

# Pharmaceutical REPRESENTATIVE®



## Words

### Master the written word

Pam Marinko reviews Deborah Dumaine's "Write to the Top"

Considering the types of correspondence we use every day, it's becoming more important to use the written word with impact and influence. When you're alone with your computer, you may not be thinking about how many people are reading what you write – but trust me, it's many more than you'd imagine. How you write and communicate matters even more as a remote salesperson, because the written word is often all people see or know about you.

Deborah Dumaine's "Write to the Top" describes strategies for writing more persuasively, collecting your thoughts more effectively and getting them on paper more quickly. Among the key concepts described in the book, writing from the perspective of the reader is my personal favorite. Dumaine explains in detail why it is so important to write in a "reader-centered" way. It's so easy to fall into the trap of focusing on our own products or objectives. "Write to the Top" gives practical advice and examples of how to refocus on the audience.

The book begins by reminding the reader why the written word, and business writing in particular, is so important. "There are two challenges of which corporate writers are blissfully unaware," Dumaine writes. "The first is professional image, how you are perceived by your managers and peers. ... Second, if you work in a large company and are known only on e-mail, you face the challenge of how to differentiate yourself and advance your career." With e-mail becoming the communication tool of choice for many in today's pharmaceutical companies, the book points out that it's imperative to write effectively and be aware of how each e-mail might be read (and reread when forwarded).

The author goes on to cover writing challenges ranging from reports to presentations to sales letters. In each case, she provides a process and

templates to help writers organize their thoughts and then produce written communication that will achieve the desired effect. For anyone who ever has to put a PowerPoint presentation together, this book will be invaluable in the planning process. Another thing I really like about this book is that it is not a rigid system that you have to follow to the letter in order to benefit. Dumaine does a great job of explaining that you should focus on the parts that are relevant to your job or individual needs. In fact, in the front of the book is a quick start guide that will direct you to the right chapter if you have a specific issue that you're working on.

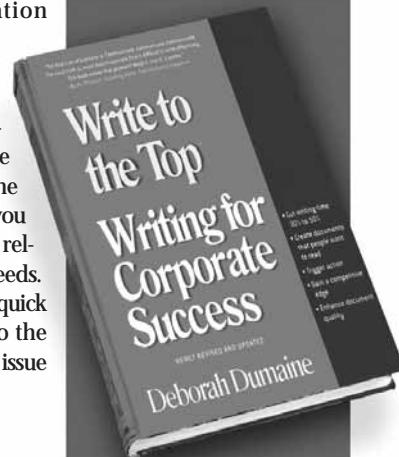
### Is it worth reading?

I can honestly say that this book has something for everyone. In fact, I believe it should be required reading for anyone who enters the business world, whether in pharmaceutical sales or any other line of work.

To be sure, "Write to the Top" is not a story or group of business vignettes. It's a down-to-business how-to book with practical applications, relevant examples and ideas to guide your style. The diagrams and user tools provided in the book are terrific and very user-friendly. So while this isn't a great vacation book to curl up with, if you're looking to improve how you're perceived in your organization or to write and put presentations together more effectively, this book is a must-have.

Pam Marinko has been in the pharmaceutical industry in various positions since 1993. She is a co-founder of the Atlanta Medical and Pharmaceutical Representatives' Association and a member of the Pharmaceutical Representative editorial advisory board. If there is a book that you would like Marinko to review, please e-mail Pharmaceutical Representative at [pr@advanstar.com](mailto:pr@advanstar.com).

## Report Card



★★★★★

### Relevance

How relevant the book is to pharmaceutical sales representatives.

★★★★★

### Visual Aids

How well the author uses charts, diagrams or graphics.

★★★

### Innovation

Whether the author is writing on a totally new concept or looking at an old topic or concept in a new way.

★★★★★

### Overall

An overall rating. (not a composite score)

*The ratings are based on a five-star system.*

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