The ULTIMATE cheat sheet to writing extraordinarily well

For a long time now, I've scoured the internet looking for the magic formula to writing well. And by well, I mean writing that captivates readers, makes sense, flows naturally and is grammatically sound…and I never did find that magical formula. But what I did uncover were bits and pieces of golden advice scattered throughout the web. So I gathered these gems, sprinkled in some of my own secrets and thought, why not create the formula myself?

Of course there are tons of different kinds of writing, like blog writing, novel writing, business writing, and much more. And each has its own nuances. The following "formula" will ensure you have a strong foundation for any kind of content that favors a well-defined structure. (Because without a firm foundation, let's face it, we're doomed.) In essence, these tips are perfectly suited for any kind of writing—except novel writing, which I will be creating another cheat sheet for.

Now, to clarify, I do use these very tips in my own writing. I'm an published author, a professional editor, and a blogger. Plus I've got a degree in Journalism. So I'm all about words and I've given this list some thought to make sure I'm sharing the absolute best with you. Because while this site was created to help you, it is also meant to be a repository of rich content for *me* as I continue to work toward becoming a better, stronger writer and editor!

So (hocus, pocus!) here's the magical formula, starting from the top!

Identify the main topic.
Create a captivating headline that relates to the main topic.
Make sure the paragraphs following the title relate to the main topic/title.
Create subheadings to break up large content.
Make sure subheadings clearly relate to the main title.
Make sure the content under each subheading clearly relates to the subheading
For **each** subheading, ask yourself: What key message do I want to convey?
Add a concluding paragraph that ties back to the main topic/title OR summarizes your content, but do not introduce any new information here.
Start from the beginning of your content and complete the followings steps with each sentence.
Ask: How can I make this sentence more specific/concise/clear?
Am I choosing the best/most appropriate words to convey this sentence's message?
Which words can I remove (adverbs, redundancies, etc.)?
Am I using unnecessarily smart vocabulary?
Which words can I revise (to avoid repetition, use a thesaurus)?
Am I still writing in the same person (1st, 2nd, 3rd)?
Are adjectives/adverbs close to the words they modify?
Do all subjects & verbs agree?
Are modifiers close to the words they modify?
Am I using active voice (where appropriate)?
Is punctuation missing/appropriately used?
For advanced editing: If I were to diagram this sentence, would all the words clearly connect and would the sentence be structurally sound?
Is my diction consistent (don't shift from serious to light hearted)?
Is my style consistent (the words I choose, the way I write)?
Does the sentence make sense?
Did I say what I wanted to say in this sentence?
Does the paragraph make sense?
Did I say what I wanted to say in this paragraph?

Can you think of anything to add? Send me a note ☺

Happy writing!