



Simple Rules for Writing Body Copy

from your Jostens representative, Scott Geesey

- 1. Think like a JOURNALIST:** ...which is what you are, a yearbook journalist! Interview the teacher, the coach, students, athletes, administrators - get all the facts, with some quotes from those you interview as well. Make a habit of carrying a small notepad everywhere you go. A good interview may take only a couple of minutes. Capture the highlights to share with your readers!
- 2. Interview as soon after an event as you can:** Real journalists don't wait for days or weeks after an event to finally interview those involved. If you're covering a sports team, talk to the coach or star players as soon after the big game as possible; don't wait till after the season has concluded when facts or feelings are not as fresh.
- 3. The old 5 W's and an H:** Remember these? Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. When interviewing your subject(s), be sure to get the information to answer these basic questions, then give your readers as many of the details as you can in a concise manner.
- 4. "Just the facts, ma'am":** Forget your opinions. Good yearbook copywriting includes what happened, when it happened, etc. Your opinions can sometimes take away from what really happened. Even an offhand comment can change the direction of a yearbook story. Stay with the facts.
- 5. Quotes add the personal aspect:** Everyone loves to be quoted! When interviewing, take the time to get some quotes from your interviewee, no matter the subject or event. But make sure to quote them correctly! Nothing ruins a good story like a misquote. Perhaps run the quote(s) by the subject before you place it/them in your story.
- 6. Save the flowery prose:** This isn't an essay from English class. If you find yourself filling your yearbook story with extra verbiage, you need to go back out and get more facts and quotes. OR your story may have limited space on the page, so cut the chatter and keep to the facts.
- 7. Have a camera or photographer handy:** If you're interviewing someone for a story, why not include a head shot or candid of the person along with their comments? It's another way to recognize the person and get more pictures of more people in the yearbook.



Simple Rules to Make Your 2007 Yearbook GREAT!!