Once you complete it, it's just a matter of "filling-in-the-blanks."

Break it Up.

Rather than trying to cram all your outline ideas onto the pages, literally start at the top and work your way down. On your paper, jot down three ideas and call them Idea 1, Idea 2, and Idea 3. Place Idea 1 at the top of your paper, Idea 2 in the middle, and Idea 3 toward the bottom. Come up with two or three sub-ideas for each main idea and list them under the appropriate title. From these sub-ideas, you will start to build the sentences and paragraphs.

Design a Cover.

Don't forget to get your own customized Ebook cover art created to use on your webpage. Statistics show that by simply having an Ebook cover art graphic on your sales letter you can actually increase your sales by up to 300%.

That's selling THREE TIMES AS MANY copies of our Ebook simply because you have a visual representation of your Ebook on your site.

Here are a few copies for my products...

Do you see how a visual representation of your product can increase sales? It just looks more professional and more valuable.

Presentation of your offer is JUST as important as your offer itself.

Graphic Outlines.

Why not try capturing your thoughts in free-association diagrams, without giving much thought to how it will all fit together. The reason for this is that it helps you from worrying about keeping the thoughts in order. In a way, it's a form of brainstorming. The actual name of this exercise is "idea-clustering" or "mind mapping."

It helps you to (a) organize your ideas and (b) come up with new ideas to share.

Removing Writer's Block Through Motivation!

Section 04: Staying Motivated for Success

Staying motivated and sticking to a schedule can sometimes seem more of a chore than a delight. As a writer, it's important to set goals for yourself. These goals will help you see progress, successes and provide you with inspiration and motivation.

It's one thing to start writing an Ebook.

It's another thing to finish it.

Take Risks.

Often times when someone feels they're boxed into a corner, they lose desire and motivation. They feel forced to do something instead of wanting to do it. I know that it happens to me. I get trapped by deadlines or sidetracked with delays and I just want to quit writing at times.

And taking a risk at times can help get me fired back up (Which is just a sports phrase that means MOTIVATED).

What kind of risks?

Being totally honest. Sometimes it is good to just say how you feel, even if those feelings are a bit controversial. For example: I've actually said, *"You know, the customer is supposed to always be right...but sometimes I just want to tell some bozo 'You're an idiot. Go away.'"* That may come across a bit controversial, but it certainly keeps things interesting. Some of the most motivating (and ultimately, rewarding) things you can do as a writer is to be totally honest and just share what's on your heart.

Being totally vulnerable. Another way to stay motivated by taking risks with your writing is to open up and let people see the real you. So what if you're a male -- you can still share how you love your wife and kids. It may not be a "war story" or a "macho" thing to talk about, but you might be surprised at how many other people feel the same way. I continue to share about my being a Christian (Many people say don't do it...it's bad for business and you

shouldn't mix the two) because that's something I'm passionate about. Like me or hate me because of it -- you gotta respect me for not holding anything back.

Being totally personal. Want to stay motivated? Talk about what you love. Even when what you are writing ISN'T about what you love. For example: Already in this Ebook I have mentioned golf. In the last section I mentioned my relationship with Christ. See how they were worked into the content? Not only does it allow me to stay motivated by sharing more about myself and the things I am passionate about, it also allows my readers to get to know me on a more intimate level. And that builds all kinds of positive things into a relationship: trust, loyalty, friendship. So, get personal and share who you are, what you think and feel, what you want and strive for in life. The real you.

The key to taking risks isn't to be careless. It's about being honest and forthright, even when others may not agree with you. Ever watch Jerry McGuire, the movie? That's what Tom Cruise's character did. It cost him his job. But, it changed his life. And ultimately, he was the big winner.

Look at Your Fears.

Be honest with yourself. When it comes to writing, what is it you're afraid of? What are the specific things holding you back from reaching your ultimate goal?

As you identify what you worry about and then tackle those things head on, with each success, you will start to be more and more motivated.

For me, when I first got started as a writer, I was afraid to write anything that wasn't PERFECT. I wanted to create the absolute spotless Ebook. I wanted it to be so perfect that I became miserable trying to write it. And I quit many times.

