Most Important, Not Most Importantly

Probably **most importantly**, you’re healthy for the first time this year. Jim Rome radio show, March 5, 2008.

The correct phrase is **most important**, and the same goes for **more important**; they are often, if not always, shortened versions of **what’s most important** or **more important than that**.

**Importantly** means **in an important way**, just as slowly means in a slow way. Using the full phrase **what’s more importantly** in a sentence illustrates the error well. **What’s most importantly is that we try our best**; this sentence doesn’t make sense. (Of course, it should be **What’s most important is that**….) It’s like saying **What’s most clearly to us is that she’s trying her best**; I’m sure it’s clear to everyone that the latter sentence is grammatically flawed, yet we give a pass to using **importantly** in the same way.

One online dictionary says that **more important** and **more importantly** are used in all kinds of text and by reputable writers, which means that there’s no reason not to use **importantly**.

Well, I can think of one reason: it’s wrong.

I agree that they are both used by reputable writers; however, I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again: Writers aren’t necessarily grammarians, and many reputable writers and respected editors make some not-so-great grammar choices.

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