



Dave's Tips for Scripts

(See what I did there? Clever, eh?)

I have done voice-over work for Dynamic Works, an e-learning subsidiary of Dynamic Workforce Solutions, for a number of years. These tips are shared from my experience in dealing with issues that commonly arise.

Writing for a conversational style:

- Contractions aren't bad!
- Scale back the syllables!
- Shorten your sentences (so the narrator can breathe!).
- It is very rare for someone to say "etc." "e.g." or other similar things in conversation, so include spoken versions "and so on" "for example" "such as" in the script.
- When citing sources, use a way that makes sense when read aloud. A proper source citation for a written document is often not at all helpful when it is only spoken (e.g., "Whitmore, 1994" could be phrased "As James Whitmore said in a 1994 article in Popular Scriptwriting...."

Proofing and Quality Control:

- Read it out loud to yourself.
- Have it reviewed/proofread by another set of eyes. You know what you mean to say, but we may not follow your words to that same destination since we didn't have your head start.
- Be sure to supply pronouncers for any unfamiliar names, places, acronyms or foreign words. It is a best practice to furnish a link to a website or YouTube video where the word is pronounced.
- Be sure to specify things that you want pronounced or spoken consistently in a certain way.

Working with your voice talent:

- Be sure you send the final version to your narrator.
- Consider putting the script in table format to clearly delineate between the separate audio cuts.
- Judiciously use page breaks so the narrator does not have to turn pages while recording a segment.
- Specify the audio file format you want for the output (e.g. mp3, wav).
- If you want special emphasis on certain words, specify it clearly. Bold type or italics do not have a universal spoken meaning
- If possible, set up a conference call with your narrator to go over the script before recording. This greatly lessens confusion and cuts down on questions.
- The narrator wants to get it right for you the first time. Do all you can to help him/her accomplish this!

Scripting Inflection and Pronunciation In eLearning Narration



We all have been involved in recording audio narration for projects within the Partner Training Team. Here are a few recommended guidelines for making our audio narration scripts easier to read and follow.

Punctuation

- Use ellipses (...) or double dashes (--) in place of commas to create a more natural “pause” within sentences.
- It’s ok to double space after a period to give more space between sentences.
- Use **BOLDFACE CAPITALIZATION** for emphasis.
- Do not use “&”, “@”, “\$”, “#”, “%” – spell these out in the script instead.

Pronunciation

- Avoid tongue twisters – there may be an easier way to script the sentence.
- Write out the pronunciation for difficult names or uncommon terminology. (example: WPASS could be written out as WEE-pass)

Abbreviations

- Limit the use of abbreviations whenever possible.
- For abbreviations that need to be “spelled out”, use hyphens between letters and keep the letters on the same line. (example: C-W-W)
- For abbreviations that are spoken as a word, capitalize, but do not use hypens. (example: CARES)
- Spell out the first use of an abbreviation that will be used again. (example CARES Worker Web, or C-W-W)

Numbers

- Numbers one through ten should be written out, per our style guide
- Numbers from 11 to 999 can be represented using Arabic numerals
- Do not use Roman Numerals
- Write out numbers above 999 (example one-million nine-hundred-sixty-five thousand)
- Round large numbers when possible (example: nearly two-million)
- Hyphenate phone numbers for readability (example: 1...800...5-5-5...1-2-1-2)
- Write out fractions (example: one-fourth)