



## ***Words at Work* endorsements and reviews**

**Top award winner of National Best Books 2009 Awards in category of writing/publishing.  
—USA Book News, October 2009**

“*Words at Work* offers you writers a painless way to be an author or just do some practical writing with style and effectiveness. Lynda McDaniel gives you a condensed course in lively writing. As someone who for thirty years has made his living by writing, I can tell you that the lessons in this book are the essential ones, and they are good. Catch the spirit in this book and follow the suggestions. I guarantee that your writing will improve and you'll be a happier communicator.”  
—**Thomas Moore, author of *Care of the Soul*.**

“Tips, techniques and tactics for better business writing. Professional writing coach McDaniel addresses the sad fact that business writing is becoming somewhat of a lost art, largely because of e-mail and other electronic communications. ‘When you write only short e-mail and text messages,’ she writes, ‘your ability to develop your thoughts shrivels, along with your ability to persuade, sell, teach, improve, guide, change, contribute, and create.’ The author provides a wealth of advice—including specific exercises—to prompt business writers to write well. Unlike most business-writing courses and books that are dry and dull, McDaniel’s work is a breezy, well-written how-to guide, nicely held together with stories of her experiences. The author is unafraid to illustrate some of her lessons with personal challenges and failures, which may be the best teacher. ... Thankfully, McDaniel presents all of the material in the book clearly, concisely, and with a healthy dose of encouragement based on the optimistic belief that ‘everyone can learn to write well’ and that ‘bad writers just stopped too soon.’ There are some good suggestions even for seasoned writers, such as ‘Exciting to Write = Exciting to Read,’ a section of specific ways to add interest and vitality to writing. The examples she uses demonstrate that even business writing can be done with flair. ... The book’s readability is proof positive that the author’s counsel is sound. A timely manual that business people at any level will find useful.” —**Kirkus Discoveries Review**

“*Words at Work* is fabulous, fabulous, fabulous. I’m going to recommend it in my graduate-writing courses. It’s so readable, and the style is lively and thoughtful.  
—**Dr. Irene Willis, educator, author, poet**

“This book is a joy to read and packed full with helpful hints and tips from the first sentence to the last. Whether you write emails or reports at work, or you just like to blog in your spare time, this book is for you and should be treated as a must-read.  
—**Clare Swindlehurst, Blue Archipelago Book Reviews**

“When 140 character tweets count as communications, writing seems a doomed art. Not so fast, says long-time writer and writing coach Lynda McDaniel. Beyond Twitter and text messages, all those digital bits and bytes on web sites, blogs, newsletters, and press releases are fundamentally ideas in words. If writing is not developed as a skill, she argues, the quality of our ideas rapidly degenerates. Her book is a passionate plea aimed at replenishing the idea wellspring of ‘American Ingenuity.’ McDaniel, in the tradition of Strunk and White, has created a guide perfectly suited to the contemporary workplace. Her personal writing journey, started while she was homesteading in North Carolina, sets the tone for her encouraging if-I-can-do-it, so-can-you approach. Decades of on-the-job writing netted horror stories aplenty. These enliven the learning process while embodying her enthusiasm for writing. ‘Even the rejects are part of the process,’ she notes. She models her lessons using vivid words, sentence structure variety, and even well-placed fragments, illustrating how to spice up even the dullest business communication. Succinct chapters show how to overcome procrastination; boost creativity; deal with inner (and outer) critics; get those crummy first drafts out on paper; work with the inverted pyramid (and what that means) to structure writing; cut jargon; directly address readers’ needs; and edit, edit, edit. McDaniel is on a mission to remove fear from writing; her use of image and metaphor provides unusual color. ‘It’s like making a loaf of bread,’ or ‘It’s more like picking blackberries’ [out of the brambles] ‘than picking huckleberries, [that fall into your bucket practically effortlessly.] Image-rich, witty approaches like ‘The Bad News Burrito’ give unconfident writers a visual, tangible understanding of writing craft. For those who loathe outlining, the chapter titled ‘Eureka’ includes a detailed explanation of a ‘Brain Dump’ technique that is the basis of an ‘organic outline.’ McDaniel explains step by step how to get there. Her discussion of “projection” for writers is unusually insightful and too rarely considered in other basic writing guides. Brief before and after writings illustrate the increased clarity available after editing, whether moving from passive to active voice or turning bureaucratese into clear prose. Though experienced writers may perceive there’s not adequate meat on the bones, this solid little book packs a punch—with powerful reminders for the pros while giving fearful writers a coach, cheerleader, and role model. McDaniel shares proven practices learned the hard way. This deceptively simple and engaging guide for workplace writers is highly recommended.”

—**Bobbie Middendorf, ForeWord Reviews**

“If you want—or need—to become a better writer, then get yourself a copy of *Words at Work*. Lynda McDaniel provides a treasure chest of practical information, but she offers readers so much more than ‘instruction.’ ... Lynda’s stories and examples will nudge even the most insecure writers to push aside their fears and trust their ability to write well. Lynda reminds us that ‘bad writers stopped too soon.’ Concise and entertaining, *Words at Work* is definitely a keeper. You’ll go back to it again and again for inspiration and practical advice.” —**Virginia McCullough, author of**

**100+ books**

“What’s wonderful about *Words at Work* is how grounded in real-life experience it is. No hocus-pocus or hokum. It’s a valuable resource for those who want to improve their business and professional writing. And it was a nice refresher for me too! (I’m a professional writer/editor)”

—**Anne Simpkinson, online managing editor**  
[www.Guideposts.com](http://www.Guideposts.com)

“Good writing skills are a solid predictor of career success and in this excellent and engaging reference, McDaniel’s mantra is ‘You CAN improve your writing.’ If you want or need to become a better writer, you need this book. ***Words at Work*** will help you banish your fears of writing while providing you with all the tools you’ll need to confidently tackle any writing task you’re called on to handle.”  
—**Peter Bowerman, author of The Well-fed Writer series**

“For those of you out there ready to take the leap, and ratchet your writing capabilities up to the next level, I’ve got just the book for you! Lynda McDaniel, a business writing coach and Director of the Association for Creative Business Writing, has just released a short book called ***Words at Work*** that contains twelve chapters of great advice on how to become a better writer. I love her mantra that ‘good writing is really good editing’ and that even the best writers fight their way through multiple drafts before a final polished product emerges.”

