9 tips for better writing.

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What this talk is really about

- Beginning to write

It’s a little like having a new car or bike. Your thoughts are primitive, your writing untested. Driving your thoughts is going to break this - you’ll get dents / scratches and may even crash. But you must take your writing from the theoretical to the practical. You adapt and shape your skills through experience. Your car may no longer be perfect, but you’ll be a much better driver.
1. Give yourself time to think

Good writing requires both action and introspection.

The right balance is personal.
2. Your writing will never be finished

Iteration and refinement.

Vectors to rasters.
3. Simplicity is key, but it's difficult

Ambiguity hides complexity and misunderstanding.

Linguistic virtuosity == Nolan's Tenet
4. Writing is both additive & subtractive
5. Be forgetful

The curse of knowledge.
Take a step back
6. Variety is key

Writing is creative, either in what you write about, or in the way you write it.
7. Ideas need a hook

This works best if the hook also motivates you to write.
8. Docs as code

It can be easy to write something functional. It's a lot harder to write something optimal.

Writing docs can be a lot like writing code - you have something to communicate and while it's quite easy to construct something functional - it takes careful thought to develop and iterate an optimal solution.
9. Writing is a position of privilege

You are answerable only to the reader.

Being the writer puts you in a privileged position.

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The writer is the colon.

You are the voice of your reader in a one-way conversation.

You have an obligation to your reader to ask and answer the questions they are unable to ask, or...

don't know what to ask.
10. Words are a serial interface

You may sometimes need to build an idea from two different viewpoints because first impressions count.
11. Open Documentation Academy

Learn open-source software documentation skills with Canonical.

https://canonical.com/documentation
Thank you. Questions?