

The

Good Grammar

Manifesto



*An E-Book for*

*Grammar Fanatics*

# How *The Good Grammar Manifesto* Was Born

Being a “grammar stickler” is no easy feat these days. As many of you know, the fight against misused commas and apostrophes is not welcomed with open arms. In fact, when pointing out an apparent disregard for proper grammar and punctuation usage, grammar sticklers usually get a door slammed in their faces or a “Mind your own business!” Is this fair? I don’t think so; we enjoy and appreciate clarity and standards—two things that make life flow just a little easier. (It’s why stop signs, for example, are always red and octagonal and never purple and round.) But our attempts to “fix” such things and make them clearer are often met with such aggression.



Grammar sticklers believe that proper punctuation should not be reserved for the classroom. Indeed, these days, it is hardly taught or practiced, even there. Good grammar should be a part of our everyday lives. We should be able to walk down the street without seeing “apostrophe’s” abused on every corner. We should be able to go to the “Ladie’s” room without having a panic attack. Why, for example, does the bakery have a sign saying they are selling “doughnut’s”? What is this mysterious item that belongs to the doughnut, and why are they selling it? Does the doughnut know? Will the doughnut mind? And it’s stressful always wondering where the fire is when friends say they have a “flare” for fashion. Stop, drop, and roll! And we are sick of everyone treating the “media” as a singular noun!



From the feelings of frustration and anger at grammar abuse, *The Good Grammar Manifesto* was born. *The Good Grammar Manifesto* is a vow made by sticklers to fight grammar injustice and ambiguity worldwide. It is a pact that we make to one another: We will right punctuation wrongs, one apostrophe at a time.

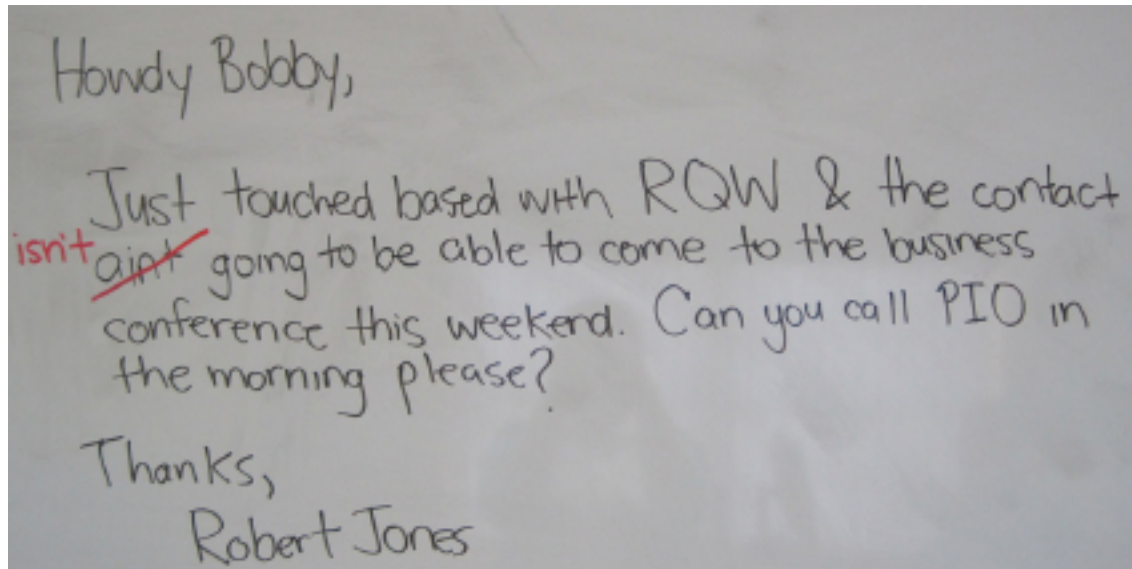
**Join the cause!**

**Enjoy *The Good Grammar Manifesto*.**

# Good Grammar Shows Professionalism

Despite the common practice of writing quick emails to clients and scribbling notes to your boss, good grammar in the business world is still a clear indication of professionalism.

*Ain't lookin' too professional there, Mr. Jones.*





In every office, there are one or two sticklers who will point out your punctuation errors, such as those in the note above. This may seem like fun and games—at least until your company’s biggest client, worth 20% of your yearly revenue, walks by and notices that you use “ain’t” in office correspondence. The fun ends quickly, as does all hope for that big promotion.

*Feel free to detest these sticklers because, really, don't they have anything better to do?*

Regardless of how boring our stickler lives may be, we get quiet satisfaction from correcting your grammatical errors—we’re happy to point them out at a business meeting in front of your colleagues and boss.

