

Recap: Smart Brevity – Writing for Busy Readers

Smart Brevity Overarching Features

- Short but not shallow
- Smartly organized ideas
- Strong words, short sentences
- Simple visuals
- Puts audience, not ego, first

Email Subject Lines

- 6 words or less.
- Clarity over cleverness. Reader should know what to expect by the subject line.
- OK to ease up on grammar/punctuation
- Consider work-appropriate emojis

First Sentence

- Identify the One Big Thing, the one thing you want people to know.
- Try to capture it in one sentence, 10 words or less. 2 sentences, tops.
- Avoid these brevity killers:
 - Anecdotes, Jokes, Bragging, Weak and extraneous words
 - Niceties (“I hope you’re having a good day.”)

Why it Matters

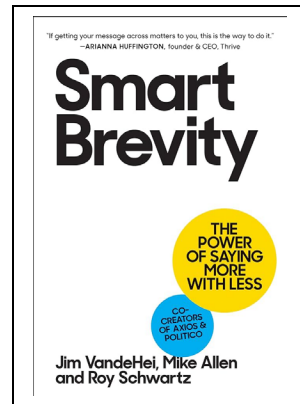
- Most common, effective header
- Explains why your opening sentence(s) are important.
- Should add explanation and offer perspective.
- Resist restating your opening.
- Limit to 1-2 sentences.

Go Deeper

- Tells readers they can stop now or read on to learn more.
- Likely the longest section. Consider:
 - bullet points, generous paragraph breaks
 - links, attachments, charts, graphics

Other Smart Brevity Headers

- The Big Picture
- What’s Next
- Between the Lines
- The Backstory
- Catch Up Quick
- By the Numbers
- The Bottom Line



Don’t care for Smart Brevity’s Headers? Create alternatives that work for you organization and use them consistently so that your regular readers learn what to expect when they see them.

Want to read the book? Available on www.smartbrevity.com, Amazon and other major booksellers.