

## A STYLE IS BORN

David Rogers—a longtime star at *The Wall Street Journal* and the greatest congressional reporter of our generation—is a father of Smart Brevity.

David was Jim's mentor in the early 2000s and a notoriously gruff, blunt character. Jim, a new reporter at the *Journal*, was feeling like Walt Whitman and wrote 1,200 words of beautiful, meandering prose. He showed it to David. "It's a pile of shit," David said. He then printed it out, grabbed a pencil and revised the structure into how it *should* have been written to break through to readers. He sketched out a short, direct sentence as an opener, shaved off superfluous words throughout, pleaded for a must-read fact or quote then demanded a paragraph giving it context.

Years later, his work helped inspire the Smart Brevity architecture.