

Be Active, not Passive!



When *Field and Stream* wants to attract new employees, they use powerful images, including the one shown here. If we want to talk about this type of image, we should be just as active and hard-hitting as the man in the photo. The following table shows how one student wrote about an ad, and how you can take passive language and make it more active, strong, powerful, direct, and straight-forward, or in other words, more like you.

Sounds Passive	Feels Active
In <i>Field and Stream</i> , there <i>is</i> an ad...	An ad <i>appears</i> in April's <i>Field and Stream</i> ...
These colors <i>are</i> natural, and normally...	These natural colors normally <i>attract</i> the eye...
Hunters think that it <i>is</i> interesting when...	Hunters <i>consider</i> crossbows interesting...
"Now Hiring" <i>is</i> in big text at the top...	"Now Hiring" <i>appears</i> in big text...
This <i>is</i> explaining the most obvious part...	This <i>explains</i> the most obvious part...
The sportsman's gear <i>is</i> all camo...	The sportsman's camo gear <i>stands out</i> ...
It <i>is</i> an outdoorsman's dream to work...	Outdoorsmen <i>dream</i> of working at <i>Field and</i> ...
Camo <i>is</i> a huge part in rural society...	Camo <i>plays</i> a huge part in rural society...
He <i>is</i> placed right up front...	He <i>stands</i> close to the viewer...
This ad <i>is</i> advertising a position...	This advertisement <i>promotes</i> a position...
The announcement <i>is</i> in bold letters...	Printed in bold, the announcement <i>invites</i> ..
The context <i>is</i> natural... it symbolizes...	The natural environment in the ad <i>means</i> ...
Since this <i>is</i> an opportunity for hunters...	Because mostly hunters <i>work</i> at <i>Field and</i> ...

Students often over-use the passive word "is" because they aren't trained to write in active voice. If we get rid of "is," we eliminate linking verbs, passive verbs, and present progressive. In their place, we can substitute active verbs that get to the point and say what they mean.