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Time issues

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Date: April 08, 2006 05:01 PM

Author: Julia bammel (juliabammel@wowway.com)

Subject: What a mess.

I have my Morson's book concerning number formats. Sometimes, however, things just don't look right following the rules. The following are examples from a transcript I'm currently working on, and I'm not sure how to handle the formats. The first concerns time. If I follow the rules, it looks like I have it written, but it looks funny using so many different ways to write times so close together.

Three to six o'clock on both days, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., and we had to empty this house out. We went in at three and finished at 6 p.m.

In the second example, I have a problem with dimensions. I know a digit should not generally be used to start a sentence; however, I also understand that dimensions should be written using digits. So how would you handle this sentence?

Q. How big were the buckets?

A. Four feet by two feet by eighteen inches and one foot by two foot by twelve inches.

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Date: April 08, 2006 05:16 PM

Author: Elizabeth A. Howd (elizabethhowd@hotmail.com)

Julia,

Due to the same issues on the time, I have recently been considering writing "3" when "three" is said and "6:00" when "six o'clock" is said, at least when elsewhere in the sentence it is necessary to use digits (as in your example). I'm interesting in hearing more thoughts on this topic.

I personally disregard the rule on writing out numbers that would otherwise be digits just because they are at the beginning of a sentence.

Not much help, I'm afraid.

Libby

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Date: April 08, 2006 06:00 PM

Author: greg adelson (greg_adelson)

Subject: writing numbers

There are inconsistencies on this topic. I know how much it kills us to start a number figure at the beginning of a sentence. Where there is a series of numbers I would start the sentence with a figure. If it is was a large dollar amount with multiple figures and that started the sentence I would go with figures. I can't cite a specific rule. I do know there is a rule in my court manual about keeping numbers consistent, that is, not to mix figures and numbers that are spelled out in the same sentence. I think it is a lot easier to read a series of numbers using figures. Whatever you do, I think you should reason it out and be consistent.

Greg

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Date: April 09, 2006 04:01 PM

Author: Anne Bowline, RMR (anne@professionalreporting.com)

Subject: numbers

Julia --

I think consistency is important and greatly aids readability. I may be all alone in the world on this, but I use numbers for ALL times, b/c I think the meaning is most clear that way.

>>>Three to six o'clock on both days, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., and we had to empty this house out. We went in at three and finished at 6 p.m.<<<

I would write your sentence this way: 3:00 to 6:00 on both days, 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and we

had to empty this house out. We went in at 3:00 and finished at 6:00 p.m.

>>>Q. How big were the buckets?

A. Four feet by two feet by eighteen inches and one foot by two foot by twelve inches.<<<

Q. How big were the buckets?

A. 4 feet by 2 feet by 18 inches and 1 foot by 2 foot by 12 inches.

Here again, maybe it's just me, but I don't let it bother me if a Q, A, or regular ol' sentence begins with a numeral.

Anne

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Date: April 09, 2006 05:49 PM

Author: Candis Bradshaw (candisbradshaw@gmail.com)

Subject: Out of curiosity...

How do you write "three o'clock"? Do you write 3 o'clock or 3:00 o'clock?

Thanks, Anne! I hope you have a great day!

:) Candis

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Date: April 09, 2006 06:09 PM

Author: Anne Bowline, RMR (anne@professionalreporting.com)

Subject: time

Hi, Candis. "Three o'clock" is 3:00 for me.

Anne

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Date: April 09, 2006 09:29 PM

Author: Peppy Strahan, RPR (PepStrahan@aol.com)

I don't know where I ever picked this up, but if someone is talking about time but they don't say "o'clock", I write it with the colons. If they say "o'clock," I write out the number.

I went to bed at 9:00.

I went to bed at nine o'clock

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Date: April 10, 2006 12:11 AM

Author: Lillian Freiler, RMR (CrtRptr@aol.com)

Subject: Morson's

Rule 184:

Numbers that precede "o'clock" are usually written out, and numbers that precede a.m. or p.m. are usually written as figures. When the CR hears the expression "o'clock", that is what should be written. The ciphers, or zeros, that follow a colon in time elements do not stand for the spoken expression "o'clock."

Rule 186:

When the time is expressed in hours and minutes, the time may be spelled out or written as figures if only two words are expressed.

Lillian Freiler

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Date: April 10, 2006 10:29 AM

Author: Laurel Eiler (laureltn@comcast.net)

Lillian:

that's one I got Lillian to give us a hall pass on with the implementation of word indexes. Clients don't always know to look for times by finding the word "o'clock" in a key word index. (Plus show 100 people the expression 8:00 and at least half of them would verbalize "eight o'clock." Finalize it with "I saw her at eight o'clock or maybe 8:15" in a transcript and how it looks like absolute yuck,

We got Lilly's blessing for the reasons cited above to conform our times. (g)

Laurel

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Date: April 10, 2006 04:02 PM

Author: Elizabeth A. Howd (elizabethhowd@hotmail.com)

Subject: Hurray!

Laurel, that's excellent!

Question for anyone: If they said, "I saw her at eight, nine thirty, and ten o'clock," which should it be?

"I saw her at 8, 9:30, and 10:00."

OR

"I saw her at 8:00, 9:30, and 10:00."

Thanks,
Libby

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Date: April 10, 2006 10:20 PM

Author: Anne Bowline, RMR
(anne@professionalreporting.com)

Subject: times

Libby, I'd go with "I saw her at 8:00, 9:30, and 10:00." As I said, I like consistency.

Anne

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