# Good Grammar Shows That You Are Educated

There is nothing that we sticklers hate more than poorly constructed sentences, and there is nothing we love more than a colleague or friend who can properly use a commonly misunderstood word. The way you express yourself speaks volumes about how educated and intelligent you appear.

*This e-book comprises...ugh...  
is comprised of seven chapters?*

Though the term “comprise” may seem simple enough, it’s used incorrectly all the time.

For example, it would be correct to say **“the periodic table comprises six alkali metals.”**

It would be incorrect, however, to say **“six alkali metals comprise the periodic table.”**

And **“comprised of”** is never right, though people say it all the time.



## Get over your Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia, my friend!

Using big words in a sentence when you shouldn't makes it seem like you're trying too hard or don't understand their meaning. Using them correctly, and when appropriate, is a rare skill—one that should be embraced.

**Incorrect:** Check out the luminescent bonfire at the neighbor's house!

**Correct:** Wow! Your sister is luminescent.

If you use big words inappropriately, we will not hesitate to put *red ink* all over your document. If you do use them correctly, however, you'll forever have won the hearts of grammar sticklers around the world.



Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia?

Nice!

# Good Grammar Means You Care



As ridiculous as this may seem, it's true: Good grammar means you care. If you carelessly send out professional correspondence full of spelling errors or submit papers riddled with grammatical errors, people will question the quality of your work. Can you blame them?

## *Would you want to work with John...*

Good afternoon, Mr. Jameson

I'm inquiring about the cost of your customizable USB drives. I can see from your web site that the cost varies between \$5 and \$10. Can you offer a cost savings if I am purchasing in bulk?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,  
John



*...or Jim?*

Hey Mr. J

Just wondering about the drives that can be custom and if I can buy them in bulk. If I can by them in bulk how much would it cost per drive to buy in bulk?

Can not wait to hear from you,

Jim

Both emails ask the same question, but one sounds like it is written by a professional who takes pride in his work. The other, well, I'll leave to the grammar sticklers reading this to judge for themselves. I predict that your blood has already started to boil.



# Good Grammar Makes It Easier for People to Understand You

Slang and abbreviations (let's not even get into emoticons!) are completely appropriate in some circumstances. In fact, the cultures in some companies practically demand their use. However, the vast majority of the world will not understand what you mean if you use improper spelling and punctuation.

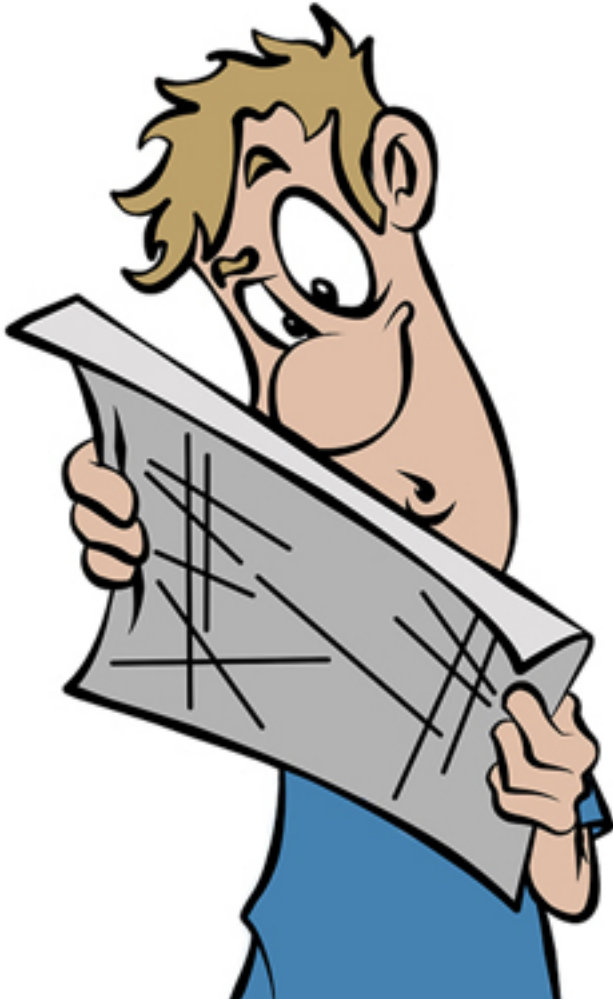
*I dunt know what ur sayin'!*



**Annoying:** Are u comin' to t-dhot with my 2day? I obvs want you to join, but I def have to take off early bcuz my mom needs da ride for 7.

**Understood:** Are you coming to Toronto with me today? I obviously want you to come, but I definitely have to be home by 7:00 pm because my mom needs the car.

