

Writing Process

Preparing/ Pre-Writing

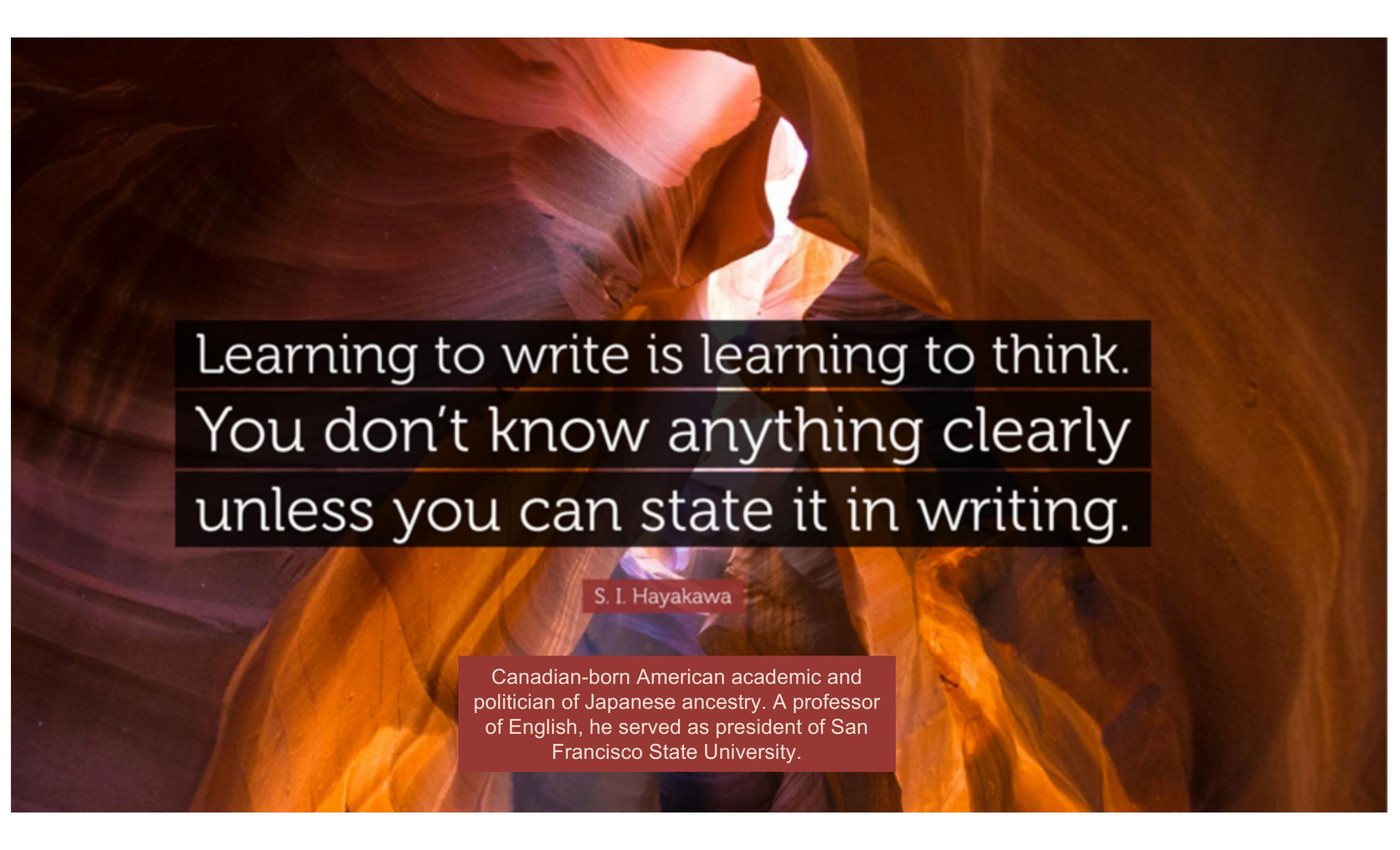


Agenda

- ▶ **The 3-x-3 Writing Process**
- ▶ **The Writing Process 1 — Prewriting**
 - ▶ Unit 4: Knowing Your Purpose for Writing
 - ▶ Unit 5: Analyzing your Audience
 - ▶ Unit 6: Selecting Appropriate Channels

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Identify basic principles of business writing
- ▶ Explain how a writing process helps a writer
- ▶ Effectively apply audience benefits, the “you” view, and conversational but professional language



Learning to write is learning to think.
You don't know anything clearly
unless you can state it in writing.

