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# The Write Stuff

A quarterly compendium of writing tips and other useful information

## THE GIFT IS IN THE GIVING

By Jeff Rubin

**H**ave you ever been on the receiving end of a misguided or inappropriate gift?

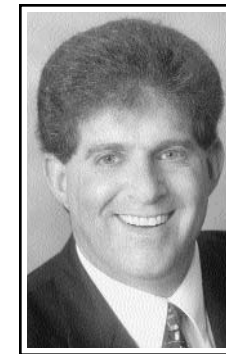
I know it's not socially acceptable — I'll probably be chastised by some of you for my lack of manners and appreciation — but let's be honest; sometimes people give you gifts that leave you shaking your head.

When I got married five years ago, at the ripe old age of 48, my wife and I had the following printed on our wedding invitation

*"We love gifts. To help you select one that will make us smile, we are registered at . . ."*(and then we listed four stores). Then we added, *"Please, no appliances or linens. Thank you."*

So, wouldn't you know it, we got two toasters (along with some great gifts!).

Where am I going with this? A few weeks ago an acquaintance of mine in



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Michigan phoned to ask me a question for an article she was writing. She's in the gift business, and she wanted to know what thoughts I had about gift giving.

She called because last summer she attended the National Association of Catering Executives' Educational Conference in Charleston, S.C., where I was a speaker. During my presentation, *Strategic*

*Integrity: Why Ethics and Reliability are Great Marketing Strategies*, I said how important it is to recognize and reward the people who help you grow your business.

Liz, my Michigan acquaintance, got me thinking about this whole business of gift giving. When she asked what unusual gifts I might suggest, I asked her two questions: "Why is it necessary to give a gift at all? Aren't there other ways we can recognize the special people in our lives?"

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