*I still dunt get it!*



**Annoying:** Hi J, my ETA is 4. Traffic everywhere, but client :). Sorted out mishap; had to give 10dis, hope that ok. Ttyl.

**Understood:** Hi Jane, I should be back in the office around 4:00 pm, pending traffic. I sorted out the issue with the client by giving them a 10% discount, and they're happy now. I'll swing by your office when I arrive. Thanks, Bryan.

Some grammatically cautious people will find that deciphering unexplained abbreviations and unknown slang terms is annoying! So don't use verbal shortcuts, particularly in the business world.

# Good Grammar Clarifies Your Message

Grammatical and spelling errors can distract the reader from your intended meaning. The reader might be able to make sense of your intended meaning, but scattering punctuation marks throughout your sentence—while showing no clear intention of where they belong—is extremely distracting.



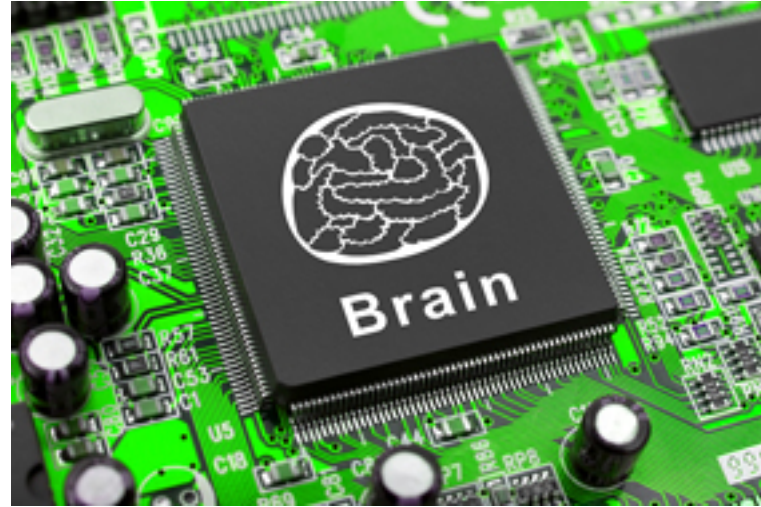


It is clear that these businesses are having a book sale and selling wedding dresses, but patrons can't focus on the advertisements because of the distracting apostrophe abuses. This is marketing money down the drain; in fact, it may have done more harm than good.



# Good Grammar Comes from Skills, Not Button-Pushing

The spell-checker on our computers and the autocorrect on our smartphones are wonderful gifts that have enabled thousands of people to avoid learning grammar. That being said, these tools are useful and can certainly improve the efficiency of our writing and the quality of the documents we create. However, there are times—more times than most of us would like to admit—when spell-checker and autocorrect simply don't work very well. At these times, one's grammar and spelling skills are really obvious.



## *Spell-checker can't help you “know”!*

I love that **egg-yoke**-colored paint you have in your living room. (should be “egg-yolk”)

Megan Bradt was the most accomplished writer in town, yet she wasn't **adverse** to making changes in her work. (should be “averse”)



I'm uncertain as to why I didn't get the job, Mr. Russell. I clearly stated that my work ethics were impeachable and that I had extensive experience in all faucets of marketing. (should be "impeccable" and "facets")

Even though we are far too pernickety, most of us would still get quite a laugh at a job application where the applicant's work ethics are described as "impeachable." I know that the irony is not lost on my fellow grammar sticklers, that someone has shown a lack of rigor by claiming—or by trying to claim—to be impeccable.

# Good Grammar Is Important Because We Write More Than Ever

With social media networks and text messages becoming primary forms of communication in our personal and professional lives, good grammar and punctuation have become increasingly more important, even as they become increasingly worse.

## *Really?*



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Expand



# Following *The Good Grammar Manifesto*

There you have it, our grammar-inclined friends: *The Good Grammar Manifesto* has taught us that grammar matters—it really, REALLY matters.

We're not saying that we sticklers need to correct each grammar abuse we encounter; indeed, that would eat up the majority of our time! (As mentioned, colloquialisms do have their place.) We are saying that grammar and punctuation play important roles in both our personal and professional lives. Taking care in our business correspondence makes us and the companies we represent look professional. Our message is clearer and more effective. No client will drop us because we tell them that our work ethic is "impeachable." And, our friends won't tease us for posting a status that reads, "For everyone who likes to cook and eat my boyfriend just posted a great recipe."

As the world of text messages and social media statuses continues to grow, it is becoming increasingly important to practice good grammar. We in the 21st century should focus again on good grammar. It's now up to us, the grammar sticklers of the world, to make grammar—and to make making sense—matter once again!

Good luck, fellow grammar sticklers!



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