

# Editing Style Guide for XYZ Online Courses

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This guide is intended to provide guidance to the editors of the narratives and resources for the XYZ online courses.

## Photos

Place photo suggestions after every new header and preceding every paragraph or every other paragraph, as the content dictates. Sometimes you can go more than two paragraphs with no photo suggestion, if there are graphics, or if there are enough other changes happening (e.g., text rotating on the display screen) to keep things interesting. If you wonder what kind of photos we have available, visit ThinkStock.com and type in related key words. Our images generally have simple backgrounds and a hero image.

Format photo suggestions as follows:

Photo: representing conflict

Photo: female and male in conflict (not necessarily doctors; no suits)

Photo: similar to ThinkStock #xxxxx

## Display Text

Display text is separate from photo suggestions. Insert when the learner should remember key points from the narration or when there are long passages of narrative without interesting, frequent changes in photos to develop the story. Format display text to follow narrative, as follows:

Display:

Five Keys to Success

1. Ipsum
2. Lorem
3. Orange
4. Black
5. White

Display: [pace with narration]

Audiences to consider:

- Client
- Team members
- Owner/Manager

Display:

If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then you are an excellent leader.

–Dolly Parton, singer-songwriter, businesswoman, author, actress

Display:

Orange and black are the two most important keys to success.

## Formatting

- Do not insert extra hard returns between lines or before or after headers. The headers have built in spacing.
- Always use the Erin Styles.dotm as the base template for the XYZ online course text docs. Apply styles and headings as necessary to every line you edit that was not created in that template.
- Each word in a header/title should have initial caps, with the exception of conjunctions such as to, a, between, and along.
- All bulleted lists should be flush left. Apply the styles included in the Erin Styles template for first, second, third, and other levels of bullets.
- Photo suggestions and display text should go BEFORE the related narrated text.
- All instructions to the development team (that creates the course in the learning management system) should be [in brackets].

## Quiz Questions and Other Learner Interactions

- Write quiz questions in the affirmative rather than the “which of these is NOT true” format.
- Write quiz questions with five plausible potential answers, with no one answer being the obvious correct answer.
- The other types of learner interactions include freeform response, choose all that apply (five answers), and choose one out of a list of up to five answers (yes/no, three options, etc.).
- For freeform responses, format text as follows:

Click Enter now to write your response.

[text box text]

Here is the scenario or question, in detail. Even if the narrator just spoke it aloud, it needs to be written here.

Photo: relevant photo suggestion

Thank you for your response. Your answer might have included ideas such as... OR The correct answer is X because...

- We can also include instructions for video screen capture to illustrate a point, or “Watch this video now to learn...” that links to a YouTube or other video for which we have copyright permission.

## Flow, Logic, and Readability

- The text should match the outline.
- The text and learner interactions should support the learning objectives.
- Ensure the narrative flows seamlessly from one section to the next. Signpost as necessary.
- Eliminate passive voice at every opportunity.
- Before you start the job, determine if the draft goes back to the writer for revisions or not. If yes, use the review comments to (constructively) note what's missing or inconsistent and ask questions as an audience member so the writer can fix it. If the document is not going back to the writer for revisions, rewrite as best you can anything that doesn't work and make notes in review comments about what you had to restructure/add/delete.
- If it doesn't make sense to you, do not assume that the writer or the SME has said something brilliant beyond your comprehension and leave it as is. These courses must be written in layperson's terms. Would a person who is educated but has very little business training understand it?

## Resources

- Always use the XYZ Styles 2.dotm as the base template for editing or creating Word resources for the XYZ online courses. The best approach is to copy and paste all text into notepad, then copy and paste that text from notepad to the XYZ Styles 2.dotm template and save as a new Word doc. Apply the body text style to the entire document, then apply header, bullet, and other styles as appropriate.
- Refer to the resources in the intro module of the course, in the form of a bulleted list where noted.
- Refer to the name of the online course in the intro paragraph of each resource (e.g., This material is adapted from XYZ's online course, "10 Truths about Leadership.").

## Before Submitting as Final

- Eliminate double spaces after all punctuation as the second-to-last step before submitting.
- Spell-check the document as the final step before submitting.
- Save the version of the document with tracked changes as vX+1 based on the v number I sent you. For example, if your document was named 10 Truths about Leadership Course Text v5.docx, save the tracked changes version as 10 Truths about Leadership Course Text v6.docx. Be sure that the header in the doc you save reflects that version number and the last revision date.
- Accept all edits in document and save as the next vX+2 (v7 in this example). Be sure that the header in the doc you save reflects that version number and the last revision date.