S. I. Hayakawa

Canadian-born American academic and
politician of Japanese ancestry. A professor
of English, he served as president of San
Francisco State University.

Business Writing Approach

The 3-x-3 Writing Process

1. **Pre-writing:** Planning and Preparing
2. **Writing:** Organize and Write
3. **Revision:** Proofread and revise



Why is it important to
follow a writing **process**?

Without following a
process, you will
waste time
- *yours and your audiences*

In business **time is money**



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FIGURE 4.1 The 3-x-3 Writing Process

1 Prewriting

Analyze: Decide on your purpose. What do you want the receiver to do or believe? What channel or form is best? Should you deliver your message in writing, orally, electronically, or graphically?

Anticipate: Profile the audience. What does the receiver already know? Will the receiver's response be neutral, positive, or negative? Use the direct method for positive messages; consider using the indirect method for negative or persuasive messages.

Adapt: What techniques can you use to adapt your message to its audience and the audience's anticipated reaction? Include audience benefits and the "you" view, as well as positive, conversational, and courteous language.

2 Writing

Research: Gather data to provide facts. Search company files, previous correspondence, and the Internet. What do you need to know to write this message? How much does the audience already know?

Organize: Group similar facts together. Organize direct messages with the big idea first, followed by an explanation and an action request in the closing. For persuasive or negative messages, use an indirect, problem-solving plan. For short messages, make quick notes. For longer messages, outline your plan and make notes.

Compose: Prepare a first draft, usually writing quickly. Focus on short, clear sentences using the active voice. Link ideas to build paragraph coherence.

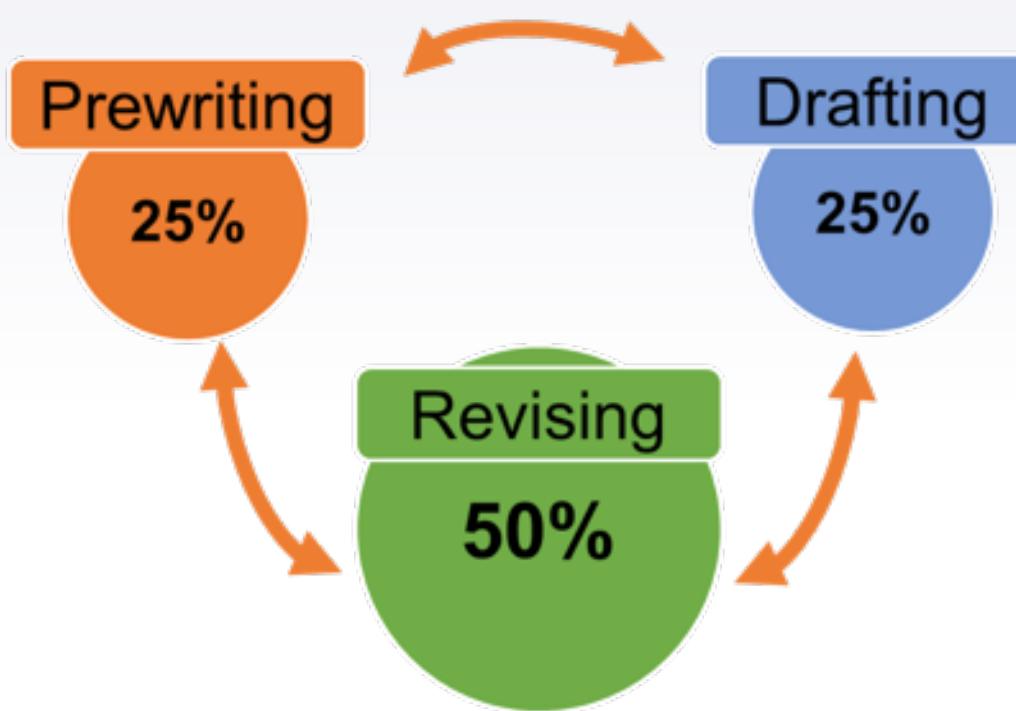
3 Revising

Revise: Edit your message to be sure it is clear, conversational, concise, and readable. Revise to eliminate wordy fillers, long lead-ins, redundancies, compound prepositions, wordy noun phrases, and trite business phrases. Develop parallelism and consider using headings and numbered and bulleted lists for quick comprehension.

Proofread: Take the time to read over every message carefully. Look for errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, names, numbers, and format.

Evaluate: Decide whether this message will achieve your purpose. Have you thought enough about the audience to be sure this message is appropriate and appealing?

