



## Style

One particularly common weakness of your style is *telling, not showing*. “**Show, don't tell** is an admonition to fiction writers to write in a manner that allows the reader to experience the story through a character's action, words, thoughts, senses, and feelings rather than through the narrator's exposition, summarization, and description. The advice is not to be heavy-handed, or to drown the reader in adjectives, but to allow issues to emerge from the text instead. The advice applies equally to fiction and nonfiction.” (Wikipedia)

For instance, on page 3, you tell us about Geraldine's relationship with Frederic and about his infidelity in a few lines. This has a huge potential for development and it could be turned into a great backstory.

Most of the book is written in report-writing style. Take, for example, Davidson's trip to London. It is described extensively, cluttered with details bearing no importance (e.g. where his wife sat in the car, pp. 113 -114). This second-hand report, “he went there, he did that”, tends to become tiresome eventually and the lack of atmospheric scenes will fail to engage the reader at an emotional level. The whole of Geraldine's investigation in Brighton is written as if it were her own report for the Agency. When you say, “This is where Geraldine saw him dealing drugs” on page 59, revealing the result of her investigation and discharging the suspense for the reader, you write this in such a matter-of-factly manner that it completely fails to achieve the intended effect on the reader.

Another style sin is the long length of your sentences. E.g.: “[quote]” on page 3. I have marked in pencil in the margin some instances where the sentences go on for too long; this creates a confusing effect on the readers, as we would struggle to assimilate or remember the information conveyed in the sentence.

I have also noticed the sparse use of dialogue. Up until Chapter 4, dialogue is not used at all. Consider adding more dialogue where long fragments are written in a plain narrative style.



Your writing is cluttered with adverbs. On the first page alone, you have seven adverbs ending in “ly”, which gives your writing a heavy, overused feeling. In the end, too many adverbs used too often will create a reading fatigue and readers will develop a tendency of skipping them throughout the book. E.g.: “[quote]” (p. 77). The best technique of weeding out the overused adverbs is to combine the verb-adverb into a more suggestive verb. E.g. “He walked confidently, but failed miserably to block the negative thoughts from his mind” (p. 222) Apart from being a too common cliché, “miserably” is a redundant add on to the verb “to fail”, since all failures are supposed to be miserable after all. Consider using more suggestive verbs, such as: he marched through the tunnel, he speeded up, he hurried up, he hasted towards the end of the tunnel, he rushed, he paced up, but could not block the negative thoughts from his mind.

Another method would be to replace the verb-adverb with more descriptive action. E.g.: he felt his confidence growing as he walked through the tunnel, while still trying to block the negative thoughts from his mind.

To find all the adverbs ending in “ly” in your manuscript, use the Find function on your Word processor and type “ly ” (don’t ignore the necessary blank space at the end). Click Find and you will locate all the adverbs in the middle of your sentences. Consider revising them one by one. Type “ly.” with the dot at the end and you will find all the adverbs at the end of your sentences. That’s how I found that in the last 25 pages I have received via email from you, you have used a staggering 135 “ly” adverbs.

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