

Handwriting's On Life Support, But Two People Are Reviving It



*Shiela Lowe, President
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Summary

- A shocking number of people cannot read their own handwriting.
- There are many cognitive benefits associated with handwriting.
- Much like a fingerprint, our handwriting is unique to each of us.
- This unique technology, along with many others, might fuel a new age of handwriting.

Ask yourself this: How many papers a day do you write by hand? A new study by Docmail says that a good number of people spend **more than 40 days at a time without even putting a pen to paper**, while a third of respondents haven't written anything in the past six months. The study also reports that a third of respondents could not even read their own handwriting. Penmanship seems to be getting worse every year. But what caused this to happen?

The answer to this question is much more complex than merely declaring that people are getting dumber or lazier. Misdirected blame has been placed on high-sugar diets, medications, folic acid deficiencies, and even a lack of vegetables in children's diets. But if you want to know what caused poor penmanship, you need only need to take a second look at the screen in front of you.

Tablets, smartphones, laptops, and desktop computers have taken over writing, and for good reason: they're convenient and fast. Want to mail a letter to someone in China? Why wait for snail mail when you can just type it up and press send, and it instantly arrives? This phenomenon has been deteriorating our handwriting slowly as technology has progressed and become more accessible. So, how do we solve this problem?

Meet Sheila Lowe and Gayna Scott. They have been working together in the Campaign for Cursive, a committee established by members of the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation. This group hopes to bring cursive back into the classroom. If you were in grade school back when Star Wars was in theaters, perhaps you don't know what's going on lately: cursive writing is disappearing from the school system. It has been slowly faded out for a while now as more schools start to enlist the help of computers to teach typing and word processing.

With this new effort, Sheila and Gayna hope to bring attention to the motor and cognitive benefits associated with writing by hand and make people aware of how our society might be changed when we stop writing. It's not a pretty picture. Mental development occurs as soon as the pencil



hits the sheet, and we're losing that. The brain performs an immense series of mathematical calculations internally just to move the fingers to create words. Are we ready to abandon this phenomenon?

Sheila Lowe is President of the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation, an organization that promotes graphology - a practice that extracts several aspects of a person from his or her handwriting, from personality traits to disorders in the nerves and brain. While the world is drifting away from handwriting, it's also losing part of its identity. Much like a fingerprint, our handwriting is unique to each one of us.

Sheila and Gayna use Zoom in their efforts to promote handwriting. With Zoom, they can start meetings in less than a minute with more people than can fill up an average conference room. One of their favorite features though is the "active speaker" switching mechanism, which enlarges the image of the person currently speaking.

This unique technology, along with many others, may fuel a new age of handwriting awareness and rehabilitation of the mind. Instead of fighting the technology trend, we can embrace it and embark on a journey together.

In the end, you see the importance of handwriting if you ask yourself the following questions: Where would you be if the world was never introduced to handwriting? And would you like to live in this kind of world?



About Zoom

Zoom, the cloud meeting company, unifies cloud video conferencing, simple web meetings, and group collaboration into one easy-to-use platform. Our solution offers the first available mobile-screen sharing and an innovative hybrid cloud service, and works across desktop, tablet, mobile and room systems. Zoom services over 40 million participants and more than 100,000 businesses globally.

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Innovations

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