

Heather Ina Mack

Editorial Portfolio

Content Editing | Developmental Editing | Brand Messaging

Selected writing and editorial samples

Heather Ina Mack

Editorial & Content Development Professional

Ghostwriting • Developmental Editing • Content Refinement

Overview

I specialize in refining long-form content for clarity, structure, and narrative coherence across corporate, brand, and narrative writing. My work focuses on strengthening the organization of content, the flow of ideas, and the message's effectiveness in serving its intended audience.

I approach editing as a structural process—evaluating content at both the message and readability level to ensure alignment between intent, tone, and execution.

Core Editorial Focus

- Structural clarity and content organization
 - Developmental editing for flow, logic, and coherence
 - Narrative refinement and pacing in long-form content
 - Tone consistency across brand and corporate communication
 - Reader-focused clarity and accessibility improvements
 - Collaborative feedback to improve writer execution
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How I Work

I review content at the structural level before focusing on language refinement. My process prioritizes clarity, intent alignment, and readability, ensuring that each piece communicates its message without friction or ambiguity.

When providing feedback, I focus on identifying structural gaps and offering clear, actionable direction that supports revision rather than rewriting.

This collection includes selected samples across three categories:

- Long-form narrative and memoir-style storytelling
- Brand messaging and voice refinement
- Corporate informational content (SEO-style instructional writing)

Each sample reflects both original writing and editorial decision-making within defined content goals or client parameters.

Sample 1: Corporate Narrative Development

Interview-to-Manuscript Story Development

Context Note (Client + NDA-Aligned Work)

This sample was developed for the founder of a privately held company who wanted to document his personal and professional journey in book form. The original material consisted of extensive interviews, company history, personal recollections, and brand-related media. Identifying names, locations, and business references have been modified to protect confidentiality.

My role involved conducting interviews, reviewing supporting materials, identifying narrative themes, and transforming fragmented memories into a cohesive first-person narrative. The objective was to preserve the founder's authentic voice while creating a compelling story that connected formative life experiences to later business success.

Business Story Excerpt:

(Excerpt adapted for portfolio presentation. Names, locations, organizations, and personal details have been modified or generalized to protect client confidentiality while preserving the narrative structure, voice, and developmental approach of the original manuscript.)

Success stories rarely begin with polished memories and neatly organized turning points. More often than not, they emerge from adversity, uncertainty, and a series of difficult lessons that only reveal their value in hindsight. The journey toward success is rarely linear. It is shaped by circumstance, resilience, and the decision to believe there is a purpose beyond one's beginnings.

Before I built anything worth talking about, I learned how to survive. Long before professional accomplishments, recognition, or financial success, there were challenges that tested my resolve and shaped my character. The experiences that influenced me most were not the easy victories but the difficult moments that demanded perseverance and adaptability.

If I were to identify the period that most influenced my future as a business leader, it would be my early adolescent years. During that time, the world felt limitless. Possibilities seemed endless, and I approached life with a curiosity that allowed me to absorb lessons from every experience. Those years brought both remarkable opportunities and significant hardships, creating a foundation that would ultimately shape my ambitions and perspective.

One of the most influential figures in my life was my father. He possessed a natural ability to connect with people and an entrepreneurial mindset that earned the respect of those around him. Watching how he navigated relationships, solved problems, and pursued opportunities left a lasting impression on me. His confidence and determination demonstrated what was possible through hard work, vision, and persistence.

Equally influential were the mentors who challenged me to see beyond my circumstances. One educator, in particular, believed in the potential of students whom many others overlooked. Through high expectations, discipline, and genuine investment in our growth, he transformed the way we viewed ourselves and our futures. He encouraged critical thinking, healthy debate, and intellectual curiosity, creating an environment in which achievement became the expectation rather than the exception.

Under his guidance, my classmates and I began to realize that our circumstances did not define our capabilities. Academic success became more than a goal—it became evidence that our futures could be different from what others expected. Those lessons extended far beyond the classroom and became principles that continued to influence my approach to leadership, business, and life.

My parents each contributed unique perspectives that helped shape my worldview. One instilled creativity, empathy, and a strong sense of purpose. The other demonstrated discipline, confidence, and business acumen. Together, they provided a balance of values that influenced how I approached challenges, opportunities, and relationships throughout my life.

Financial literacy was another lesson introduced early. Concepts such as saving, investing, personal responsibility, and long-term planning became part of everyday conversations. These experiences provided an understanding of money management long before I entered the business world. While the lessons seemed simple at the time, they laid the groundwork for decisions that would later influence both personal and professional success.