Finally, I decided to just write and share what I know. People will either love it or they won't. You can't please everyone anyway. And that was 16 top-selling Ebooks! ago. I think it worked. What do you think? :o)

The point being: address those fears. Whatever they are, whatever these obstacles are that keep you from staying focused and active...face them, find a way to overcome them and then chop their heads off. :o)

Model Other Successful Writers.

When you need that extra boost to stay motivated, conduct some research and learn how other writers or famous people started out. The majority at one time or another waited tables, worked construction, or cleaned houses. They weren't always successful but had to work their way up.

Seeing the success of people we admire is a great way to stay motivated. Each one of them had to be 100% committed in order to meet schedules and deadlines. Knowing that other people go through the same emotions and struggles, and learning what they did to get past those barriers, will help you out a lot.

Another thing you can do is look at HOW they stay motivated. Many of them share their "secrets" in their writings. You can even approach some of them via email or telephone and ASK them how they overcome difficulties.

Step into the Unknown.

Instead of staying with a subject or style that you know you're successful with, try something new and unknown. There are so many different TYPES of Ebooks! you can write...so mix it up.

Tutorial. Most of his Ebooks! are "step-by-step tutorials." Another common phrase is a "how to" Ebook. Basically, he takes a particular function (creating an Ebook, writing a salesletter, etc.) and breaks it down into exact steps and then writes an explanation for each of the steps. That's a tutorial, or "how to" Ebook.

Resource Directory. Another kind of Ebook to write is a collection of resources, categorized into popular topics.

Interviews. Want to change styles? How about conducting a bunch of interviews to create your Ebook? Pick a subject, develop a list of questions and contact some well known experts for answers.

Tips / Ways. Look no further than the Ebook you are reading now for an example of this kind of Ebook. It's a collection of writing tips for Ebook authors. 77 of them to be exact. :o)

The point is this: to stay motivated, switch things up. Heck, you can even do that in the SAME Ebook. Mix it up and include interviews, tips, frequently asked questions (along with the answers, of course :o) and resources.

It couldn't possibly get dull in doing that!

Spread the Word.

Sometimes sharing your goals and aspirations with close friends and family is a huge motivator. When people expose their dreams, in a way, they've made themselves accountable for your own success. In essence, they've now presented a challenge to themselves. In addition to making these desires public, you have also created a cheering section.

Now, when you aren't motivated, you can always have those people remind you of why you wanted to write. Have them repeat back to you what you had shared with them – how important writing was to you, that writing was a passion, etc. They can help you keep your dreams alive.

When I first started an offline Christian newspaper (actually, I hadn't even started it yet) I had folks asking me "When is it going to be here -- I'm ready to read it!"

Need any more motivation than that?

By giving other folks involved, you not only have accountability, you have waiting readers who want to see your finished product. Sometimes as much as you want it yourself.

Reward Yourself.

Many writers create a tradition for their successes. When you get your Ebook finished, reward yourself with something important. It doesn't really matter what it is, but bait yourself with something you really want and make that your prize. Whether it's a new dress, a trip to your favorite restaurant, a night out at the movies, whatever it is, congratulate yourself for your successes.

I personally like a large deposit into my bank account by selling a lot of copies.

Hey, we're being honest, right? :o)

One writer collected beautiful Oriental paintings by a particular artist in China. Although not expensive, the paintings were all signed and beautifully done. Each time she successfully published an Ebook he would buy another piece of his work. Within a year, she had completely redecorated her living room with his artwork on all the walls, and, she had to switch to new rewards because she was running out of wall space. No matter what you choose, it's important to choose something you like and can look at from time to time as a reminder that you succeeded.

Be good to yourself.

I think that's a song by Journey, but it illustrates the point.

Keep Writing.

It's important to write every day. Even if it's just a paragraph, this keeps your mind sharp and helps to Block. If you find it easier to schedule time each day, whether it's 15 minutes or an hour, then you can go that route. Otherwise, just take a few minutes when you have time.

I cannot stress how important this is for staying on track and keeping your mind flowing. A BIG PROBLEM with writer's block is a DAUNTING TASK in front of you. When I sat down to write *77 Tips for Ebook Writers*, I thought to myself "Oh my goodness, that's a LOT to write."

