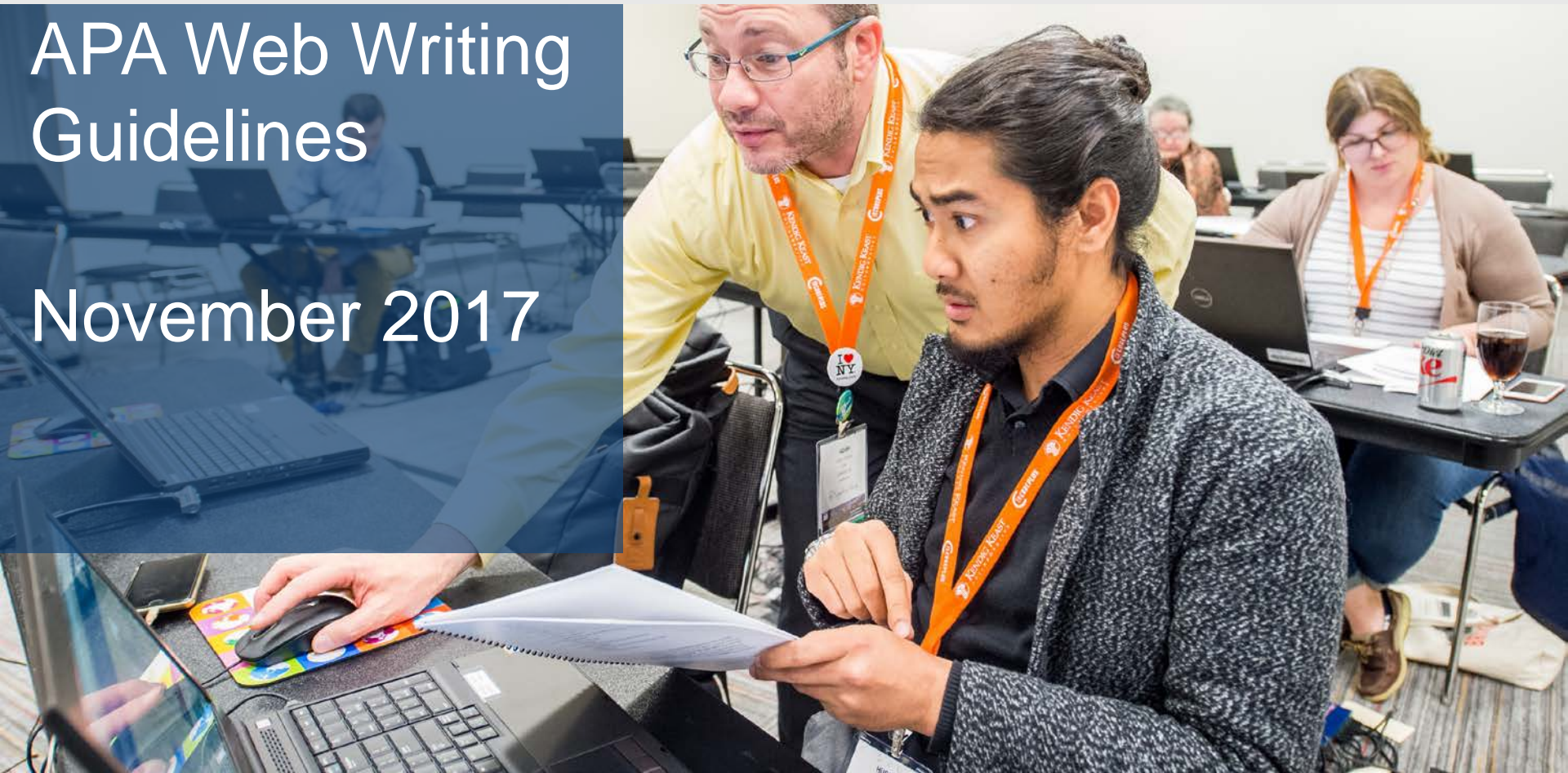


APA Web Writing Guidelines

November 2017



American Planning Association
Making Great Communities Happen

Use APA's desirable tone & style

- Friendly
- Simple
- Approachable
- Convey leadership
- Clear
- Collaborative
- Direct
- Engaging
- Empowering
- Trusting
- Positive
- Authentic





Follow the “F Rule” of writing for the web

Fast

- Scannable text
- Short paragraphs (2 sentences, tops)
- Group related ideas together
- Concise copy, with no jargon
- Active verbs
- Just-the-facts approach
- Subheads to signal topic changes
- Bullets and numbered lists





Follow the “F Rule” of writing for the web

Front-Loaded

- Concise, direct, and SEO-friendly headlines
- Headlines are 65 characters or less (including spaces)
- 500 words and 3 links maximum per page
- Avoid keyword stuffing (no more than 2x/paragraph; no more than 6x/per page)
- Write inverted-pyramid style, with the most important information at the top





Follow the “F Rule” of writing for the web

Friendly

- Conversational tone (Take the talking test: If anything feels forced, rephrase it)
- Authentic voice
- Write with purpose, consistent with APA’s mission (keep in mind what makes APA different, why APA matters, and what problems APA solves)
- Ensure related links are easy to find
- Enable readers to easily share content, contact authors/staff





By following these guidelines, APA will gain...

- A more effective piece of writing
- Better engagement with constituents
- Content that helps members do their jobs, improve their communities, and advance their careers





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