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Suffering from Comma Trauma or Grammar Grief?

*New CD-ROM “Survival Guide” Helps Business Professionals
Find Answers Quickly to Vexing Style and Usage Questions*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (June 24, 2002)—True or false:

1. Capitalize words when you want to give them extra emphasis in your writing.
2. Colons and semicolons can be used interchangeably.
3. All nouns ending in “o” are written in the plural by adding an “es” (e.g., potatoes)

If you answered “true” to any of the above, you would benefit from *What’s the Rule? A Simple Guide to Perfect Punctuation, Great Grammar, and Superb Sentences and Style*. The newly released CD-ROM guide will help you avoid mistakes that may not only make your writing look sloppy and perhaps unprofessional but also could be confusing to your coworkers or boss. Previously released in book form in 2000, the *What’s the Rule?* CD-ROM is the latest tool for discerning business writers who want style and usage information and want it fast.

Unlike other style and usage guides, *What’s the Rule?* was developed specifically for those professionals who “wouldn’t know an antecedent from an ant hill,” according to author and businesswoman Kathy Sole. The CD-ROM format (and tabbed organization in the hard copy version, which is available separately or packaged with the CD-ROM) is ideal for busy professionals who don’t have time to wade through voluminous texts containing arcane grammar terminology.

“*What’s the Rule?* is a survival guide for the business user who either had English classes many years ago or maybe never was exposed to some of these rules in the first place,” Sole says. “The guide is heavy on the ‘how’ of writing clearly and effectively rather than getting bogged down on diagramming sentences and labeling the parts.”

Sole is an accomplished writer, editor and instructor and has owned a business writing and editing company in Roseville, Calif., for the past 14 years. She also teaches at local colleges and universities and conducts corporate and government writing workshops.

Origins of *What's the Rule?*

Sole decided to write her book after frequently hearing her workshop attendees and students complain about the difficulty of finding grammar and style reference books that were easily understood or searched. They wanted their writing to be clear and correct, but they didn't have the time to look through several different books to find the answer to a specific question. For many, it had been years since they had had a class in grammar and punctuation, and their typical comment was "I don't remember the rules."

Using about 40 existing references, Sole spent two years researching typical workplace grammar and style questions, looking at where the experts agreed and disagreed. She compiled these into *What's the Rule?*, which has sold over 80,000 copies since it was first issued in 1999.

How it's different

Many people are familiar with the spelling and grammar checker features contained within most office software. While sometimes useful, these features are not infallible, and writers often need to check a rule.

Rather than looking up these rules in a number of different books, *What's the Rule?* software allows users to answer punctuation, grammar and usage questions without their hands ever leaving the keyboard. Users can quickly search for topics by key word, check the rules and even test their knowledge with practice quizzes.

Other features include:

- Examples for all rules, geared to business situations and concerns
- An extensive list of commonly confused words with rules for remembering them
- A comprehensive section on rules for constructing lists
- An extensive glossary of writing terms

An electronic version of *What's the Rule?* that users can access on the Web or through their corporate intranet will be released this fall.

The book and CD-ROM are available at Amazon.com, Borders.com, Barnesandnoble.com, Real World Publications' Web site (www.whatstherule.com) and select Sacramento area bookstores.

About Real World Publications

Kathy Sole and her husband, Jon, formed Real World Publications in 1999 to publish *What's the Rule? A Simple Guide to Perfect Punctuation, Great Grammar, and Superb Sentences and Style*. Kathy also owns WriteSource, a technical business writing and editing company for documents such as product guides, training manuals and policy and procedure manuals. Prior to starting her own business, Kathy worked for 20 years in the financial services industry, serving as a vice president of Bank of America and manager of the bank's worldwide Corporate Communications, Instructional Publications Division. She has also served as marketing director for two financial institutions.

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