

*Write Now!*

## On Writer's Block



*The Author Series from Praeclarus Press*



I've just started a class on blogging and social networking, and I have homework for the first time in about 20 years. Of course, when you write, you have "homework" almost every day. But this is official. I *paid* for this.

So what did I have to do? I needed to generate 10 potential blog postings on the topic of my choice. That's a fairly hefty

amount, but I write all the time. I blithely thought, "no problem."

Then I sat down to do it. And I sat and sat and sat. I played on Facebook for a bit. Still nothing. I was really stuck. It didn't help that I had waited until the last minute. (Did I learn *nothing* from my years in school?) I finally gave up and went to bed, after first posting a note on my Facebook page about being stuck. Within minutes, notes of encouragement, sympathy and advice came pouring in. Much of the information shared was stuff I knew. More to the point, it was stuff I also taught. But there is something really valuable in sharing experiences with others.

I was also really struck by something else. Writer's block is remarkably common, even among people who write all the time. And it's probably because the process of writing is often not particularly pleasant. This truth was brought home to me recently when I was chatting with an amazingly prolific colleague. As we talked about writing, I told her that I wished I could write with less drama. Without that voice in my head keeps saying that I should have started sooner, should have done more research, should really write this better. She said, "you too"? We looked at each other and laughed.

I think our experiences highlight that writing is hard work. Sometimes, really hard work. But wrestling with the blank page, or blank computer screen, is part of the process. And our willingness to engage in this process is what differentiates the writers from the wannabes. Writers work through those difficult moments and persist even when it isn't fun.

As for my class, I did sleep on my assignments. I got up the next morning, played on Facebook for a bit, went to Starbucks, and then sat down and drafted 9 out of 10 of my blog entries. They're not great. But they're a start, and I can take it from here. So thanks everyone who offered their encouragement and support. Let me know when I can do the same for you.

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