



The Architect's Guide to Writing: For Design and Construction Professionals

By Bill Schmalz

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Finally, a book designed specifically to help architects, designers, engineers, and contractors improve their writing skills. The author, Bill Schmalz, AIA, CSI, is a practicing licensed architect and a principal with the firm Perkins+Will. He understands the types of documents that design and construction professionals routinely write and edit, and he knows how they can do it better. Using examples that an architect will understand, the book deals clearly—and, the author hopes, sometimes humorously—with design and construction professionals' most common writing problems.

Some of the book's chapters:

- "The Slippery Sidewalk of Grammar"
- "Verb Irregularities"
- "Handle These Words with Care"
- "The Punctuation Toolbox"
- "Developing a Lean Writing Style"
- "Writing Internationally"
- "Editing Your Draft"
- "The Right Look"
- "Facing the Blank Screen"

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Editorial Review

Review

Bill Schmalz has crafted an entertaining book that is full of general rules for writing as well as specific rules for writing about architecture and construction. The book is very informative, but it is also written in a manner that makes a boring topic entertaining with jokes, quips, and comical sketches throughout. *The Architect's Guide to Writing* can be seen as a general book on grammar and writing - this is a necessity given that architects and construction professionals write using the same language as we use to write in general. However, Schmalz also provides countless advice that applies specifically to architects. ... In addition, almost all of the example sentences in the book are specific to the construction industry. ... The chapter entitled, "Do You Need a House Style?" is incredibly valuable in that it has suggestions for a lot of words and phrases that apply specifically to architecture and construction. This is important because other usage guides like *Garner's Modern American Usage* don't cover a lot of the words that architects use. ... While *The Architect's Guide to Writing* is not as in-depth as other usage guides, it provides important advice that is specific to the architecture and construction industries. We highly recommend that this book be added to your library and we suggest that you keep it close at hand when writing. (archtoolbox.com)

Bill Schmalz, a principal at Perkins + Will's L.A. office, hones in on the how. ... In *The Architect's Guide to Writing*, Schmalz examines vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, style, spelling, and other highly detailed ways of writing the English language. ... Therefore the book functions like a crash course in getting reacquainted with written English in order to write more clearly, free of jargon, and primarily free of errors (it's hard to be completely free of them). More seasoned architect/writers, myself included, may find the advice to be basic, but I was amazed at how many questionable things appear in my own writing (such as "in order to" in the previous sentence, which could just as effectively be shortened to "to"). ... Schmalz ... uses humor (in his writing, but also in Bob Gill's illustrations) as a way to make what are at times remedial lessons go down easier and become memorable. [It's a] quick read, and for architects out there who would rather spend their time on anything but reading and writing, that should make their lessons go down that much easier. (John Hill, Archidose; A Daily Dose of Architecture)

This one-stop reference for design and construction professionals concentrates on the things that designers and architects frequently get wrong. Concise, clear and casually written, this guide should be on every industry professional's bookshelf. (*Specifier*)

About the Author

Bill Schmalz, AIA, is a principal in the Los Angeles office of Perkins+Will. Since joining the firm in 1980, he has led teams on a wide variety of project types, including healthcare, education, research, transportation, and commercial. His expertise is in contract documentation, contract administration, and construction cost management. In addition, he has been teaching writing classes to the firm's project architects since 2009.

Users Review

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