



The Author Guide Course for non-fiction authors

Insight 6 – Organisation makes writing easier

[Video tutorial for Insight 6](#)

Content development

Now you have a structure and a subject for each chapter. The next step is to create the content for each chapter as headings, or with a sentence outlining what that section is about.

You can do this with pen and paper if that's how your creativity flows best, or in a Word document or a spreadsheet.

For *The R.A.V.E. Toolkit* my chapter structure looked like this:

Personal story

Paragraph intro

Quotation

Overview of key points

Main content – How to (the main body of the chapter)

Tips & tools

The System

Why this is important

The template

As I mind-mapped each chapter, I also had a number of headings or one liners about what I would write about in that chapter.

With that in hand, writing the book becomes much, much easier. All you are doing is filling in the gaps! If you know your stuff, that should be relatively easy.

Planning first, will also make it much easier to maintain flow and you don't need to worry about blank page syndrome. You'll never have to face such a thing!

With a plan you'll be surprised how fast your book will progress.

Aim to develop a complete list of headings for each chapter.

Information gathering

Now you have a framework for each chapter, and you'll need to gather some of the content to add. Things like quotations, stories, anecdotes, case studies.

For my last book I had a spreadsheet that looked a bit like this:

	Chapter title	Story	Quote	Template
1.	Six honest serving men	The FAB chart	6 honest serving men, Rudyard Kipling	Brand essentials
2.	Your brand	Corporate training	Second chance ... impression, Will Rogers	Ideal client profile
3.	Content strategy	Attitudes/Inside News ideal client	If you don't know where you're going ... , Lewis Carroll	Content strategy

So your next job – and this week's assignment – is to do your information gathering for at least a couple of chapters, more if you can find time to invest.

Style sheets

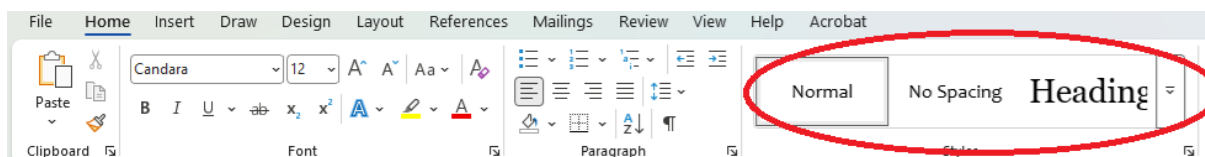
Your publisher or, if you're self-publishing, your layout designer will ensure your book is formatted for the correct page size and that the text flows correctly, but working with a style sheet will make both your life and their life much easier.

If you've never used a style sheet before, this is a bit about how they work.

You format your body text, headings, etc. to be a specific font type and size. It doesn't matter which font or size you choose, because if you apply the appropriate style and decide to change the font or heading size later, you just change the style and the entire document automatically updates. Magic!

Most people usually work in Word on a standard A4 size page – but if you prefer to choose a different size that's fine.

