

THE PURPOSE OF WRITING

The basic purpose of writing is to communicate. There's some information you either want or need to convey to somebody else in a written format. Except for people who are not literate, communicating by writing is not a big deal—it's easy. Leaving a note for your roommate or writing a letter to your mom or taking notes in class—these are all things we do easily and are examples of written communication either between us and others or between us and ourselves. Writing a paper for a class is really no different. Of course, there's the issue of the grade and of completing assigned work that we might find boring or difficult, but it's still basically about communicating. If you will approach your writing assignments more as a way of telling your TA or your professor some information and less as a test of your knowledge or a lousy way of taking up your time, writing will be much easier for you. Believe it or not, having the so-called *Nike* attitude can help you more than you think.

Things You HAVE To Do

1. **KNOW** what the assignment is. If you don't understand it, **ASK** for explanation. It's always much easier to procrastinate if you don't really get what you're supposed to do. Don't let the excuse of "But I don't understand it—whine whine whine" keep you from doing what you have to do.
2. **KNOW** how the assignment will affect your grade. How much does the work count for? Can you do a re-write or revision if you don't do well the first time?
3. **KNOW** your deadlines. Why bother to write a paper or complete a project that is already marked down even before you turn it in? **BE ON TIME.**
4. **KNOW** what you know. Go as far as you can and then, when you've reached the limits of your current knowledge, **GET HELP.** Don't stop unless you are finished.