William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*

Annotated excerpts on writing as hard work:

“*Good writing doesn't come naturally*, though most people obviously think it does.”

I question this statement as writing because if, as Zinsser suggests later, writing clear comes from clear thinking, then putting clear thinking on a page need not be unnatural. No doubt this first draft of putting my thoughts on the page, while likely somewhat unclear, are flowing naturally from my brain/fingertips. I have practiced this skill and over time it has become more natural. But simply writing stream of consciousness – if your ability to touch type is decent – then it can come naturally. The rest comes about as you become more competent at removing deadwood.

“*Writing is hard work*. A clear sentence is no accident. *Very few sentences come out right the first time, or even the third time*. Remember this as a consolation in moments of despair. *If you find that writing is hard, it's because it is hard. It's one of the hardest things that people do*.”

As with my above notation, getting words on a page can be as natural as thinking. My ability to get words down has come more naturally with practice. Removing deadwood is also something that comes with practice. The practice need not be “the hardest thing that people do.”