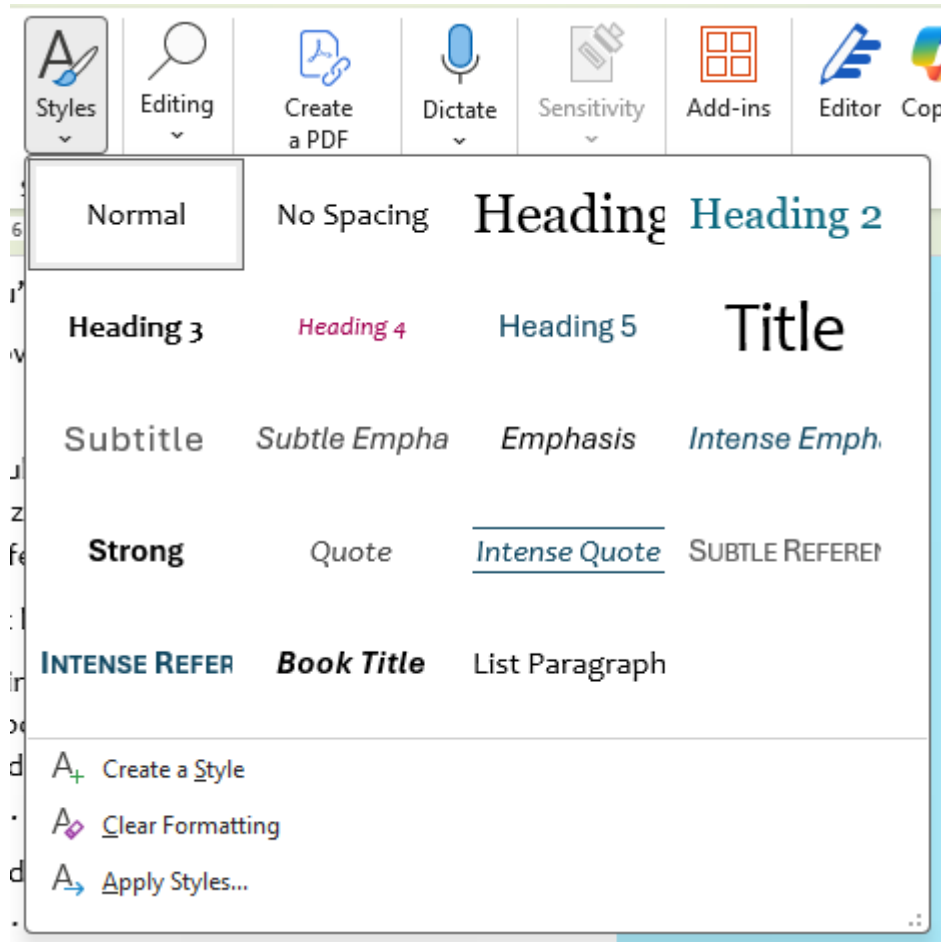
You'll see the options on the toolbar on the Home tab.



The arrow on the right expands the list to show all the current styles.

Right click on any of the styles and select 'Modify' from the drop down, then you can edit it.