It just SEEMED like a HUGE CHUNK to write.

Know how I did it? Ten tips per day for eight days. Now it doesn't seem so daunting. I wrote a little each day and the ideas kept flowing, simply because I wasn't burned out trying to do TOO MUCH at a time.

Every day write on your project. Even if it's only ONE tip out of 77. In three months you'd have it completed even at that pace. Better to get a little done than nothing at all.

Work on More than one Project.

Some writers believe that it's important to focus only on one article at a time, and for some, that works. However, another option is to work on several projects simultaneously. If you are having some difficulty and can't seem to get your mind going, try this.

This accomplishes two specific things. First, this will keep your mind sharp and invigorated. Secondly, this practice helps avoid writer's burnout. Sometimes as you write on one article, half way through you might slow down and need a break because the content is now familiar and not as stimulating as it was when you started. To avoid this problem, switch to an entirely different project and write on that for a while. Going back and forth like this will often keep ideas fresh and flowing.

It's interesting to note that I almost always have ten or more projects in the works at the same time. I have the main project that I am working to complete -- and then I have almost a dozen more projects that I write "portions" of. As I start generating a lot of ideas for a new project, I start writing on it. No need to write ideas down and hope I remember later what they were all about. When inspiration hits, run with it!

Record Whatever Comes to Mind.

Literally, whatever you think of, write it down. If you are in a slump, exercising your mind will help get you out of that slump. If you see a neighbor walking their dog, write down what you see. For example, "It's a cold morning. The sun is barely peeking through the overcast sky. As I sit sipping on my latte, I spot my neighbor. She's an elderly woman and prefers to keep to herself. She's an avid gardener and quite talented if I may say so. This morning, as with every morning, she and her trusty companion take their walk. Pickle always seemed like a funny name for a dog, but that's his name. He's an older dog but still full of energy and always excited to take his walk..."

As you start making stories out of things you see, you will be surprised at how you become inspired, and how those thoughts foster usable ideas.

Pickle may seem like a funny name for a dog...

...but how can you use that story to enhance your content?

Find a Rhythm.

As bizarre as that might sound, writing can become very rhythmic. Many things in life have a rhythm, such as the ocean, the sunset, music, etc. Just as with those things, writing too has its own rhythm. Although hard to describe, as you start writing, you will find that you get into a rhythm that feels right for you. Follow that rhythm and before you know it, there will be ideas flowing freely.

One of the reasons writers get into a situation with Writer's Block is that they have changed their schedule or their process and have lost that all-important rhythm. If you've changed the way you were writing and have found that you are struggling with a lack of thoughts, either go back to the way it was, or try a new rhythm.

If you write best in the mornings, then get up in the mornings and stay on a schedule for writing at that time. If you need to have the radio playing softly in the background, then do it. If you are like me and need your spouse to drive you across the state so you can sit in the passenger seat and write uninterrupted, then beg them to take you on a trip! If you find that you write better with a pen and paper instead of a keyboard, then write for goodness' sake.

We are all different. Find out what works best for you, and do it.

Have Fun.

Writing should be fun. Dogs named Pickle. Golf with your son. It ought to be fun. If you don't enjoy it, then you probably need to find something else to do with your life.

More than anything, you need to enjoy what you're doing. Don't take life so serious or everything becomes a chore. Find the interest and humor in everything you write. Enjoy the learning process, the research, and the final product.

This is probably one of the most important tips of all. If you don't enjoy what you're doing, you probably won't succeed.

Writing an Ebook is more than just trying to make some money or even bettering the lives of others through it. It's also about getting enjoyment from just writing it.

I tell stories. I use crazy analogies. I don't worry about dangling participles (I don't even know what the heck that is :o) The point is: HAVE FUN.

This ain't dental work. It's not a visit to the proctologist.

It's an adventure.

Enjoy the ride.

Get Physical.

You wouldn't think that physical exercise would be important for writing. Well, it is. If you look at successful people, no matter what their area of expertise, the one thing they all have in common is that they take time to get physical. They take time to work the body, which then fuels the mind.

