

Write On Code of Ethics

Effective April 10, 2015

As a contributor for Write On, you are tasked with providing the public with original, compelling and entertaining fiction and/or accurate, thorough, well-supported informational non-fiction. We rely on the professional integrity of our contributors as we strive to maintain a voice of quality and value.

1. Plagiarism

- a. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, to plagiarize is "to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source." It is an attempt to steal, pass off, summarize, paraphrase or quote words, images or other creative pieces of work as your own when the information is not common knowledge.
- b. Reusing phrases, sentences or paragraphs from a previously published work authored by you without properly citing the origin will be considered plagiarism according to Write On.
- c. If content is not properly attributed, it can be perceived as plagiarism. Make sure to give credit within the article to the original source from which the information is derived. When appropriate, use quotation marks to indicate material from other sources.
- d. Never submit duplicate or similar content. This is essential, as it directly affects the appeal of your work to the target audience. Each assignment you submit must be composed in your own words and contain fresh, new content, even if the subject matter is similar to that in another assignment with a related topic.
- e. We often publish series of content on similar topics, but we cannot accept any "cut-and-paste" content that is nearly identical to each other.
- f. Write On cannot use any information that:
 - i. You acquire as a result of a confidential relationship with a third party, such as attorney-client privilege or a business contract.
 - ii. Is proprietary, or that the owner has defined as a "trade secret."
 - iii. Isn't in the public domain or requires a fee to use.

2. Title Ownership

- a. If your content has been rejected, you may republish your work on a different site, but you may not use any Write On originated title. If we reject your work, the content you wrote belongs to you, but the title provided by Write On is our intellectual property and may not be republished.

3. Outsourcing

- a. Write On requires each piece of content be submitted by its original Write On-approved creator, **OR**
- b. Writers submitting a joint publication, product of collaboration, contracted or ghost-written work must have full copyrights and/or permissions to publish the works being submitted.
- c. Any indication that you have submitted work not created solely by you or that you do not have the appropriate copyrights or permissions may result in a refusal for Write On to render services, for associated submissions to be rejected from publication or promotion, or your ability to transact business with Write On to be either permanently or temporarily suspended.

4. Sensitivity

- a. Practice sensitivity when dealing with topics related to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability. Our goal is to provide high-quality prose that is entertaining to a wide and varied target audience, and discrimination of any form impedes this goal.
- b. Do not use inappropriate or offensive language in your work. This includes profanity and derogatory words or phrases in works of non-fiction or using language that greatly surpasses what is reasonable to define the scenes and environments of your fictional works.
- c. We recognize each individual comes with his or her own set of beliefs regarding many of these sensitive subjects. However, in order to provide quality content to Write On, avoid bringing any such individual values or agenda to your work. All non-fiction content must remain independent from any bias that prevents an objective consideration and all fictional works must be marketable and non-objectionable to the largest segment of the e-book purchasing market.

5. Libel

- a. Libel is an extremely serious charge, which can result in the termination of site privileges. Libel and slander are defined by the Media Law Resource Center as "legal claims for false statements of fact about a

person that are printed, broadcast, spoken or otherwise communicated to others." Avoid any potential libel charges by taking the following measures of precaution:

- i. Thoroughly investigate each and every statement regarding a person or party's actions, intentions, character, history or achievements.
- ii. Ensure each statement you include in a non-fiction work regarding a person or party is factually correct and verifiable beyond a doubt.