Looking back, it is clear that many of the defining moments of my life occurred long before any career achievements. The challenges, mentors, family influences, and early lessons in responsibility created a foundation that would eventually support future opportunities. What appeared to be ordinary experiences at the time became the building blocks of a much larger story.

Editorial Approach

- Conducted multiple interviews to gather personal history and business context
- Identified recurring themes, values, and formative experiences
- Organized non-linear memories into a structured narrative progression
- Developed a consistent first-person voice based on interview patterns
- Balanced emotional storytelling with business relevance
- Connected childhood experiences to leadership development and entrepreneurial growth

Sample 2: Brand Messaging Sample

Context Note (Client + NDA-Aligned Work)

This sample was developed for a marketing agency team profile under NDA. Names and company identifiers have been generalized to maintain confidentiality. This brand messaging system was developed from individual interviews conducted with team members. The original material consisted of raw conversational input rather than structured written copy.

My role was to synthesize these interviews into a cohesive brand messaging system, ensuring consistency in tone, clarity in role descriptions, and alignment with overall brand voice.

Team Messaging

The team is presented as a collaborative group of professionals with diverse strengths contributing to shared client goals in branding, marketing strategy, and digital execution. The original narrative emphasized personality, relatability, and culture; the refined version preserves this warmth while improving clarity, structure, and role definition.

Each profile reflects a combination of professional function and personality traits, unified through a consistent editorial approach.

Individual Profiles (Refined Examples)

Team Member – Marketing & Creative Strategy

This team member brings a collaborative and relationship-focused approach to client work, combining storytelling ability with strong attention to detail. Known for balancing creativity with structure, they contribute to marketing automation, video production, and client communication efforts. Their approach emphasizes building meaningful professional relationships and aligning creative execution with client vision and goals.

Team Member – Marketing Technology Specialist

This contributor is recognized for strong communication skills and a service-oriented mindset. With experience supporting technical marketing systems and campaign execution, they focus on building reliable structures that support client acquisition and performance outcomes. Their work emphasizes consistency, problem-solving, and operational dependability.

Team Member – Social Media & Content Support

This individual supports content development and digital engagement initiatives, contributing to social media strategy, administrative coordination, and client visibility efforts. Their strengths include adaptability, eagerness to learn, and maintaining consistency across fast-paced content workflows.

Team Member – Operations & Client Support

This role focuses on internal coordination, organizational support, and client-facing operations. The individual is responsible for maintaining workflow efficiency, supporting team communication, and contributing to the smooth execution of internal systems that support client delivery and business operations.

Team Member – Client Strategy & Account Leadership

This contributor brings a relationship-centered and empathetic approach to client account management. Their strengths include communication, project coordination, and maintaining alignment between client needs and strategic execution. They support both collaborative and independent work environments with a focus on consistency and professionalism.

Team Member – Branding & Marketing Leadership

This individual contributes strategic oversight across branding, marketing planning, and customer journey development. Their approach emphasizes systems thinking, problem-solving, and alignment between creative strategy and business objectives. They support cross-functional collaboration across teams and client initiatives.

Team Member – Design & Creative Execution

This contributor specializes in visual communication and design execution, supporting brand identity, graphic development, and creative production. Their work reflects adaptability, responsiveness, and a strong ability to translate concepts into visual systems that support client goals.

Team Member – Brand Marketing Direction

This individual contributes to brand messaging strategy and marketing direction with a focus on clarity, alignment, and audience engagement. They support client growth initiatives through structured messaging development and feedback-driven collaboration.

Team Member – Digital Strategy & Innovation

This contributor brings curiosity and innovation to digital marketing execution, with a focus on customer experience, technology integration, and performance-driven strategy. Their approach emphasizes adaptability, analytical thinking, and continuous improvement in digital systems.

Editorial Approach

- Organized unstructured interview content into a consistent profile structure
 - Balanced personality details with professional role clarity
 - Standardized tone across multiple contributors while preserving individuality
 - Removed redundancy and clarified language for readability
 - Established consistent hierarchy across all bios (role → contribution → supporting personality)
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Outcome

The final result is a cohesive brand messaging system that maintains individuality while ensuring consistent tone, structure, and clarity across all team profiles.

This approach strengthened readability, improved brand voice alignment, and created a unified narrative experience across contributors with diverse communication styles.

