

Revising for Conciseness Paragraph B

The following responds to the Practice activity presented on pp. 365-66 of *Acting on Words*.

Original Paragraph

McDonald's is continuing to enjoy its great degree of success in fast-food products on a scale that could be accurately described as global. But why, given that more and more people are continuing to become vegetarians or at least are concerned to some extent about their nutrition, veggie intake, and cholesterol, why does such a company prosper? Firstly, to begin, a lot of their business success seems to be relying on the use of their slick, but merely image-driven advertisements: it's strange that there is little talk in these beautiful ads of factual nutritional wholesomeness, considering how McDonald's sells food for families and young people. Secondly, the price the company charges is always right. If a customer is worried about today's prices (like I am), McDonald's prices are appealing to customers. But what if the final outcome is that the deliberate lies of many promises in media join together with the appealing incentive of low price to make people forget their best interests?

Revised Version

McDonald's continues to enjoy its global success in fast-food. But why, if people continue to become vegetarians or to concern themselves with nutrition, veggie intake, and cholesterol, does such a company prosper? First, the success of McDonald's relies on slick, image-driven advertisements: curiously, these beautiful ads often neglect the facts of nutrition although McDonald's sells food specifically for families and young people. Second, accounting for widespread success, the price is always right. If a customer worries about money, McDonald's prices appeal. But what if misleading media promises join with the incentive of low price to make people forget their best interests?

Commentary

In revising the original draft for conciseness, we have conjugated verbs (so “is continuing” becomes “continues,” “seems to be relying” becomes “relies,” etc.).

We have also eliminated redundancies in phrasing (“Firstly, to begin” becomes “First,” “joins together” becomes “join,” and “appealing incentives” becomes “incentive,” etc.).

Can you find one place where we seem to have added words?

Answer: In the third sentence, we said “the success of McDonald’s” rather than the shorter “McDonald’s’ success.” Readers these days already have enough difficulty with apostrophes; we considered it best to avoid the highly unusual and therefore distracting spelling that is required to place a possessive wording into in the possessive second degree. We might have said “the company’s success.”