6. Conflict of Interest

- a. Any situation from which a contributor profits or exploits for personal or influential gain can be defined as a conflict of interest and is strictly prohibited. In short, contributors must remain independent from their sources, and decisions made regarding an assignment must be exclusively in the interest of preserving the accuracy, reliability and objectivity we strive to purvey in our works of non-fiction.
 - i. When on assignment, seeking or accepting any payment, gift, service or benefit (whether in cash or kind) offered by sources, companies, a subject of assignments or people with whom Write On does business is strictly prohibited.
 - ii. As a contributor, you must not accept reduced or complimentary rates, deals or any other type of special treatment that could be interpreted as a payment for a particular type of coverage (favorable or unfavorable) or is offered because of your relationship to Write On.
 - iii. In some instances, it may be customary to offer gifts on special occasions, such as a religious holiday. To refuse such a gift may serve as an offense. In deciding the suitability of a gift, consider a society's culture and traditions, and recognize that a gift of considerable value must be refused with a courteous explanation of our policies. If you're in any doubt about whether or not to accept a gift, discuss the situation with a Write On staff member.
 - iv. Avoid any involvement that might create a conflict of interest (real or perceived) and therefore jeopardize Write On's professional standing. For example, using a spouse,

family member or friend as a source solely for the exposure of such source serves as a conflict of interest.

- v. Remain free of any associations that may compromise Write On's credibility. For example, a contributor that is affiliated with a specific product or brand and therefore chooses an assignment relating to that product or brand creates a conflict of interest.
- b. If in doubt about the legality of a business investment, personal or business relationship, community involvement or any other potential conflict of interest, disclose the situation first with a staff member of Write On.
- c. As a contributor, you are obligated to report outside activities that could potentially cause a conflict of interest before they develop.

7. Misrepresentation of Self

- a. When researching information, disclose your identity, unless the information sought is readily available to the public. Misrepresenting yourself or impersonating anyone is strictly prohibited.

8. Objectivity

- a. As a contributor, you must remain neutral about the non-fiction topic on which you are covering. This includes conducting proper research that presents both sides of a story. If your work advocates a specific position, you are responsible for substantially supporting your position with reason and logic.
- b. Refrain from obscuring or failing to report certain facts or details that could jeopardize the objectivity and reliability of the content.
- c. You must ensure that content does not read or sound like advertising (real or perceived, obvious or furtive) and should shun any vague language that could blur the lines between advertorial and editorial.

9. Identifying Sources

- a. When you use facts gleaned from a person, organization, publication, broadcast or outlet, the source and material used must be accurately portrayed and attributed. Write On cannot accept anonymous or unidentified sources under any circumstances. The sourced information must echo reality and remain free of any biases. Misrepresenting or falsifying information gleaned from a source is strictly prohibited.

Selective use of information should never be used to prove an agenda, as it provides an unbalanced point of view.

- b. When necessary, place extracted excerpts or exact quotes in quotation marks, with the understanding that quotes must never be altered or "cleaned up." It is acceptable to delete a repetitive word or clause (marked with an ellipsis) only if the removal does not alter the context of the quoted material in any way.
- c. Write On has an ethical obligation to correct all factual errors, and it is your responsibility as a contributor to report any inaccurate information presented in an assignment.

10. Writing with Accuracy and Truth

- a. It is strictly prohibited to falsify or misrepresent any information presented in your content. By submitting assignments to Write On, you are thereby agreeing that all information is objective, factual and does not distort the truth or create ambiguity.
- b. Avoid misleading information or "staging" events. If reenactment is essential to present information, it is imperative you label it as such.

11. Being Contacted by the Press

- a. If contacted by members of the press regarding issues related to your branded prose, feel free to engage in a professional and PR friendly fashion. If the press has any questions regarding the publication of your prose, the distribution process of your published work, or your contractual agreement with Write On, please direct all inquiries to authorservice@writeonpress.com. Also, keep in mind Section 5 of the Contributors Agreement signed upon your acceptance to the Service: "You are an independent contractor and are not authorized to make representations or commitments to third parties on behalf of us or our affiliates."

12. Social Networks

- a. As an online content creator, you have a right and an obligation to exercise your freedom of speech, and we ask you to remember to be respectful, critical and accurate in claims made toward others on personal blogs or other social networks.

13. Affiliate Links

- a. In order to provide readers with an unbiased experience when interacting with Write On content, adding third-party affiliate links to

any part of your article, even if the link is relevant to the topic, is strictly prohibited. Affiliate links are defined as any website from which you will profit financially when visited, such as Amazon accounts.