Scheduling the Writing Process



The process is recursive, not linear. Writers revise continually as they progress.

► How does the Writing Process help you?

- ▶ Applied to all forms of communication
- ▶ Ensures systematic and organized approach to writing
- ▶ Guides you at every stage of writing
- ▶ Builds confidence in you as a writer and an editor ☺
- ▶ Enables you to review and evaluate business communication and professional writing

Step 1. Preparing



Purpose

What is the general purpose of your message?



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The purpose is ...

- ▶ To inform
- ▶ To persuade
- ▶ To entertain
- ▶ To explain
- ▶ To describe



Source: www.unsplash.com



Source: www.unsplash.com

The most common general purpose of workplace messages is to **inform**.

5 W's Format to Inform

Most emails, memos, and reports cover a topic thoroughly and precisely with the five **Ws + H** subtopics

- What
- When
- Where
- Who
- Why
- How



<https://www.datocms-assets.com/17507/1606822917-5ws-in-business.jpg?fit=max&fm=webp&q=60&w=736>

Purpose

- ▶ There is also a **specific** (or hidden) purposes to workplace messages.
- ▶ *For example*, a lot of workplace communications (mostly from HR) are sent out to have **a written record**.

Business Writing Goals

- ▶ Business writing differs from other writing. For business messages and oral presentations, your writing should be:
- ▶ **Purposeful.** You will be writing to solve problems and convey information. You will have a definite purpose.
- ▶ **Persuasive.** You want your audience to believe and accept your message.
- ▶ **Economical.** You will try to present ideas clearly but concisely. *Length is not rewarded.*
- ▶ **Audience oriented.** You will concentrate on looking at a problem from the reader's perspective.

Critical Thinking

Whether one is writing a book, making a speech, or composing a business message, why is it important to **anticipate the audience** for the message?



Audience

The first commandment
in *business* is
“Know thy customer”



Source: www.unsplash.com

Audience

The first commandment
in *communication* is
“Know your audience”



Source: www.unsplash.com

► Profiling the Audience

Determine Audience

- **Internal**
 - Coworkers, staff, managers and executives
- ▶ **External**
 - Clients, customers, government, regulatory agencies or professional associations

► Profiling the Audience

- ▶ Visualizing your audience is a pivotal step in the writing process
- ▶ Remember that most receivers will be thinking,
 - ▶ **What's in it for me? (WIIFM)**
 - ▶ **What am I supposed to do with this information ?**



Source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/o4c2zoVhjSw>

Making Choices Based on the Audience Profile

- ▶ Who is the primary audience?
- ▶ Who might be the secondary or tertiary audiences?
- ▶ What is my professional relationship to them relative to their position/seniority in their organization's hierarchy?
- ▶ How much do they already know about the topic of my message?
- ▶ What is their demographic – education, culture, beliefs and attitudes?

Making Choices Based on the Audience Profile

Basic Demographic Groups

- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Family
- ▶ Class
- ▶ National
- ▶ Ethnicity
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Political Alliance
- ▶ Region

Watch the Video –
[Defining Audience I](#)
[Demographics](#)

Making Choices Based on the Audience Profile

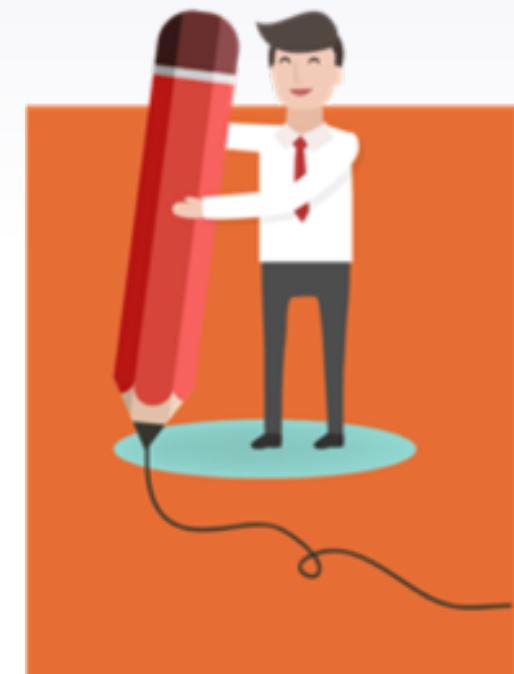
- ▶ What language is appropriate?
- ▶ Are you free to use specialized technical terms?
- ▶ Should the tone be formal or informal?
- ▶ Will the receiver respond positively or negatively to the message?
- ▶ What type of response can I expect - neutral, positive or negative?