—**Matt Youngquist, expert in the field of career coaching; founder of Career Horizons, Bellevue, Wash.**

“As a professional, I have had the opportunity to read and use the wisdom from many self help books and the key is finding one that is timely, doesn’t demean and is immediately useful. McDaniel achieves this by teaching you the process from beginning to end, including the little used rough draft and self-critique. In order to become a good writer, you need to become your audience. McDaniel shows you how to see your writing through the eyes of others, how to target your audience and how to make more out of less. I found her insight, experience and teaching style a very nice blend. Whether you are just starting out, well seasoned or just wondering if your style is helping or hurting, ***Words at Work*** will give you the answer. It is a great desk reference that I completely recommend.”  
—**Gregory J. Saunders, Allbooks reviewer**

“Creative writing takes time and talent; but the basics can be learned. ***Words at Work*** will equip executives and creative types alike with the tools to make your writing come alive.”

—**Andrew Glasgow, Executive Director  
American Crafts Council, New York, N.Y.**

“***Words at Work*** is an awesome book that will become my writing bible.”

—**Robin Andrews, communications expert  
Foster City, California**

“Research tells us that the number one skill to succeed in the work world is the ability to communicate. Lynda McDaniel shows us how to become a stronger business writer. Her book is one of the best resources I’ve found anywhere. Thank you, Lynda!”

—**Randy Siegel, “The Career Engineer”  
Build Your Influence.com**

“A must-have for anyone who aspires to be a better writer -- whether it's to improve your performance on the job, land a better job, create snappier copy for your website, or write everyday communications without embarrassing yourself (or your company). This is NOT a grammar book or a dry-as-dust business textbook. ***Words at Work*** breaks new ground by showing you how to overcome ‘writer’s block’ and organize your thoughts before you start writing. It’s as if Strunk and

White's 'The Elements of Style' merged with Julia Cameron's 'The Artist's Way' to create something quite fresh: a guide to using your creative ('right-brain') powers to write more effectively in a rational ('left-brained') business world. —**Gina Willis, former journalist/editor**

“*Words at Work* by Lynda McDaniel is a fabulous book. For once, a business book about documents and writing that is full of life; not dry and overwhelming! Reading this book felt like flowing along a river, and I loved every minute of the ride. One of the best things about the book is that the author herself never leaves you. My favorite books are the ones where the authors stay present through examples of their own lives and the lives of others. Then, they weave the stories and examples into their topic, gracefully. Lynda has achieved this in a way that shows her understanding and professionalism, combining the best of journalism with solid, practical business tips, techniques and writing. This book is more far reaching than even the title would suggest. I found myself taking her words to heart for other projects I am working on that, while not "about" business writing per se, have writing in them. Everyone should buy this and have it at work for their personal use and encouragement and to share with others--supervisors; peers; vendors and clients. FIVE STARS!!!  
—**Jennifer Capella, The Capella Group**

“The author gives good advice on writing for results, emphasized by stories from her own experiences, both good and bad. She has obviously walked down this challenging path herself. She encourages readers as she has her students: Don't be discouraged by those who would thwart you if you really want to write. Her clear examples and exercises lead you through the process of improving your writing. Her message is that anyone can write, and by the time you are part-way into this book, she has made a believer out of you!”

—**Kathy Shearer, publisher, Clinch Mtn. Press**

“I love to write, and I want other people to love for me to write. There. I said it. Words rock! Choosing them. Putting them in order. Learning new ones. What could be more fun?! If only enthusiasm was enough. My work did not seem to resonate with many people. Feedback from my instructors (and a couple of editors when I was brave enough to try) was scant, vague and just plain mean. My inner critic admonished, 'You're fooling yourself! You'll never be a writer.' *Words at Work* helped me reframe my negative writing experiences. Tame my 'ornery editor.' Excavate the constructive criticism from impatient teachers or unkind editors. (If only all that feedback had been framed in a 'bad news burrito.') I've carried the shame of 8 ½" x 11" red X's on term papers for 20 years. 20 years! After struggling with passive voice, to learn it has a place is freeing. To recognize a 'darling,' admire it and delete it is empowering. With a rare combination of authority and vulnerability, McDaniel outlines the evolution of her writing life. As I moved through the chapters, I practically saw her pick up each of the tools and tips she shares. The skills are not limited to use in the workplace. *Words at Work* showcases words at play, too.” —**Emily Davis, physical therapist**

“It's comforting to know that writing isn't easy, even for an accomplished author like Lynda McDaniel. In *Words at Work*, McDaniel provides encouragement and inspiration with stories from her own career as a journalist and writing coach. Banish the negative talk from the "ornery editor" on your shoulder and use the simple techniques in this book to plan, edit, and polish your business writing. Look elsewhere for advice on grammar and punctuation--this book is about writing more powerfully, originally, and persuasively.”  
—**Devin McLaughlin, librarian and facilitator**