To keep sharp in your writing, it's extremely important to keep your body well tuned. Eat the right foods, exercise regularly, and get the right amount of rest. When you need some extra motivation, go exercise and allow the endorphins and adrenaline to flow.

And it's always good to get oxygen to the ol' brain too. :o)

Watch your Progress.

Whether it's looking back at the ten top-selling Ebooks! you've written, or it's a smaller recap of the past 5 chapters you've written, take a look at your progress. As more and more pages are added, it's easy to become more and more motivated to keep going.

I mean, let's face it, the closer you are to the finish line, the less likely you are to turn around and quit, right?

Progress is to be counted and applauded. Even if it's "baby steps." Confucius said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Think about that the next time you need motivation.

Solve Problems.

Make it a challenge with yourself that when you run into temporary problems or setbacks, you won't lose sight of the long-term goals you've set for yourself. Sometimes you have to look at the big picture and not drill down so much into all the little details.

Prepare yourself that setbacks will be a part of your writing career but also prepare yourself to have solutions. Set up some options for resolution and when certain hurdles come along you'll have a plan on which to build.

Don't let little problems keep you from staying with it. If you know that you can't write with the kids around, find someone to baby-sit them instead of attempting to write while they're battling it out like some video game fight to the death.

When a setback hits you...hit back.

Take Classes.

More and more, motivational classes are popping up. The focus of these classes is to teach you how to stay positive and pumped up. The great thing is that you can use these classes for your writing as well as life in general. These classes will teach you ways to find the good in everything as well as how to conquer those annoying little bumps in the road.

You can check with your local community college and see what they offer. Some offer classes that are specific to motivation while others provide a broader approach with classes on how to focus and improve writing. Although you may not agree with everything they teach, you will come away with some great new ideas and probably a stronger network of writers.

Don't want to go to a class? Read a motivational book. You'll find DOZENS of them at your local bookstore, or even at your library.

Give Credit Where Credit Is Due.

One of the things that motivated me more than anything else in writing my first offline book was knowing that I was going to be able to hand that book to the people that I said "thanks to" in my credits.

I wanted so badly to finish that book so I could give a copy to my wife and say "Look what I said about you here in my 'Special Thanks' section. I want you to know how much you meant to me in helping me finish this book."

I couldn't wait to give a copy of it to my first Sunday School teacher who was mentioned in there. My pastor and his wife. My special friends. My parents.

What a thrill it was going to be (and it was!) to give them the book with THEIR names mentioned inside. That kept me excited, because I knew that someday I would be able to hand deliver a copy to those who helped me along the way.

What a way to stay motivated -- to know that you are going to be able to fill someone's heart with joy when you share their name in your SPECIAL THANKS section.

Removing Writer's Block Through Motivation!

Section 05: Overcoming Writer's Block

I've been writing for a long time, and one thing is for certain -- writer's block is a reality. Even for someone who writes full-time for a living, who cranks out a new Ebook every month...sometimes the words just don't spring forth.

Yes, sometimes the ideas flow freely. But, other times, no matter how hard you concentrate, there's nothing. Bringing life and vibrancy to writing can be a challenge at times, which is perfectly normal. This is called Writer's Block and something to be expected as you progress in Publishing Ebooks!. However, there are ways to motivate and stimulate the mind.

And that's what we are going to talk about first.

Rest Your Mind

Being too tired or stressed is one way of setting yourself up to be faced with Writer's Block. It's often easy to over-extend.

Just as the body becomes exhausted after a hard exercise, the mind also struggles with fatigue.

What happens when you run a marathon? Your body says, "Okay, I need to lie down and get some rest." The mind is the same way. It too can become overloaded and when that happens, concentration is almost impossible. If you get to a point where nothing is coming to your mind and you've tried every possible trick to get things going and yet nothing – rest.

Rest your mind.

Allow your mind time to regenerate and rebuild, allow time for refreshment and renewal.

In today's society, people are busier than ever. (I know I am!!) There are kids to get ready for school, dinners to make, baseball games to coach and business meetings to attend. Sometimes getting past Writer's Block is simply a matter of slowing down and taking several days to enjoy life and give your mind a break.

