



# Editing: Words' best practice

## Why use an editor?

Editors work with writers for the benefit of readers.

They help writers get their message across with greater clarity, elegance, forcefulness and insight.

If it's written, an editor can help. Books and newsletters, brochures and educational materials, advertisements and scholarly articles, government and annual reports, websites and poetry—an editor's deft touch can improve their effectiveness in reaching their target audience.

It's all about time and money—think what you could save in explanation and correction after publication.

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**The purpose of writing is communication; the purpose of editing is to improve communication by removing distractions.**

Janet Mackenzie DE,  
*The editor's companion*, 2004

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# IPEd.

To advance the profession of editing

## What do editors do?

An editor can:

- > act as an impartial first reader before you launch your words on the world
- > structure your documents logically
- > choose the right style and language
- > help you use illustrations to advantage
- > remove ambiguity and clarify your meaning
- > correct grammar and spelling
- > simplify obscure language and bureaucratic, technical or specialist jargon
- > help you get straight to the point
- > ensure consistency in style and language
- > help you manage large communication projects
- > make your novel more appealing to an agent or a publisher.

Editors can provide three levels of service, depending on the stage of production:

- > proofread for errors as a final check
- > copyedit for grammar, spelling and consistency
- > offer substantive or structural editing, where the editor is involved from the outset, advising the writer/s how they can improve their work.

Editors gain their skills through formal education, experience, on-the-job training, mentoring and other career paths. Anyone can say they are an editor but skilled editors are communication specialists and an invaluable resource for all publishing projects.

## What is an accredited editor?

The Institute of Professional Editors Limited (IPEd), Australia's peak body for the editing profession, manages a national scheme for accrediting editors. It ensures editors who meet Australian Standards for Editing Practice are known and acknowledged for their highly developed skills and professionalism.

Accredited editors (AEs), those who have passed a rigorous exam, and distinguished editors (DEs), those who were appointed by IPEd to mark the first exams, meet the highest editing standards.

You can be confident in giving custody of your words to accredited and distinguished editors. They will discuss your work with you, preserve your voice and message, and correct and improve the text within agreed timelines and budgets.

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### Institute of Professional Editors

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[www.iped-editors.org](http://www.iped-editors.org)

IPEd is the peak body for seven state and territory-based societies of editors; each can put clients in contact with professional and accredited editors.

Canberra  
[www.editorscanberra.org](http://www.editorscanberra.org)

New South Wales  
[www.editorsnsw.com](http://www.editorsnsw.com)

Queensland  
[www.editorsqld.com](http://www.editorsqld.com)

South Australia  
[www.editors-sa.org.au](http://www.editors-sa.org.au)

Tasmania  
[www.tas-editors.org.au](http://www.tas-editors.org.au)

Victoria  
[www.socedvic.org](http://www.socedvic.org)

Western Australia  
[www.editorswa.com](http://www.editorswa.com)