

ACTIVE  
A TRUCK DRIVER AND STRUCK A PERSON KILLED A PERSON ON A BIKE.

PASSIVE  
A CYCLIST WAS STRUCK BY A TRUCK & DIED.  
INTENTIONALLY OR UNINTENTIONALLY.

SOMETIMES, YOU DON'T KNOW THE ACTOR, SO YOU HAVE TO KEEP IT VAGUE. BUT OFTEN, PASSIVE VOICE OBSCURES RESPONSIBILITY.

ACTIVE  
I MADE MISTAKES?

PASSIVE  
MISTAKES WERE MADE  
DIFFERENT THAN

PASSIVE VOICE IS A GRAMMATICAL STYLE WHERE WRITERS OBSCURE OR DIMINISH THE ACTOR IN A SENTENCE. HOW / S...

A LIFE-AND-DEATH GRAMMAR LESSON

PASSIVE VOICE IS FOR COWARDS

THERE WAS AN OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTING...  
A POLICE OFFICER SHOT A MAN.

THE LANGUAGE WE USE MATTERS. OUR WORD CHOICE SHAPES THE WAY WE SEE THE WORLD— AND WHO TAKES ACTION IN IT.

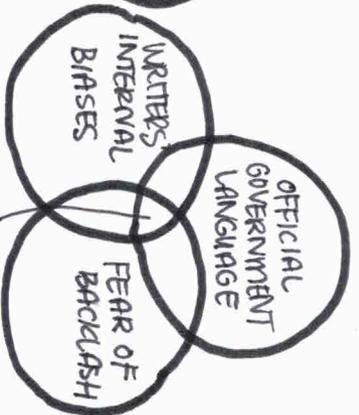
JOURNALISTS HAVE A BAD HABIT OF USING PASSIVE VOICE WHEN THEY FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE NAMING A PERPETRATOR.

OOO... I'M GONNA GET AN ANGRY PHONE CALL.

ACTIVE  
U.S. DRONE STRIKE KILLS 60 PEOPLE

LET'S REVISE.

PASSIVE  
60 PEOPLE WERE KILLED BY DRONE STRIKE



NOWHERE IS MORE WIDESPREAD AND INSIDIOUS THAN IN OUR POLICE LANGUAGE AROUND POLICE.

OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT TERMS COMBINE WITH PASSIVE VOICE TO OBSCURE THE PEOPLE WHO COMMIT VIOLENCE.



"MAN WHO DIED DURING ARREST"... WHO KILLED HIM?

WHO FIRED THEM? AND, AGAIN, WHO KILLED THE MAN?



THIS CONVOLUTED TWEET PLACES THE RESPONSIBILITY ON... WH... "AN OFFICERS KNEE"?

POLICE OFFICERS DON'T HURT PEOPLE— THEY'RE INVOLVED IN USE-OF-FORCE INCIDENTS."