► Profiling the Audience

- ▶ **Analytical report:** Is it a big group or management who will read the message? *This profiling will take time.*
- ▶ **E-mail message:** To whom am I writing? *It may take little time to familiarize with a co-worker or familiar supplier.*
- ▶ **Blog post:** Will local, national, and international audiences read the message?
- ▶ **Social Media Post:** How much of your day and life do you want to share? Will customers and business partners read posts?

► Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience:

- ▶ Audience focus and “You” view
- ▶ Sounding conversational but professional
- ▶ Being positive rather than negative
- ▶ Expressing courtesy
- ▶ Employing bias-free language
- ▶ Preferring plain language and familiar words
- ▶ Using precise, vigorous words



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► Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience:

The “You” View

- **I/We View**: We are requiring all employees to respond to the attached survey about health benefits.
- **You View**: Because your ideas count, please complete the attached survey about health benefits.

► Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience:

Being positive rather than negative

- **Negative**: This plan definitely cannot succeed if we don't obtain management approval.
- **Positive**: This plan definitely can succeed if we obtain management approval.

► Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience:

Being positive rather than negative

- **Negative**: You failed to include your credit card number, so we can't mail your order.
- **Positive**: We look forward to completing your order as soon as we receive your credit card number.

Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience: Avoiding Biased Language

Biased

A new lady manager was hired.

A nurse serves her patients.

Invite all employees and their wives.

This law applied to old people.

Olivia Chen, a Chinese student, enrolled.

Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience: Avoiding Biased Language

Biased	Improved
A new lady manager was hired.	A new manager was hired.
A nurse serves her patients.	Nurses serve their patients.
Invite all employees and their wives.	Invite all employees and their spouses (or partners)
This law applied to old people.	The law applied to people over 65.
Olivia Chen, a Chinese student, enrolled.	Olivia Chen enrolled.

Using Expert Writing Techniques to Adapt to Your Audience

- ▶ Use Familiar Language
- ▶ Avoid jargon (industry slang, or idioms)
- ▶ Use acronyms only after having spelled them out



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Audience Communication

Use Familiar Language

- ▶ Employees should manage time to **optimize** their productivity.
- ▶ Employees should manage time to **improve** their productivity.
- ▶ Our goal is to make this project **actionable**.
- ▶ Our goal is to make this project **achievable**.
- ▶ We need to decide how our app and content can be **monetized**.
- ▶ We need to decide how our app and content can be **profitable**.

Audience Communication

Use Familiar Language

- ▶ Their social media startup has **gained traction** in the last year.
- ▶ Their social media startup **has become popular** in the last year.
- ▶ **Enable Location History**
- ▶ **Turn on Location History**

Audience Communication

Avoid jargon (industry slang, or idioms)

- ▶ **Put your money where your mouth is**
(= take action to support one's statements or opinions)
- ▶ **Bang for your buck**
(= value for money; performance for cost)
- ▶ **Move the needle**
(= To change a situation to a noticeable degree)
- ▶ **Test the water** (= trial or investigate)