Sample 3: SEO Content Article (Before & After Edit)

Title: How to Tell if Chicken is Done with and without a Thermometer

Overview:

This sample was created within a client-defined instructional SEO template that intentionally uses repetition and structured phrasing to support accessibility and comprehension. The editorial focus was on refining clarity, flow, and organization while preserving the original structural intent.

(Before) Article with Client Template

How to Tell if Chicken is Done with and without a Thermometer

Chicken has always been a significant component of meals all over the world. Cooked chicken is a necessary skill that many cooks of all skill levels should know. Cooking chicken properly will prevent food poisoning and other serious illnesses.

Quick Answer

Fully cooked chicken has an internal temperature of 180°F (82°C) for a whole chicken or 165°F (74°C) for any cut of chicken. Using a thermometer or a simple touch test can help you know if the chicken is cooked. Cutting into the chicken or looking for visual cues can also ensure you have cooked chicken.

Chicken is a significant component of many cuisines. Properly preparing chicken will ensure your meat is safe to eat. It will also be delicious upon completion.

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done With & Without a Thermometer

There are four main ways to tell when you have cooked chicken. You can use a thermometer or touch the meat during preparation. You can also cut the chicken or use visual clues while cooking. Each method can be beneficial, although some can be challenging if you are new to cooking.

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done Using a Thermometer

The first time you use a digital thermometer can be daunting, but it is a simple tool to use in the kitchen. It is preferred that cooks use thermometers to ensure chicken is done. You must use several steps to receive a correct reading on the chicken being prepared.

Step 1: You never want the tip of the thermometer to touch the bone. The thermometer should never be close to the bone. It will give you a false reading, making you think the chicken is warmer than it is.

Step 2: Ensure that you are placing the thermometer in the thickest part of your chicken. Still, you must make sure to keep the thermometer away from any bones. If you are dealing with a whole chicken, the breast is the best place to put the thermometer.

Step 3: The ideal temperature reading for a whole chicken is 180°F (82°C), or 165°F (74°C) for chicken cuts. It is okay to have a little pink still appear inside the chicken as long as the temperature reads as suggested. The color has nothing to do with how done the chicken is. You can always use the thermometer as a backup method.

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done by Touching

If you do not have a digital thermometer handy, you can also check it by touching the chicken. This method tends to be the trickiest to get the hang of, especially if you are new to the world of cooking. The "pinch test" will give you the practice you need without ever using actual food products. You will need both of your hands to complete the pinch test.

Raw Chicken: Hold up your least dominant hand, making sure it is in a relaxed position. Raw meat feels loose like the skin underneath the thumb; when your hand is open, pinch it. Compare the feeling of raw chicken to the skin underneath your thumb. Doing this will help you understand the concept.

Medium Rare Chicken: Use one hand to touch your thumb to your middle finger. The other hand to pinch the skin underneath the thumb. Medium rare meat feels like the skin underneath your thumb. Practice how it feels to recognize the subtle difference between them.

Medium Chicken: Touch your thumb and ring finger and use the other hand to pinch the skin under the thumb. Medium cooked meat feels similar. Repeat the different finger positions if necessary.

Well Done Chicken: Touch your pinky to your thumb. Well-done meat feels similar. While touching the chicken, the goal is to have a well-done texture.

The only way to master the skill of the "touch and feel" technique, you will need to practice this method often. If you decide to use this method and are still a new cook, use another way for back-up until you master the skill.

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done by Cutting into It

Another method you could use until you get the hang of the "finger test" is to cut into your chicken. This method is easier for home cooks to use. You may cause the meat to dry out and not be as flavorful in the end when cutting into your chicken.

Using A Knife To Cut: When you cut into the chicken, you are looking for the juices that run from it to be clear in color. If the chicken still has red or pink juices flowing from it, the chicken will need to cook longer. Make small cuts in the chicken to keep it juicy.

Using a fork to Prick: Instead of cutting into your chicken with a knife, you can use a fork to prick the meat. Fork pricks are much smaller and allow for the chicken to remain juicy.

Additional Tip: Cut or prick into the same piece of chicken on the opposite side. The first reason is to prevent the other parts you are preparing from drying out during cooking. The other reason is the chicken will cook unevenly.

Cutting or pricking is specifically for chicken. It does not apply to other meats you may prepare.

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done Using Visual Cues

The final method you could use to check your chicken is visual cues. This method, as well, can be as tricky as the “touch and feel” technique. The more you cook chicken, though, this method will become the most used of the other ways put together. There are several things to look for to ensure that your chicken is cooked.

