

Your Voice is your gold:

Ten tips on how to mine it



No-one sees the world like you.

No-one has the same experiences as you.

No-one enjoys capers fresh out the jar washed down with a little red wine quite like you. Okay, so that might be me, but you get the overall picture.

Sure, there may be many billions of us on this crowded blue planet, but only you are you.

And that right there is your selling gold – best you learn how to mine it. These **TEN TIPS** will help take your product – YOU – from behind the scenes to center stage.

1. *Embrace Who You Are.* If you're a romance writer and proud, then wear that mantle and scream it from your high-rise's roof top. Let your romance writer flag fly. Be the best dang romance writer out there. Hiding behind some strange non-speak title is not going to help your cause. Exit, stage left.
2. *Write How You Speak.* The fastest way to eradicate who you are is to write how you think you should speak, rather than how you actually speak. This is how people end up writing corporate-ese, using words like 'extrapolate',

'maximize', and 'optimizable' (in US English). Would you use these in an actual sentence about love and conflict and happily ever afters? If, yes, why? Genuinely, *why*? Anyone trying to sound smart or worse — literary — ends up sounding a boob. Don't be that person.

3 *Write How You Speak But Use Not---So---Common Sense.* If your

words are liberally sprinkled with eff bombs, swimming about with the turdles and the faeces, then remove these from your written communication. Except for dialogue. And even then, sparingly. Similarly, if you have your own made-up language, this is not necessarily the time to start airing it (wait till book three, at least).

4 *Get Super Specific.* Your specifics. Someone once wrote on a resume that

'eating' was their hobby. Eating? Eating what? Hand-crafted truffles delicately chilled in the winds of the Arctic? Sloppy Joe's slumped on the couch while they Netflix'd and chilled? Or the physical act of stuffing, chewing, and swallowing? Who sounds the most interesting character or the three? What would be the specific interest on your resume? How is that relevant here? Because those specifics — those subjects you know more about than anyone else on this messed up planet — help separate you from the grey crowd.

- 5 *Toss Out the Clichés Like Yesterday's Rubbish.* See where you've written something like, 'Her hair was as soft as a feather' ..., 'Her stilettos clicked on the floor' ..., or, 'He was as slippery as an eel...'? Delete, delete, delete. Ever watch one of those beauty pageants where they all want world peace and to save the children? Did you believe any of them? Sure, it might have been true, but after the fiftieth capped smile response, it sounds same-ole, same-ole. Don't do that to your writing.

What do you really think when you feel soft hair? Or hear clacking shoes? Or are you censoring yourself so as not to offend our delicate sensibilities? Head back to number two.

- 6 *Don't Neglect the Hobbies.* I know – whenever anyone asks me about my hobbies, it sounds like a question we learnt in French class (I'm still waiting for someone to ask me where the station is, so that I can answer accordingly). But, sometimes the drama, passion, and intrigue missing from a manuscript, lurks under this oft forgotten heading. This is where your average accountant turns into a slash: accountant/deepwater diver, accountant/little league coach, accountant/phantom of the opera (Saturday nights only).

Trust me – readers are looking for variety. The kind that you with your

addiction to DC comic characters can provide.

7. *Watch Your Tone.* Are you super-casual, chatty? Full of wit and one-liners?

Or overall a little cynical about the world? Your tone speaks volumes about you. Decide which one best suits you and where you're going. Trying to fit in with another tone, looks and feels tone deaf.

8. *One Line to Rule Them All.* Quick – think of one sentence that describes who you are/your mission/your purpose/your goal in writing. One sentence. Think of it as your personal brand tag. It's what you stand for, at a glance, for someone looking for the big picture — your theme. Yeah, you're going to notice that this will creep into your writing as well. Let it.

9. *Three's Company.* Somehow everything works better in threes. 'Sheer driving pleasure', 'Impossible is nothing', 'I'm lovin it'. What are three words that describe you? Best to go with nouns...but remember that earlier point about specifics. An accountant is meh. But, a number warrior is starting to show sexy promise. Number warrior + entrepreneur + small business gladiator is way more telling about this number cruncher in the trenches than accountant + business owner + small business advisor.

10. *Make Them an Offer They Can't Refuse.* You know the drill: you're in an elevator and in walks the reader tribe/agent/editor you've been wanting an interview with foreeeever. You've got ten seconds, maybe twenty, to give your pitch. You've got your Three's Company, your One Line to Rule Them All, and and and...what are you offering? What do you, the erotica

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whisperer/paranormal goddess/contemporary queenbee writer, have that all of those other writers don't? What demonstrates you in all your fabulousness YOU-niqueness and helps them? Yep, that's the clincher, right there. How are you helping them? All the fabulousity in the world doesn't mean a thing, if it ain't got that need-fulfilment. How are you helping the world? What's your role in this whole crazy planet Earth project?

*Head to the workbook to uncover more about you, your voice,
and how to mine it.*

Want more? *How to Write a Romance* might be for you.

Head over to www.hearomancewriting.com for more details.