Allow your mind some time to recoup and soon you will be right back to writing.

A tired mind is an unproductive mind.

Choose Better Writing Subjects.

Wouldn't it be great if every writer could choose only the writing assignments pertaining to subject matters they enjoy? Things they're interested in or have special knowledge of? Unfortunately, not all writing projects are exciting and involve subjects that the writer absolutely loves. In fact, many are based on subjects writers know absolutely nothing about or that are flat out boring.

However, as an Ebook author, you have the CHOICE OF SUBJECT. One of the most important things you can ever do to overcome the struggle to write, is to choose things you are PASSIONATE about to write about.

Think about it -- you're at the dinner table, or you have friends over...what do you talk about? What gets you excited? What is it that you naturally start raising your voice in exuberance to share? What is it that gets you up out of your seat to elaborate on?

Write about what you ENJOY. It's hard for me to personally write about dog obedience. I have no knowledge on the subject, no experience on the subject and no real desire for the subject.

But, I could write on the joys of golf all day long! :o)

Words naturally flow when you are PASSIONATE about the subject.

Get More Information.

It's common for writers to get to a point where they think "what now?" You've just written everything you know about a particular subject and it still seems like something is missing. There aren't enough pages. The chapters don't fit together well. Something isn't explained quite the way it should be.

Don't allow the lack of information to stop you from digging in and creating an outstanding Ebook. The Internet is an open highway of information just waiting to be researched. Start out with some of the top search engines such as Google.com or Yahoo.com and in the search field, type in a half dozen or so different keywords and key phrases relating to your subject.

For example: If you are writing an Ebook on weight loss, you might search for...

weight loss
lose weight
weight loss articles
nutrition
health and fitness
weight loss tips

nutrition tips
exercise
diets

Your search will result in tons of information for you to start with. You'll find content sites, free Ebooks!, articles, reports, eCourses, message boards -- just a lot of free information you can study to find new ideas.

Spend a few hours (or even a few days) gathering ideas by reading through the information available all over the web. One huge part of successful writing is strong research abilities...

...and just flat out investing your TIME in gathering ideas.

You'll find that as you research, a LIGHT BULB will go off in your head. When it does, WRITE IT DOWN. Gather a dozen or so ideas and then plug them into your own writing.

----- Sidebar -----
Let me make one thing clear: Research involves looking for IDEAS, not stealing someone else's content. NEVER copy someone else's materials without their permission. You are looking for IDEAS that you can write about, not content that you can take.
----- Sidebar -----

It's always good to get a fresh perspective and see things from other folks' viewpoints.

Believe in your Abilities.

No matter what your area of expertise, it's important to believe in yourself. At one time or another, every writer needs to polish and improve his or her skills, which is to be expected. However, it's critical that you know in your heart you can write.

There are times when I get frustrated with writing and I think "I'm getting nowhere". What do I do? I remind myself that I am a BEST-SELLING AUTHOR and adored by MANY READERS WORLDWIDE. I don't say it to brag, I say it to remind myself that I am a professional, and I know what I am doing. And it helps to bring my confidence back.

Maybe you have never written a best-selling book or Ebook. Maybe you don't have a worldwide audience. Do you think I always had that? Heck no! When I wrote my first Ebook, no one had any clue who I was.

But, that didn't stop me. Why not? Because I BELIEVED IN MYSELF AND MY ABILITIES. Writing is mental in many ways, including CONFIDENCE. You gotta believe that you have something worthwhile to share and that you have the skills to share it.

There will be times during your writing career when your plate is full and sometimes overflowing. You will find yourself feeling completely stressed and second guessing your abilities. When this happens, and it will, take a deep breath and remind yourself that you are a good writer, skilled and capable.

Feeling a bit overwhelmed is always a part of any artist's mind. Providing your readers with quality work is in the forefront of the mind, as it should be. Remember that you can always go back and clean up your materials once you get a draft completed.

In the end, it will all come together beautifully. Give yourself a pat on the back occasionally. There's nothing wrong with reading your work and thinking "Darn, that's good stuff!" :o)

Look in Parallel.