1st: Look at the coloring of your chicken while it is cooking. It can be hard to judge if you are grilling or cooking chicken over high heat. Higher temperatures will brown meat quickly; meanwhile, the inside still could be raw.

2nd: See if the size of your meat has gotten smaller slightly. If the chicken has not shrunk any, it needs more time to cook.

3rd: Finally, you can still see what color the juices are that expel from the chicken you are cooking. Juices will naturally begin to leak from the meat you are cooking. It is an indicator of how done it is.

This method is the most out of all the other ways put together.

Wrap Up

The easiest methods for checking chicken are using a thermometer and cutting it. Once you get the hang of cooking chicken, the other ways to check chicken will become more used. No matter which method you use, let your chicken rest for five minutes before serving.

(After) Edited Version:

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done (With and Without a Thermometer)

Chicken is one of the most widely used proteins across global cuisine, but cooking it properly is essential for both safety and quality. Undercooked chicken can pose serious health risks, while overcooking can lead to dry, less flavorful meat. Knowing when chicken is done is a fundamental kitchen skill for cooks of all levels.

Quick Answer

Chicken is fully cooked at an internal temperature of **165°F (74°C) for cuts** or **180°F (82°C) for a whole chicken**. A food thermometer is the most reliable method, but you can also check doneness using touch, visual cues, or by cutting into the meat.

How to Tell if Chicken Is Done

There are several reliable ways to check if chicken is fully cooked: using a thermometer, checking by touch, inspecting visual cues, or cutting into the meat. Each method varies in precision and ease, depending on experience level and available tools.

1. Using a Thermometer (Most Reliable Method)

A digital food thermometer is the most accurate way to ensure chicken is safely cooked.

How to check:

- Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the chicken
- Avoid touching the bone, which can give inaccurate readings
- For a whole chicken, check the thickest part of the breast or thigh

Safe temperatures:

- 165°F (74°C) for chicken pieces
- 180°F (82°C) for whole chicken

A slight pink tint may still appear in some cases, but temperature—not color—is the most reliable indicator of doneness.

2. Checking by Touch (Advanced Skill Method)

The “finger test” can help estimate doneness, but it takes practice and is best used alongside other methods until mastered.

Basic idea:

Firmness increases as meat cooks.

- **Raw:** Soft and loose, similar to a relaxed hand muscle
- **Medium:** Slight resistance, less give
- **Well-done:** Firm with little to no bounce

To practice, compare the firmness of the palm beneath your thumb while touching different fingers:

- Thumb to index = soft
- Thumb to middle = medium
- Thumb to ring = firmer
- Thumb to pinky = firmest

This method improves with repetition but should not replace temperature checks when precision is needed.

3. Visual Cues (Helpful but Less Reliable Alone)

Visual inspection can support other methods, but should not be your only indicator.

Look for:

- Meat turning fully opaque (no translucent areas)
- Juices running clear rather than pink or red
- Slight shrinkage as moisture cooks out

Be cautious with high-heat cooking, where the outside may brown before the inside is fully cooked.

4. Cutting or Piercing the Meat (Backup Method)

Cutting into chicken is a quick way to check doneness when other tools aren't available, though it may release juices and affect texture.

What to look for:

- Juices should run clear
- Interior should be white throughout with no raw or rubbery texture

If needed, use a fork to gently pierce rather than slice to minimize moisture loss.

Final Tip: Let It Rest

After cooking, let the chicken rest for **at least 5 minutes** before serving. This allows juices to redistribute, improving texture and flavor while ensuring even doneness throughout.

My Editorial Observations

1. Reduced repetitive phrasing to improve readability while preserving instructional intent
2. Reorganized sections to prioritize quick-answer clarity and scanning behavior
3. Consolidated overlapping explanations to reduce cognitive load for the reader
4. Strengthened structural hierarchy to improve flow across multiple instruction methods
5. Maintained original client-defined format and instructional tone throughout

About the Editor

Heather Ina Mack specializes in developmental editing, narrative development, ghostwriting, and content refinement. Her work focuses on transforming complex ideas, lived experiences, and raw source material into clear, engaging content that aligns with audience needs and organizational goals.

Core Strengths

- Interview-Based Content Development
- Developmental Editing
- Narrative Structure
- Brand Messaging
- Content Organization
- Editorial Feedback
- Voice Preservation

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