

Style sheet formation

This example shows the process of forming a style sheet for a vulture portfolio text. I've selected the PRSSA memo. The list below is the file I typed into the computer as I edited, showing the decisions I made from top to bottom. The second page is the reorganized, more formal query and style sheet to present to the client.

The style sheet begins with the content below "Punctuation." Note that I didn't make a billion categories—for a short document, three headings are enough.

Western Illinois University (WIU)

Acronyms: spell out first time in body copy; follow with acronym in parentheses.

Single-space all copy.

Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)

Bateman Case Study Competition (BCSC)

Safe Kids Buckle Up (SKBU)

Q1: Letter or memo? Formatting borrows from both. Use one or the other—block left.

Use one space after all paragraphs.

Q2: Audience? Who wants what from whom?

Phone numbers always carry area code. Form: (321) 456-7890.

Q3: Standardize info: no email for Canon, no institution for Siddiqi.

Q4: Verify spelling of all names.

Use en dash for ranges between numbers (8–13).

Do not indent paragraphs.

grades: no superscripts; "fifth grade" not "grade 5" or "grade fifth"

tweens

initiatives

participation

Use serial comma (Murphy, Pacione, Davis, and Naso).

Q5: How to sign up? Not clear from this.

Date: Feb 19 2008
Editor: Dilger
Author: Murphy *et al.*
Title: “Safe Kids Buckle Up”
Level of edit: Medium

Questions & Queries

1. Should this document be a letter or a memorandum? Formatting borrows from both styles. Consider revising to use either letter or memo format; if the former, block left is recommended.
2. Who is the intended audience? What is being requested, and of whom? How is the Macomb School District involved? Consider revision; unfortunately, it is difficult to understand the purpose of this document.
3. Please standardize information included for contacts. Institution is not included for Siddiqi; email is not included for Canon.
4. Please verify spelling of all names.
5. What’s the next step for those who want to sign up? Currently it’s not clear who to contact or how.

Punctuation

Use en dash for ranges between numbers (8–13).

Use serial comma (Murphy, Pacione, Davis, and Naso).

Acronyms: spell out first time in body copy; follow with acronym in parentheses. Use only acronyms or or full names; avoid other forms like “Safe Kids.”

Other formatting

Single-space all copy.

Use one space after all paragraphs. Do not indent paragraphs.

Phone numbers always carry area code. Form: (321) 456-7890.

Neither superscripts nor numerals for grade ordinals (“fifth grade” not “grade 5th”)

Spelling

Bateman Case Study Competition (BCSC)

initiatives

participation

Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)

Safe Kids Buckle Up (SKBU)

tweens

Western Illinois University (WIU)