One successful way to get past Writer's Block is to look at both the problem and solution in parallel. Start relating the problem to a similar obstacle you've hurdled in the past. What do they have in common? Then, look at how the problem was solved and see if any or all of that solution can be used for the current problem.

A pastor at my church calls this "forgotten faith." He talks about how when we face a new hurdle or obstacle in life, we become frustrated and frightened because we FORGET about how God pulled us through something similar in the past. And we worry in vain.

The same thing applies to writer's block. We find ourselves facing some kind of obstacle, some problem and we panic. Instead, it's important to remember the past. How did we get through it last time? What worked to overcome the writer's block?

Draw on your experiences, which will help you meet and beat your new challenges in similar ways that you beat your challenges from the past.

Visualize Success.

Envision yourself being talked about (positively!) in every major newsletter in your field of expertise. Imagine being ranked at the top of Clickbank's sellers or in the Top Ten at Amazon.com.

See the success of your writing in your mind. Turn something that you can't put your hand on into a viable piece of finished art. Think about the END RESULTS. What will you accomplish by finishing your Ebook? Will you make a lot of money? Will you be branded an expert? Will you get free publicity?

What happens when you are finished with the project?

Sometimes the key to overcoming writer's block is to envision the prize awaiting. Heck, we all need to get motivated at times. What motivates you? Is it money? Is it fame? Is it publicity? Envision it. There's a reason you are writing the Ebook.

And you ain't gonna get to it until you finish writing!

That's motivation enough for me. :o)

Get Contribution From Others.

There are many folks who have ALREADY WRITTEN materials that they would be willing to contribute to your Ebook. For example: A writer might have published a newsletter article that they would allow you to compile into your Ebook material (they receive a FREE link to their website in exchange inside the Ebook).

Not only does it give you MORE material for your Ebook, but it also helps you overcome writer's block because it gives you something more to write about. In other words, you make additional comments about the article itself -- either as notes throughout the article, or before and after the article.

For example: If you are writing an Ebook about buying and selling stuff on eBay.com and you find an article entitled "7 Places To Find Hidden Treasures To Sell On Online Auctions" then you approach the writer to see if they will allow you to include it in your Ebook. And then you either (a) Expand upon each of the "7 places" by adding more comments, or (b) You share some additional thoughts before or after the article. (I.E. "3 more great places to find hidden treasures are..." OR "You can use search engines to find online sources for each of these 7 places by..."

See how that works? Someone else contributes part of your content, which spawns new ideas for YOU to write about.

Listen to Music.

Music is always inspiring. If you are writing an Ebook on dating or relationships or marriages, put on some nice, romantic music. Allow the instruments and lyrics to create a mood that you can draw from. Whatever type of writing you're

working on, choose music that fits the subject and just allow your thoughts to start rolling in.

Whether the music is classical, opera, jazz, ballads, or rock and roll, each style has magic. As a writer, you can connect with another artist and envision the setting for your book based on the music. An example is Enya. One of her first CD's had a song that was romantic, mystical, and almost poetic. As that song is played, a person can envision a Roman coliseum, filled with lions, chariots and gladiators. It's very powerful music. Allow your mind to open as you listen to the music and you'll soon be filling page after page of information.

You might be surprised at how inspired you become after listening to some music.

Don't Panic.

When you start writing, don't get so bogged down into perfection that you get stuck on the first page. Writing evolves and like an artist with a painting, it progresses with time and effort. Writer's Block can often be created by our own actions. Keep stress out of your writing and you'll definitely reduce or eliminate the problem.

One of the biggest contributors to writer's block is DESPERATION. You've got a deadline for getting your Ebook done (whether self-imposed or by others) and you can't seem to get anywhere. What happens? You begin to feel pressure. The clock keeps ticking and you start becoming anxious because you need to hurry up and finish things up.

Can anyone work well under those situations?

Not many. Not me. I have to be RELAXED.

The best way to do that is to set REASONABLE, REACHABLE goals for your writing. Set goals that you can easily achieve. When the writing assignment in front of you seems daunting, panic is a great possibility. And panic means either you probably won't put out your best work, or you won't have any ideas at all!

On the other hand, when you feel comfortable thinking "Today's assignment is easy -- I can do this" it makes for much less pressure which means it much easier to write.

