

Appendix IV.1.18

Things to Avoid

Stilted language

Dialogue that does not sound like natural speech.

Filler

Dialogue that does not further the scene and does not deepen your understanding of the characters.

Exposition

Dialogue that has the character explain the plot or repeat information for the benefit of the audience.

Naming

Having one character use another character's name to establish identity. People almost never say other people's names back to them, and if they do it is a character trait typical of a used car salesman.

Overuse of Modifiers

Too many dialogue modifiers such as *shouted, exclaimed, cried, whispered, stammered, opined, insinuated, hedged* and a million others. Modifiers such as this can sometimes be useful, but are often annoying and used as a crutch for poorly designed dialogue.