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The secret to writing a great Media Week Award entry – make it easy

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Let's first address the elephant in the (writing) room, awards entries can be tricky.

Finding un-interrupted focus time, getting writer's block, moments of self-doubt, chasing approvals, chasing data and chasing colleagues.

We've all been there, we're there right now.

Over the years I've lost endless hours to writer's rigor mortis, paper paralysis and over complicating the process, but I think there's a different way...

... Thinking of Goodstuff's most prolific papers and those I've read as a Media Week judge, there's something they all have in common;

1. Case building over creative writing

The thought of creative writing works for some but not for all, but most of us are familiar with the a word ramble. concept of building a case and pitching it. So if creative writing doesn't float your boat, approach your paper like a business case builder, a pitch on a page filled with clear and compelling selling points, insights and evidence, with an easy-to-follow narrative.

They make awards judging easy and are a joy to judge.

So we'd like to share a slither of our secret sauce in the hope we help to make awards writing easier. Why?

The Media Week Awards spread the best ideas from our industry so act as an incubator for future invention, making media creativity more contagious. All things we proudly stand for and support at Goodstuff.

So here's our five fave tips based on the principle of making your Media Week papers more effective by making them easier to judge:

2. Don't bury your treasure, less is more

Paradoxically, pithy storytelling is harder than a word ramble. The issue with the latter is that entries often hide what's truly special under layers of unnecessary detail.

With every sentence ask yourself – what point am I making? What point am I scoring with the category criteria? Be a ruthless editor. Less is more, we apply our 'Only the good stuff' filter to our papers, limiting to 600-700 words max.



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3. Polish your gold

Likewise make the treasure within your paper shine, make it easy for judges to pitch your work for you in rounds of debates. How can you make your key selling points sparkle? How can you contextualise or creatively sell your best insights and evidence? Or perhaps your gold isn't just in the copy...

5. Go for the goal in your control

I like to think of this as Stephen Covey's Circle of Control meets James Clear's Atomic Habits for awards writing.

Getting gold isn't in our control, but crafting a gold standard entry is.

All award judging processes are subjective.

Whilst there's trends amongst the winning work, I don't believe there is a repeatable winning formula, which is a good thing.

Clear selling points, neatly written (proofed) copy, beautiful design, strong supporting media – are all gold standard goals we can control.

Best of luck for this year's awards.

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4. Show as well as tell

... Make it easy to see, hear, watch or play with the work.

For most cases it's essential to witness the work, yet I've seen so many papers that make this difficult.

Don't relegate supporting media to playing a supporting role, or let paper design be an afterthought, add some imagination to use of images, video, live links and sound files.

Finally, I'd like to end with sneaking in a sixth principle for making your Media Week entries easier, one I've learned the hard way – **take it easy on yourself**.

Give yourself what you need to do your best work and it won't just be a joy to judge your paper, but also to a joy to write one too.