

Senior Editor Guidelines

Last Modified on 09/10/2015 4:23 pm PDT

studioD depends on you as a **Senior Editor** to help review and coach new Studio writers. As such, you are required to prioritize assignments with the New Writer flag whenever you see them in the queue. This allows us to achieve our goal of providing timely feedback to writers who are just getting started with studioD.

Once you claim a New Writer article, you are required to complete it from first review to rejection or approval. You are not permitted to allow it to expire.

Use the following guidelines when giving feedback to New Writers on their first three Studio articles.

Guidelines

Point out any flaws in the content, but offer detailed, overarching advice on how to fix the mistakes. The lessons we teach during this “orientation” period should enhance the content of the article in review, and set a quality standard for future submissions.

Write detailed notes in a voice that is welcoming and mentoring. Emphasize the language of inclusion, using “we” whenever possible to impart a spirit of camaraderie.

Acquaint the writers with the appropriate guidelines, and direct them to the Resource Center for additional guidance.

Impart the general rules governing the composition of content, including rules governing style. Provide links to relevant guidelines.

Frankly rate the content. Your marks will determine whether the writer continues providing articles for our company. Don't overrate incompetent writers.

Advise, don't admonish. The writer is your collaborator. Compose your queries as if you were writing to an esteemed colleague. Do not denigrate the writers, their skills or their submissions.

Emphasize solutions, not flaws. Writers are more open to constructive criticism when the editor underscores the positive outcome a fix will provide:

- **Incorrect:** The information in the second sentence is thin, the sources you name are generic, and the phrasing is awkward.
- **Correct:** Add more detail to this sentence. Name specific sources for these tools. Smooth the phrasing. Compose this sentence in active voice (in this order: subject-verb-noun).
- **Note:** During a typical studioD edit, you wouldn't offer an alternative as an example of a clear sentence. As a Senior Editor, this much detail is not only appropriate, it is required.

Keep your notes detailed but succinct. Do not overwhelm the writer with too much information in one section. Rewrite comments should never be longer than the article itself.

Write emphatic comments. When you phrase your comments as questions, writers often waste their only revision opportunity by responding with questions of their own. Writers also often view the information you're seeking with questions as optional, rather than required. To achieve effectiveness and clarity, **frame your comments as polite instructions**.

- **Incorrect:** Can you give us two or three examples of cities that enforce these laws?
- **Correct:** Please provide two or three examples of cities that enforce these laws.
- **Incorrect:** Do you know the year the study you've cited in this section was published?
- **Correct:** Please insert the publication year for this study.

Compose your instructions with certainty. Assume your instructions are correct and final. Use language that makes requirements clear.

- **This reads like a suggestion:** You might supply the reader with some background by explaining when junk bonds first became available in this section.
- **This carries the weight of requirement:** Supply the reader with some background. In this section, explain when junk bonds first became available.
- **Note:** If you reject an article, provide the writer with something to build on. Note some things the writer executed well, and then summarize issues he or she must work on to earn approvals with future submissions.

Writer Evaluation Program Notes:

The Senior CE role includes reviews of writers involved in the **Writer Evaluation Program**. These tend to be struggling writers who have potential to become solid contributors.

WEP writers will now submit articles with a bulleted list of the three to five elements they need to improve on as dictated to them by a segment editor or expert, in order to remain in good standing. In these cases, the role doesn't require mentoring, but you should place an added focus on their areas of need. If a writer neglects to include these bullets, please contact the respective segment editor.