

Adventures in Outsourcing: Cooking with TaskRabbit

Overview

This is such an interesting article! Again, add some humor and emotion. It would be easy to do this in the section where you are trying to find a TaskRabbit. Involve the reader. Make them feel like they were receiving the rejections with you. This section can come alive. Just because it's written from your point of view (pov), the sentences don't have to involve 'I.'

I loved the way it ended. You have talent as a storyteller! Some tweaks here and there, and you will be an excellent writer.

Explanation

Explain what TaskRabbit is. Start the Finding a TaskRabbit section with a paragraph explaining what it is. Give some background. I had no idea what this was until I googled it. This explanation will involve your readers more because they will start thinking about TaskRabbit and if it will work for them. Then, they will want to see how you used it. The recipes aren't the focus of this section, so don't lead with it.

Seamless. This comes out of the blue. "I've stopped ordering from Seamless." You haven't talked about before.

ProsperBot. Same as Seamless.

"I"

This is a tough one, but you use the word "I" too often. 79 times. Yes, this is from your pov, but a reader doesn't want to hear repeated words.

"I tend to be more limited by available time than money, so if I think I can save an hour by spending \$30, I'll generally do it." ->

"My time is more limited than money, so if \$30 saves an hour, then it's worth it."

"I've never had a TaskRabbit decline a job before, so I figured it was just a fluke." -> "Interesting. No TaskRabbit has declined one of my jobs before."
This does two things. It removes two 'I's, and it adds emotion.

Helping verbs

"I've been trying" -> "I've tried" or "I tried"

Unnecessary words

Really – It's rarely necessary. You used this six times.

Some – This word is too generic. You used this five times.

"It's always kind of awkward" – "It's awkward"

Very

"Calculated everything out" – "calculated everything"

"A lot more" -> "more"

"I'd rather let her focus on the cooking" -> "I'd rather her focus on cooking"

"I made sure to briefly walk her through" -> "I briefly walked her through"

"At times, I briefly forgot she was there." -> remove briefly

Repetitive words

"I can order, as **BBQ**, deli sandwiches, **BBQ**, pizza"

Decline(d) – thesaurus.com is useful. Said no, rejected, refused, dismissed, etc.

"**my** house with me, but **my** kitchen is isolated enough from the rest of **my** apartment" -> "my house, but the kitchen is isolated from the rest of the apartment"

Parentheses

Make them into sentences or separate the text with commas.

"I've found some sites that offer free keto recipes (my favorite being [ruled.me](#)), but I don't really like cooking." -> "Since I don't like to cook, I use sites that offer free keto recipes. My favorite is [ruled.me](#), but XXX and XXX are also good." Offer a choice. Readers like choices.

Colons

What about replacing these with em or en dashes when you cannot make it into a complete sentence? – or –

“I thought this would be a good opportunity to experiment with outsourcing: I can pick the recipes and hire someone else to handle the rest.” -> “I used this as an opportunity to experiment with outsourcing. I choose the recipes and hire someone to hand the rest.”

Commas

When a sentence has ‘and,’ put a comma before the ‘and’ when the second clause has a subject and verb. The same holds true for other connections, such as so, then, etc.

“I offered her the job and she promptly declined.” Comma is needed.

“I can pick the recipes and hire someone else” Comma is not needed.

“I still cook some of my meals like scrambled eggs or steak,” You must put a comma before like.

“I’m about even with my previous spending, because I tend to spend about \$10-20 on lunches through Seamless and my dinners tend to be \$15-30 (including tax, tip, and fees).” Leave the comma out before because. ->

“Spending is about the same as before. Previously, I spent \$10-20 on lunches through Seamless and \$15-30 on dinners.”

Upgrade vocabulary

Pick -> choose

“buy all this” -> “buy everything”

“to get through” -> “completely use”

“had gone unused” -> “were unused”

Reorganized -> organized

“She did her thing” -> “She cooked”

Sentence length

This is personal preference, but for non-technical copy, I think shorter is better.

“But she charged \$26/hr, which is relatively inexpensive, and I was willing to take a gamble that I’m probably a much easier food critic than most people that would hire and review a TaskRabbit chef.” -> “She charged \$26/hr, which was in line with the first three people. I decided to take the risk, knowing I’m probably a more forgiving food critic.” Adding emotion here. It’s giving a hint to who you are. You aren’t a foodie. If this isn’t the case, rephrase it to fit who you are.

Involve the reader

“Leah showed up right on time the evening she was scheduled. I showed her my kitchen and handed her the printed recipes and she was off to work.” -> What was she like? Bubbly personality, dull, etc.

What are you trying to accomplish with this story? If it’s just the facts, you’ve done that, but I think you can do more. This is creative writing. Have fun with it. Make the reader laugh. Make the reader want to keep reading. Take the programmer language out of this one. “As a corollary”? No, just no! By the way, you misspelled that word in the post.

Why did you have the second dessert prepared in Session 3? Are you a dessert person? Was this for a party? You started to do this with “which were amazing.” This is where an ‘!’ is appropriate. “(which were amazing) -> “By the way, the cheesecake cupcakes (include a link) were amazing!”

I really like the Conclusion section because it’s telling me more about you. It can be cleaned up, but the tone appeals to me as a reader. Although the second paragraph is programmer language again. “Refine the process” -> “Since I don’t enjoy...”

Headers

Be less technical.

“Costing Methodology” – Your target audience isn’t attracted by this. I know because I am your target audience. “Determining the Costs”

“Raw Numbers” -> “The Specific Numbers” or “The Actual Costs”

“Price Analysis” -> “The Bottom Line”

“Conclusion” -> “What’s Next?”

“Have everything ready” -> “Prep the kitchen”

POV

You switched to we.

“so we’d maybe add \$1-2 to the cost of each meal to get closer to reality” ->

“so add \$1-2 to the cost of each meal for a more accurate estimate.”

Misc.

Don’t put a ‘.’ after oz

Sometimes ‘when’ is a better choice than ‘if’

“so I end up having to throw some ingredients away **if** I can’t use them in other meals”

Tips for Hiring TaskRabbit Chefs

Think about the logical order of the tips. The order seems random.