Use a Dictionary/Thesaurus.

Dictionaries and Thesaurus' can be a writer's best friend. These are great tools for Writer's Block in that they offer words, phrases, meanings we haven't even considered.

No matter what the subject, a dictionary or thesaurus can open up and provide ideas completely missed. When you become stuck, or your mind goes blank, take a word from your writing and start looking at the different meanings or comparisons. You will be pleasantly surprised at how useful these are.

Take a Walk.

When your mind is just not cooperating, go for a walk. The purpose is to help clear your mind and to provide new visuals for your mind to process. Although that sounds strange, walking is a perfect way to get your mind off the things keeping you from writing. Yet at the same time, once your mind is cleared, as you look at houses, trees, flowers, people, your mind will start rebuilding its database so to speak, with fresh new ideas.

Look at cloud shapes, size and color of trees, landscaping designs, anything and everything possible. You don't necessarily need to start coming up with content, but use your walk as a way to stimulate your mind with fresh visuals.

Each house, each person, each vehicle is a potential story. Let's say you turn the corner to spot a big moving truck. There are men moving in and out, making trip after trip putting boxes in the truck. You see the family scurrying around trying to get things finished up and a little girl crying. There are MANY different illustrations in that alone that could be used to drive home a point in your Ebook

And speaking of driving...

Go for a Drive.

Just as with walking, getting in your car with the music playing and the wind blowing in through the windows is a great way to refresh your mind. Getting outdoors and taking in some fresh air and new scenery is always helpful. Some writers claim that their best work is done while driving.

If you can, find some places out in the country where you can be free and enjoy nature and the natural scenery around you. If you live in the city, look for areas that are in the historical district or where Victorian homes are being refurbished.

Whether the country or city, either choice offers you even more visuals and helps stimulate your mind.

I'll be honest with you -- I get the BULK OF MY WRITING done while on the road. My wife drives and I peck away on this laptop. In fact, that's what I am doing RIGHT NOW as I write this Ebook. One of the biggest reasons that it works for me is because I have VERY FEW distractions. The phone isn't ringing. There isn't anyone at the door. The television isn't on. It's just me and my laptop.

And I can write for hours this way. Try it. You might very well write your next Ebook while in the car!

Daydream/Meditate.

Allowing your mind to “daydream” or “meditate” is a wonderful, relaxing way to help clear out old thoughts and replace them with new ones. By looking off into the distance or sitting quietly with your eyes closed, your mind will soon start bringing wonderful thoughts or favorite memories to light.

For a writer, it's important to have some “down time.” Allow your mind to wander, to dream, to fantasize. Daydreaming or meditation provides a rebuilding and regenerating process needed for every writer.

Closely related to this is what is referred to as "stream of consciousness." For a writer, it's an important exercise in generating new ideas for writing content. The idea is to think about something related to your Ebook and then the first thing that pops into your mind, you write it down. As you think about whatever you wrote down, the first thing that pops into your mind from there, you write it down. And you repeat the process.

Soon, you can easily generate a dozen new ideas by just letting your mind wander.

Watch this...

Let's suppose I'm writing an Ebook on how to get the most out of your golf game. Each time I think of a new phrase or word, I'll write it down. Let's brainstorm...

Golf

Bad weather (it's raining right now)

Wish I was in Florida (it's not raining there)

Disney (It's in Orlando)

My little boy (we took Him to Disney last year)

Learning to play (My son actually has his own sticks!)

My Mustang (We have a beautiful picture of my son in front of my stang)

John (When I think of my car, I think of my friend John who has a Porsche)

Golf Pro (John *almost* turned pro as a golfer when he left school)

PGA events (I'd love to go see a tournament with all the big stars!)

Tiger Woods (Stars don't get any bigger than that!)

I could keep going on and on, but I just want to illustrate a point and show you what I've already gathered just from this brainstorming session through "stream of consciousness."

Want to get the most of your golf game? Here's how...

