

Ten Tips on How to Write a Good Review

You see them everywhere; on the back of books or magazines, listed on websites, on posters if they are films and sometimes whole sites on the internet are geared to listing them for every conceivable product. So, what are they? And, why are they so important?

They are reviews and they are important because they help consumers decide whether or not they want to purchase that particular product or service. They are also an excellent marketing tactic for the companies or authors who request them. The trouble is, anyone can write a review but not everyone can write a good review. Quality will be the key factor in encouraging the consumer, to buy or not to buy that particular product, so that review must grab them almost straightaway.

So, how do you write a good review? Easy. Here are my Top 10 Tips to becoming a good and respected reviewer whatever the product. Please note these tips can apply to anything that you need to review. Some of the suggestions might even be obvious but you will be surprised at how often they are omitted:

1. The most important tip is to enjoy what you do. You must be an avid reader and enjoy discovering new talent and products. If you don't, it will show in your review and you are in the wrong job.
2. As you read or browse, make a mental note or write it down if you think you will forget, of specific areas of the product that spark something in you. This could be an act or situation in a novel that you can personally relate to. For example, I could relate to the title of one novel that I reviewed recently. I was interested to see if the title mirrored my own personal experiences. Whether it did or didn't, in the end, is immaterial but what I felt on a personal level was then added to the final review.
3. Think about what the product says to you as a reviewer. Do you hate it? Are there particular facts or information that you feel are incorrect e.g. historical dates or myths? Does it excite or anger you? What other emotions does it instil in you? As an example, I read and reviewed a novel some time ago, that stated, what I saw as, two incorrect historical facts. It didn't mean that I hated the novel, far from it, but it did mar my enjoyment of it. I stated my feelings in the final review, but unfortunately I received no acknowledgment that the author had received the completed piece. So, be warned. It does not automatically mean your opinions will be liked or accepted. You will, however, gain respect and a good and fair reputation as a reviewer. If you are not honest with yourself and/or your clients, then what is the point of the review?
4. One of my bad habits in writing is repeating the same word over and over again. Make use of a thesaurus to find another way of saying a similar thing.
5. Make sure you have all relevant information correct in your review. Sometimes, it can be easy to forget the name of a specific character in a novel, product name or even contact information for the author/webmaster. Check the facts again. Try not to make any errors in that respect otherwise it looks like you haven't even looked at the product or that you care about what you are reviewing.
6. If you are reviewing a novel or book, don't just write what the novel is about in your own words and have, at worst, one line of your own thoughts. Believe me I have seen reviews out there like this. This is an example of a very poor review. A review is an opinion; yours. The reader wants to know what you thought of the novel not just what the book or product is about even if it is written in your own words. Remember: That is what the synopsis is for!
7. Unless you are working for a review site that asks for this way of writing a review, don't mark separate areas of the novel or product with ratings or points. This method is extremely hard and boring to read. Reviews for books should be short and to the point. They are supposed to be designed to attract the buyer in a limited time. Reviews are not always the most exciting things to read unless you are looking for a specific item. Using this way of reviewing guarantees the loss of interest or sale for your client.
8. Develop your own style of writing. When I started reviewing I had to follow a set standard review format because that was what was required at the site I worked for. Over the years, I have stuck to this basic format but have developed my own style and pattern. Personalise your work.
9. Communicate with your clients. Have a happy, cheerful, friendly disposition and they will submit to you again in the future.
10. And, finally, have fun!

So, there you go. If you follow the tips above I can guarantee you will be well on your way to becoming a proficient reviewer.

Happy Reviewing!

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About the Author

Carrie White has written a number of erotic short stories, self published a few of her own e-books and has been published both in print and online. More of her writing can be viewed at <http://www.hentracks.co.uk>