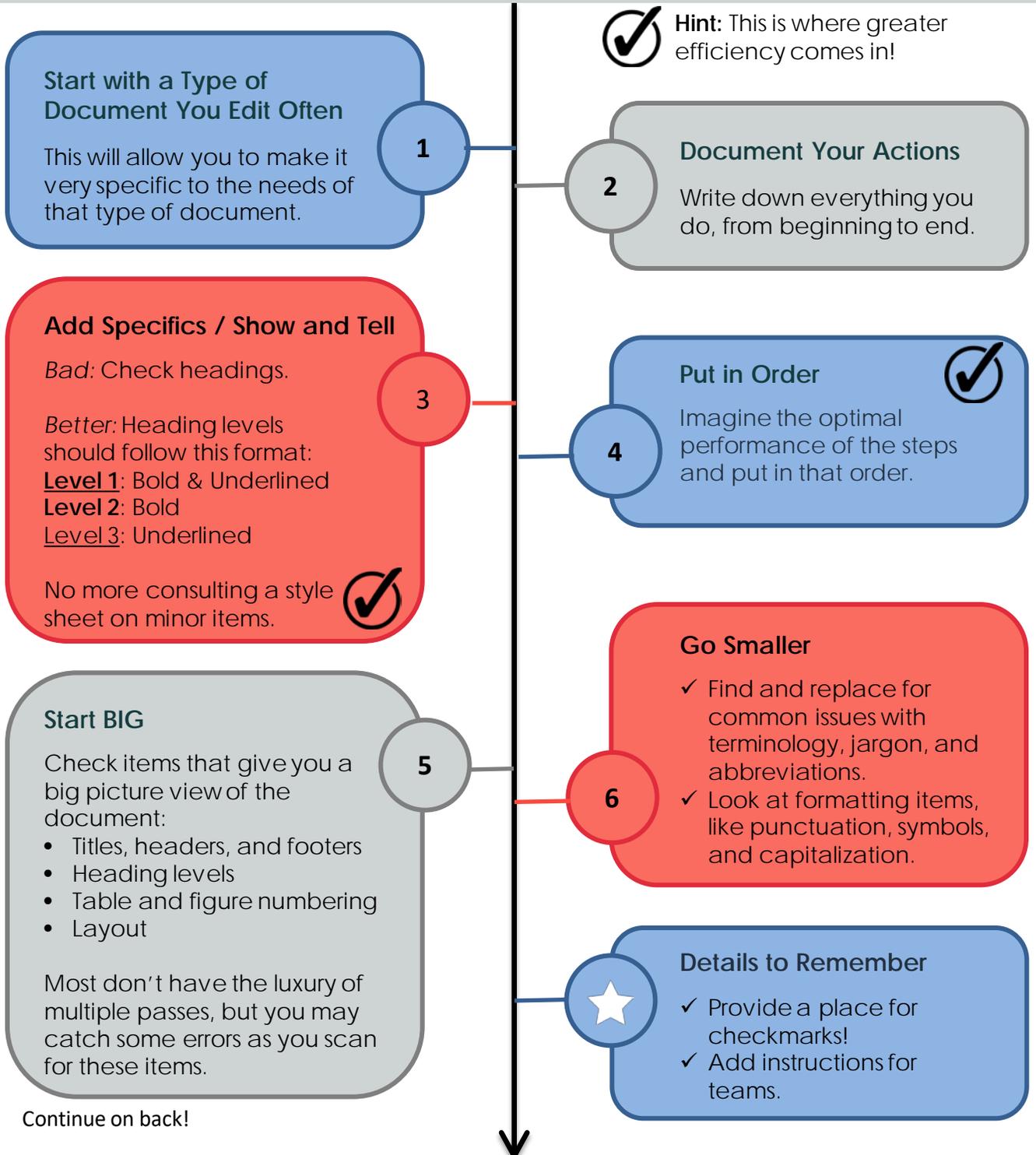




# How to Create an Editing Checklist

Creating and using an editing checklist for a particular type of document can really help you (and your team) be more efficient and consistent.

But a checklist is no good unless you use it! Being able to check off items you have completed lets you know where you left off when you've been interrupted or you go off on a tangent.



## Add Mechanics

- ✓ Steps for getting into systems
- ✓ Process-related items
- ✓ Spell Check
- ✓ Updating TOCs

7

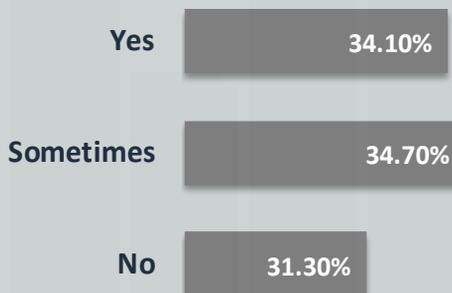
If processes change or you hop between different systems, this is especially helpful.

## Test, Revise, Test

Once you have a draft, test it out on your next document. Make notes of what didn't work and make those changes to the next version. Then do it all over again until it works really well.

9

## Do Editors Use Checklists?<sup>a</sup>



## Add Tracking Items

- ✓ Start and stop times
- ✓ Length of document
- ✓ Level of edit provides
- ✓ Level of difficulty
- ✓ Author or team
- ✓ Product or topic

8

Keeping the checklists allows you to more easily remember what was going on with a particular task if asked about it later. And if you didn't have time to check everything on the checklist, you have documentation of what you did and didn't do.

## How do you Know Your Checklist Works?

- ✓ When you find an error because the checklist told you to look for it.
- ✓ When you start a new type of document and feel a little lost without a checklist.
- ✓ When you feel your edits are consistently more thorough and faster, and you are confident you have done all you can in the time allotted.



**2016 STC Summit Progression:**  
*Using Checklists for More Efficient Editing*  
@STC\_Summit #stc16

**Contact:**  
Kelly Schrank  
[headbookworm@gmail.com](mailto:headbookworm@gmail.com)  
<http://headbookworm.com>  
@headbookworm

### Sources Mentioned in Progression:

Gawande, Atul. *The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right*. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2010.

Rude, Carolyn D. *Technical Editing*. New York: Pearson Education, 2006

Tarutz, Judith A. *Technical Editing: The Practical Guide for Editors and Writers*. New York: Perseus Books, 1992.

### Sources:

<sup>a</sup>176 members of the AMWA Writing/Editing email list and the Society for Technical Communication's Technical Editing Special Interest Group email list took a survey in October 2011.