

HOW TO WRITE – and Stick with It

KIM MICHAEL, MA, RT(R), RDMS, RVT, FSDMS
UNMC College of Allied Health Professions

KATE WAMPLER, BS, RT(R), RDMS, RVT
UNMC College of Allied Health Professions

ELIZABETH BEAM, PhD, RN
UNMC College of Nursing



Celebrate successes!

When a member of the group submits or has a publication accepted, be sure to acknowledge the accomplishment. This will also serve as motivation to keep meeting.

Finding time to write in an already over-scheduled calendar can feel impossible. Add to that the difficulty and loneliness of the writing process, and it can forever be pushed to the very bottom of the to-do list.

The solution—**writing groups**, a game changer for writing the pieces that will get you to the places you want to be in your career.

Writing groups are designed to **make writing a priority** in your schedule and to hold you accountable to your writing commitments in a collaborative environment. Here are five tips for making a writing group work for you:

» Building your group

Consider meeting once a week with two other members. Each week, one person will bring in writing, and the other two will serve as readers. A small number ensures everyone is important to the group's success, and feedback from two people is not overwhelming.

» Selecting your members

Select colleagues:

- » You trust to provide and accept constructive, honest feedback
- » Who are dedicated to the writing process and their fellow members
- » Who are committed to showing up prepared each week with a positive attitude

» Scheduling

At the beginning of each semester, pick a time that works for everyone and block off your calendars. Do not change the time or cancel the meeting for a more pressing commitment. If you can't meet in person, schedule a video meeting. Finally, determine the order you will go in, so you know who will be sharing and who will be reading each week.

» Rules for the writer

If it is your week to share your writing, you must have something—no skipping or trading places. The pages must be emailed to the others 48 hours in advance to allow time for review. Don't stress—if you keep it to roughly two pages, a two-day review time should be manageable for the group.

» Rules for the readers

Just as important as the writing process is the review process. Reading, reflecting, and providing honest feedback ensure a good discussion at the meeting and a better product for publication. It can also help you become a better writer yourself.

» Bonus: Bring Snacks

The best meetings have tasty treats!

Additional Resources

Curtis, C.P. (2011). The Rules of Writing Group. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.
<https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Rules-of-Writing-Group/126880>.
Gennaro, S. (2016). Why Write? *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 48(2), 117.