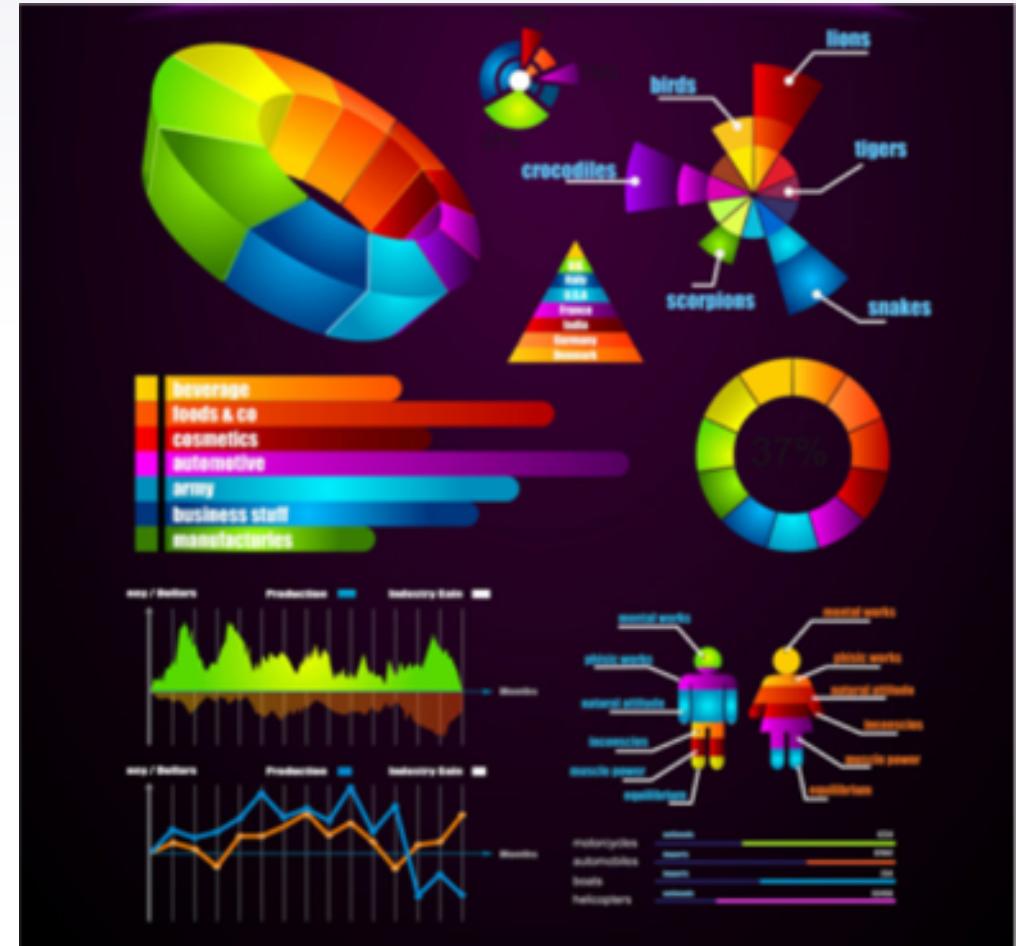
Audience Communication

Use acronyms only after having spelled them out

- ▶ **COB:** Close of business
- ▶ **ETA:** Estimated time of arrival
- ▶ **PA:** Performance appraisal
- ▶ **SME:** Subject matter expert
- ▶ **YTD:** Year to date

Audience Communication

Add tables, graphs,
illustrations and
simple visual
symbols to promote
understanding



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Secondary Audiences

Remember...

- ▶ Your emails can be forwarded
- ▶ Your text or voicemail messages shown or played
- ▶ Even what you say can simply be reported to tertiary audiences and be believed

Golden Rule:
Don't write anything you don't want published.

Formal vs. Informal

It all depends on your relationship with your **audience – and the message**

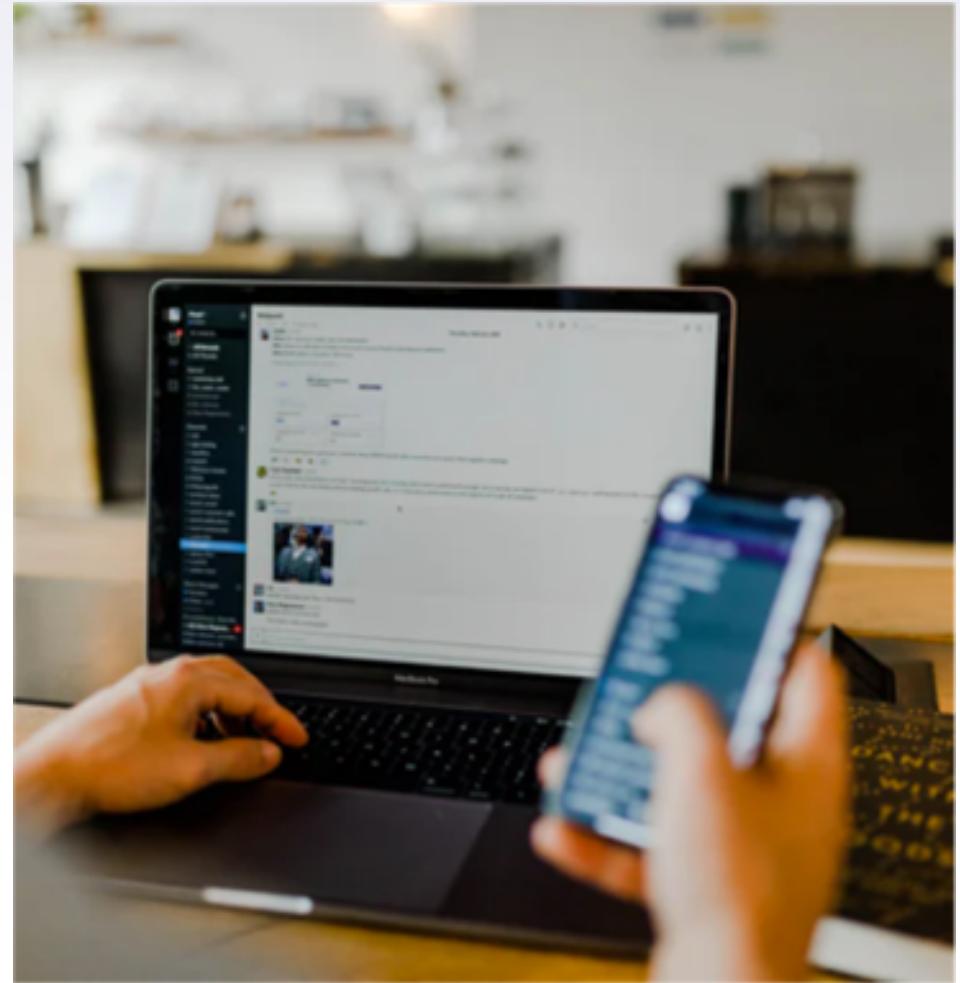
- ▶ Example: Company Barbeque vs. Report to Board of Directors