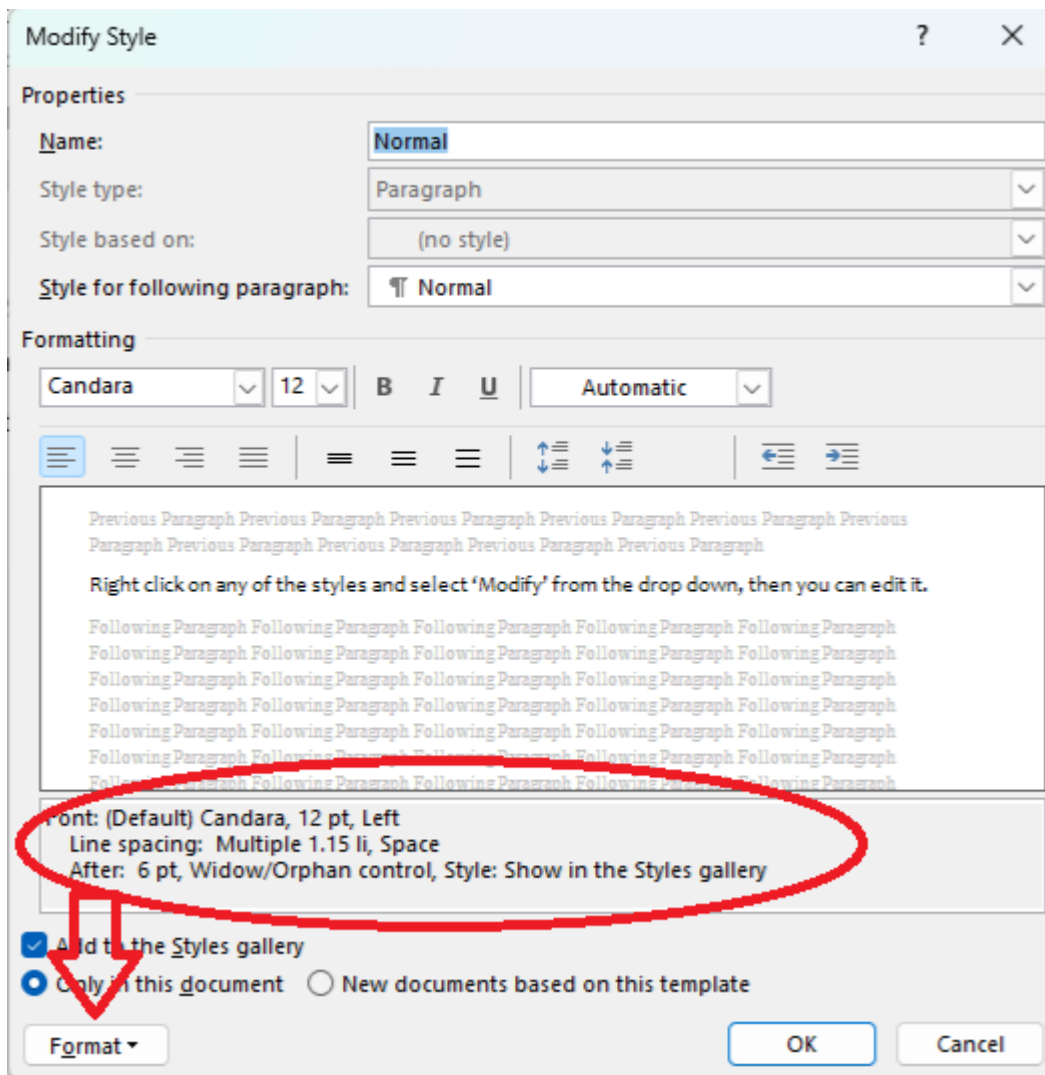
You don't have to use the format provided and you can choose which styles you use for what. So just because there is an option for 'Book Title' doesn't mean that's what you have to choose for that. Start with normal and then your headings.



Use the Formatting options for the font style, size and colour (the box that says 'Automatic'). You can choose bold, italic etc. here too.

You'll see the current settings listed underneath the box that shows what the formatting looks like (in the red circle on the graphic on the following page).

If you click on the button, bottom left, that says 'Format', and select 'Paragraph' you can alter line spacing, indents, and much more. There other options here for formatting text too. Take a look at what's possible, but don't get too fancy!



My advice is to format Normal in your chosen font and size, with multiple line spacing of 1.15. This gives your text enough space to read easily and as long as you use normal, everything will look the same.

I suggest also formatting:

Heading 1 – 20 point, for your chapter headings.

Heading 2 – 16 point, for main headings within the chapter

Heading 3 – 12 or 14 point bold, for subheadings within chapter sections.

Quote – centred, italic, bold. You might choose a bigger font size, so, if you're using 11 point, maybe use 14 pt.

All these are your choice – and it doesn't matter what you choose. Stay away from coloured fonts as they don't reproduce well in print.

TIP: When you have your style sheet set up as you want it, save it as a template, so you can open a new document with all the style sheets in place.

Why this is important

If you change your mind about a heading style, you don't have to trawl through your entire 40,000 words trying to make sure they all match. You just change the style and the whole document will update automatically.

There's another clever little thing – when it comes to your contents page, you can insert this automatically – and, as long as you have the correct styles formatted, all your chapter headings will appear with the correct page numbers!

I'll show you how to do this in the video so you can follow it step-by-step.

This week's assignment

Develop all your chapters using the Chapter plan and Chapter structure worksheets for reference and the **Chapter template** to guide you.

If you aren't familiar with style sheets, open a blank Word document and experiment with setting up your headings etc.