1. Make alternate plans. Sometimes weather conditions don't allow you to play golf at your own course. Don't let that get you down! Instead, travel an hour or two away to a neighboring course where weather conditions are right for golf (It ain't raining there!) In addition to having an enjoyable time at a DIFFERENT course, it can actually make you a better golfer, simply because there are NEW CHALLENGES. You may face bunkers that you don't have at your course. The greens may be incredibly fast. The Par 4's may seem like Par 5's because of their distance. It can actually better equip you as a golfer by facing new challenges designed for different degree of skills.

2. Take a Vacation. There are many special "golf vacation packages" available throughout the country. So, go play them! Golf is available all year round in Florida, for example -- so, even in the winter, you can play. That's when most golfers get "rusty" because they take a couple of months off. And it takes a while to get back into the "routine." So, plan a winter getaway and stay on track.

3. Involve your family. I love to play golf with my wife and my little boy is learning how to play. What better way to better your own game, than by teaching others and watching others. Blah blah blah blah blah <I would go on to explain some things about using golf as a way to strengthen family bonds, etc.)

4. Ask Folks For Advice. <I would talk about how my buddy John is very knowledgeable about the mechanics of golf and that I ask him for help with my game and how you should do the same by finding folks at your course that you can become friends with who can give you pointers.

5. Attend Events. <I would talk about going to PGA (or amateur) events to WATCH professionals play and learn from them.>

6. Read and Apply. <I would talk about how Tiger Woods has a book out entitled "How I Play Golf" and that reading instructional books and watching instructional videos from

pros are great ways to improve your own game. I'd talk about how many of these are available for free viewing at the library>

Do you see how I generated 6 new ideas in a VERY SHORT amount of time just by letting my mind wander? Stream of consciousness thinking can really be helpful in coming up with more ideas for writing content. I could easily have kept going with the thought process and probably generated 25 more ideas to write about.

Do it. Sit down and write down the first thing that pops into your mind after writing down each new word or phrase. After about 10 minutes, look back over your list and see what kinds of ideas start popping into your mind.

Use Quotations.

A proven way to succeed in writing when ideas don't come easily is to use quotations. Finding famous quotes from United States Presidents, Diplomats, Actors, Scientists, Inventors and the like, always makes for good reading and inspiration.

For example, American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson once stated "Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quote of it. Many will read the book before one thinks of quoting a passage. As soon as he has done this, that line will be quoted east and west."

Cool, huh?

Did you also notice that I actually USED A QUOTE in this tip as PART OF THE CONTENT.

I'll let you ponder on that one for a bit.

Other's Points of View.

If you've been able to start an article or book but now you've reached a point of impasse, try obtaining other people's points of view. Let's say you've written about dating. Although you're married, you remember the dating world. However, you've now hit a wall and no matter what you do, you just can't seem to get past it. You have teenagers who are actively dating, so why not ask what they think. They can probably provide a fresh viewpoint, associated with today's society that you hadn't thought of.

Do you realize how much society is changing, and has changed?

Twenty-five years ago the biggest problems in schools were: tardiness, spitballs and chewing tobacco.

Today the biggest problems are: violence, sexually transmitted diseases / pregnancy and drugs.

But, if you aren't raising a child today, you might not even be aware of the changes that have taken place.

The important thing is to ask questions to get other people's point of view. And here are the two questions to ask...

What do you KNOW about this situation? (What are the facts?)

What do you THINK about this situation? (What is your opinion?)

And what a way to find more ideas to write about...

An astounding 83% of polled Americans feel like...

Three out of four residents said the mayor was doing a good job...

Among the biggest concerns were...

The top 7 most requested...

Whatever the results -- whether your content is in agreement with, or in disagreement with -- you have something more to comment about. You can debate the results, emphasize the results, agree with the results, expand on the results, editorialize the results and / or explain the results.

More content. More ideas. More perspective.

Don't Quit.

Best advice I can give you. Don't quit. Don't give up. Don't back down. Don't scrap the idea. Don't walk away. Don't stop. Don't forget about it.

DON'T QUIT.

Believe in yourself. Take baby steps if you must, but get the job done. Don't listen to negative people. Stay focused and get the job done.

You are a writer -- or you wouldn't be interested enough to read this far.

Don't sell yourself short.

Instead, sell a million copies!