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# Investment Writing Update

## Writing that's an investment in your success

### August 2006

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#### Strengthen your writing with active verbs

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Sentences featuring active verbs typically have more oomph than their passive counterparts. You can ratchet up their appeal by using colorful active verbs, such as "ratchet."

Here's a quick test. Which of the following sentences uses an active verb?

1. The announcement of a peace treaty **sparked** a stock market rally
2. The stock market rally **was caused** by the announcement of a peace treaty.

Yes, it's sentence number one. In sentence number two, the use of "was" -- a form of "to be" -- betrays the sentence's passivity.

Still confused? Check out [this explanation of active vs. passive verbs](#).

Scroll down to the fourth section, "Changing Passive to Active" for hints on how to purge your sentences of passivity.

I must thank Karyn Greenstreet's [Passion for Business e-newsletter](#) for bringing this grammar web page to my attention.

I like this related tip from Richard H. Weiss' ["How to be your own best editor"](#): "Use powerful verbs. Underline all the verbs in your copy. Did you find a bunch of 'is' and 'are' constructions? Can you replace those words with verbs that convey momentum and action?"

#### Create your personal communications plan

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If you work in marketing, or brush elbows with marketers or corporate communicators, you're probably familiar with the idea of a corporate communications plan. Have you ever applied this concept to yourself?

The fact is, you've got to market yourself to get ahead. And by itself, a resume may not suffice, according to "[Managing Your Marketing Career: Creating Your Personal Communications Plan](#)" by [William Arruda](#) of Reach.

An online presence is critical to creating your personal brand. According to Arruda, "The best way to ensure that your online identity is congruent with your offline identity is to

build your own Web site or blog. This gives you control over the message that is being communicated about you."

However, don't despair if you don't have the time or money to create your own website. "If you are not quite ready for your own space on the Web, you can build your online identity through existing Web sites. Posting comments to blogs that address topics that are relevant to you and posting online reviews of books are great ways to build your online identity," says Arruda.

However, think carefully before you post. In some cases, bloggers' hasty -- or too revealing -- comments have come back to haunt them.

**Please answer my brief communications survey**

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Please [answer my three-question survey](#) about the techniques of personal communications.

Your identity will NOT be tracked. I'll have no way to know who says what.

I'll report the aggregate results next month, **if I get enough results** to make them meaningful.

**What's happening with investment management M&A?**

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If you work in the investment management industry, you know that a merger or acquisition can change your work environment overnight. So get on top of this year's M&A trends with Berkshire Capital's [Mid-Year Investment Management and Securities Review](#).

You can subscribe to the free newsletter by emailing [jsransky@berkcap.com](mailto:jsransky@berkcap.com).

Also, watch the Association of Investment Management Sales Executives website for my forthcoming article on "M&A Offers Opportunities to Marketing Directors."

**Off to Europe!**

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I'm leaving soon for a European vacation. I expect the highlight will be my week-long bike and barge tour from Amsterdam to Brussels. But I'll also enjoy my free days in Amsterdam and Bruges.

I hope that you've enjoyed your summer! I look forward to re-connecting with you in September.

**P.S. Do you have colleagues or friends in Hartford, Conn.?** If they work in investment management, please tell them that I'm in the process of scheduling a September date to present "The Six Deadly Sins of Investment Commentary, Or How to Write What People Will Read" to the [Hartford Society of Financial Analysts](#). Look for information to be posted to the Society's events page by early September.

**P.P.S. What my clients say:** "Using Susan as we have for white papers and articles has created a great deal of efficiency for us. If we were to take time away from our day

to write them ourselves, it would be a real loser for us. The investment of time for us, because of her preparation work, is minimal."

If you know someone who might be interested in my services, please tell me or forward a copy of this newsletter to them.

**Quick Links...**

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- [Susan Weiner Investment Writing Website](#)
- [Investment blog by Susan](#)
- [Marketing and communications blog by Susan](#)

**Contact Information**

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