Informal

Example:

Just a quick heads-up: don't forget to submit your travel expenses to Brenda in HR by 4:30 p.m. today.



*Quick information sharing with a co-worker you know.
The message's tone is informal.*

Source: www.unsplash.com

Formal

Example:

Please submit your travel expenses to Brenda in the Human Resources by 4:30 p.m. today.”



Formality conveys respect.

Source: www.unsplash.com

► Formal vs. Informal

Formality in writing also involves carefully selecting words that are slightly fancier (professional) than the colloquial (“informal”) words you would normally use in everyday situations.

Word Choices

- ▶ Formality in writing also involves carefully selecting words that are slightly fancier (professional) than the colloquial (“informal”) words you would normally use in everyday situations.
- ▶ In short, **professional but conversational**

Word Choices

Informal / Slang	Semi-formal / Common	Formal / Fancy
kick off	begin / start	commence
cut off	end	terminate
put off	delay	postpone
awesome / dope	good	positive
crappy / shoddy	bad	negative
flaunt	show	demonstrate
find out	discover	ascertain
go up	rise	increase
fess up / come clean	admit	confess
mull over	consider	contemplate
bad-mouth / put down	insult / belittle	denigrate
plus	also	moreover

Selecting Appropriate Channels



Channel Selection

- ▶ In-person conversation and group meeting
- ▶ Email
- ▶ Instant/Text message
- ▶ Tweet
- ▶ Instagram
- ▶ Article or blog
- ▶ Letter
- ▶ Memo
- ▶ Report/PowerPoint
- ▶ Fax
- ▶ Phone, VoIP, voicemail, and conference calls
- ▶ Video chat and web conference

Channel Selection Factors

- ▶ Convenience (sender and receiver)
- ▶ Audience size
- ▶ Geography
- ▶ Timeliness
- ▶ Cost (time and money)
- ▶ Sensitivity and privacy
- ▶ Permanent record required

Channel Selection

Pros
vs
Cons

Channels	Best use
Face-to-Face	When you want to be persuasive, deliver bad or sensitive news, or share personal information.
Voice-Mail	For simple and brief messages. When sender of information does not need an immediate response.
Telephone	When face-to-face interaction is not necessary, however, sender needs an immediate response
Text	Different time zones, written record is necessary, email is not available or appropriate.
Email	Different time zones, written record is necessary, communicating with a large group, can replace hard copy memo or letter.
Video/Tele conference	When group interaction is required, but group is geographically dispersed.
Memo	Communicating inside an organization, non sensitive company information, company policy, company procedure(s)
Letter	Communicating external to organization, non sensitive and non-complex information.
Report/ Proposal	Used for internal and external communication. Communicating complex or extensive ideas and initiatives.
Online forums/site	To share ideas with wide audience, to provide opportunity for interaction with and revision of information.



Channel Selection

Pros vs Cons

- Email
- Social Media And Text Messaging
- Letters

Review

- ▶ What's the first step of the writing process?
- ▶ Name the three sub-steps when preparing to communicate
- ▶ What are five possible purposes for a message?
- ▶ Name the two types of audiences?
- ▶ When selecting a communication channel what factors must you consider?



Sources

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Weekly Inspiration

See you next week!

*Be not afraid of going slowly,
be afraid only of standing still.*

Unknown

