

Write the Right Way



Be Clear: the best way to say something

Five Techniques

TECHNIQUE	UNCLEAR SENTENCE	CLEAR SENTENCE
Use short, familiar words	It is mandatory that employees furnish a physician's statement upon returning to work following an extension of two or more days.	Employees must provide a doctor's note after taking sick leave of two or more consecutive days.
Use words with appropriate connotations	Our products are <i>cheap</i> .	Our products are <i>inexpensive</i> .
Revise noun clusters	Our computer software development and testing strategy document is attached.	A document outlining our strategy for developing and testing software is attached.
Use Active Verbs	After being the Project Manager for so long, it was difficult for John to <i>give up</i> his authority.	After being the Project Manager for so long, it was difficult for John to <i>surrender</i> his authority.
Use adjectives and adverbs sparingly	The staff appeared extremely enthusiastic about the interesting conference this morning.	The staff was enthusiastic about the conference this morning.

Use Muscular Verbs

LAZY VERBS	MUSCULAR VERBS
Speak softly	Whisper/mutter/mumble
Speak loudly	Yell/bellow/thunder
Hold tightly	Clench/clasp/cling
Eat quickly	Scarf/gobble/devour/inhale
Drive quickly	Speed/careen/zoom
Go slowly	Meander/crawl/inch
Go into	Enter/plunge/peer
Start up	Launch/begin/commence
Look at	Examine/observe/study/glance