Eleventh Edition

HANDBOOK OF TECHNICAL WRITING

Gerald J. Alred
Charles T. Brusaw
Walter E. Oliu

The Five-Way Access System

The five-way access system of the *Handbook of Technical Writing* provides readers with multiple ways of retrieving information:

1. Alphabetically Organized Entries

The alphabetically organized entries with color tabs enable readers to find information quickly. Within the entries, terms shown as **links** refer to other entries that contain definitions of key concepts or further information on related topics.

2. Contents by Topic

The complete "Contents by Topic," on the inside front cover, groups the entries into categories and serves as a quick reference for finding all topics covered in the book. The "Contents by Topic" allows a writer focusing on a specific task or problem to locate helpful entries; it is also useful for instructors who want to correlate the *Handbook* with standard textbooks or their own course materials. The list of "Commonly Misused Words and Phrases" (see page 642) extends this topical key by listing all the usage entries in the book.

3. Checklist of the Writing Process

The "Checklist of the Writing Process" helps readers to reference all writing-process–related entries.

4. Comprehensive Index

The new user-friendly Index lists all the topics covered in the book—including subtopics and model documents—within the main entries in the alphabetical arrangement.

5. Model Documents and Figures by Topic

The list of "Model Documents and Figures by Topic" (see page 644) makes it easier to find the abundant real-world examples and sample documents throughout the text that provide models for effective technical communication.

Contents by Topic

Use this list as a quick reference for finding entries by topic. To search this book in more detail, see the Index.

Technical Writing Documents and Elements

Brochures 55
Description 124
Environmental Impact Statements 175
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) 184
Forms 219
Indexing 255
Instructions 266
Job Descriptions 295
Manuals 330
Mathematical Equations 336
Newsletter Articles 356
Newsletters 358
Process Explanation 417
Proposals 428
  Grant Proposals 233
  Requests for Proposals 471
Questionnaires 452
Report Components
  Abstracts 6
  Appendixes 36
  Conclusions 94
  Executive Summaries 182
  Glossaries 231
  Introductions 285
  Tables of Contents 538
  Titles 546
Reports 469
  Feasibility Reports 186
  Formal Reports 196
  Incident Reports 255
  Investigative Reports 290
  Laboratory Reports 308
  Progress and Activity Reports 417
  Test Reports 544
  Trip Reports 556
Specifications 528
Trade Journal Articles 550
  Literature Reviews 325
Usability Testing 558
White Papers 577
Writing for the Web 582

Design and Visuals

Layout and Design 310
  Forms 219
  Headers and Footers 246
  Headings 247
  Lists 324
Visuals 568
  Drawings 157
  Flowcharts 192
  Global Graphics 229
  Graphs 238
  Infographics 260
  Maps 334
  Mathematical Equations 336
  Organizational Charts 377
  Photographs 392
  Tables 536

Correspondence

Acknowledgment Letters 10
Adjustment Letters 17
Complaint Letters 88
Correspondence 105
Cover Letters (or *Transmittals*) 114
E-mail 164
Inquiries and Responses 261
Instant Messaging 264
International Correspondence 272
Letters 316
Memos 343
Reference Letters 462
Refusal Letters 464
Text Messaging 544

Job Search and Application

Acceptance / Refusal Letters (for Employment) 8
Application Cover Letters 36
Interviewing for a Job 280
Job Search 297
Resignation Letters 480
Résumés 484

Presentations and Meetings

Listening 322
Meetings 338
Minutes of Meetings 347
Presentations 408

Research and Documentation

Adapting to New Technologies 12
Bibliographies 50
Brainstorming 53
Copyrights, Patents, and Trademarks 102
Documenting Sources 135
Interviewing for Information 277
Literature Reviews 325
Note-Taking 362
Paraphrasing 387
Plagiarism 398

Questionnaires 452
Quotations 459
Research 473

Organization, Writing, and Revision

Blogs and Forums 50
Collaborative Writing 73
Content Management 98
Description 124
Document Management 132
Ethics in Writing 178
Exposition 183
Global Communication 228
Logic Errors 327
Methods of Development 345
  Cause-and-Effect 66
  Chronological 68
  Comparison 86
  Definition 121
  Division-and-Classification 130
  General and Specific 227
  Order-of-Importance 373
  Sequential 521
  Spatial 527
Narration 354
Organization 376
Outlining 377
Persuasion 392
Preparation 405
  Audience 44
  Brainstorming 53
  Context 99
  Purpose 449
  Readers 462
  Scope 506
  Selecting the Medium 506
Proofreading 426
Repurposing 469
Revision 502
Social Media 523
Writing a Draft 581

Digital Tips

Assessing Hardware and Software 13
Conducting Online Meetings 339
Creating an Index 258
Creating an Index (for a formal report) 201
Creating an Outline 380
Creating Styles and Templates 201
Digitally Enhancing Formal Reports 197
Incorporating Tracked Changes 504
Proofreading for Format Consistency 427
Scheduling Meetings Online 339
Sharing Electronic Files 165
Storing Search Results 475
Using Collaborative Software 75
Using PDF Files 585

ESL Trouble Spots

Adjectives 13
Agreement 24
Articles 41
Biased Language 48
Clauses 71
Comma Splice 77
Commas 78
Double Negatives 156
English as a Second Language 170
Gender 226
Idioms 253
Mood 351
Nouns 364
Number (Grammar) 366
Numbers 367
Periods 390
Phrases 395
Plagiarism 398
Point of View 401
Possessive Case 403
Prepositions 406
Pronouns 422
Quotation Marks 457
Run-on Sentences 504
Sentence Construction 512
Sentence Fragments 518
Spelling 529
Style 530
Syntax 535
Tense 541
Transition 554
Verbals 561
Verbs 564
Voice 572

ESL Tips

Assigning Gender 226
Avoiding Shifts in Voice, Mood, or Tense 566
Choosing Voice 575
Determining Mood 352
Punctuating Numbers 369
Stating an Opinion 402
Understanding the Requirements of a Sentence 516
Understanding the Subject of a Sentence 513
Using Adjectives 16
Using Articles 42
Using Possessive Pronouns 425
Using the Progressive Form 543

Style and Language

Style 530
- Affectation 23
- Allusions 31
- Ambiguity 33
- Awkwardness 46
- Biased Language 48
- Clarity 70
- Clichés 72
- Comparison 85
- Conciseness 91
- Contractions 101
- Defining Terms 120
- Direct Address 129
- Double Negatives 156
- Emphasis 168
- English, Varieties of 174
- Euphemisms 180
- Expletives 182
- Figures of Speech 190
- Gobbledygook 232
- Idioms 253
- Intensifiers 271
- Jargon 295
- Nominalizations 361
- Pace 382
- Parallel Structure 385
- Plain Language 399
- Point of View 401
- Positive Writing 402
- Repetition 468
- Rhetorical Questions 504
- Sentence Variety 519
- Subordination 532
- Technical Writing Style 538
- Telegraphic Style 540
- Tone 549
- "You" Viewpoint 586

Word Choice 580
- Abstract / Concrete Words 6
- Antonyms 34
- Buzzwords 58
- Connotation / Denotation 97
- Dictionaries 127
- Foreign Words in English 195
- Functional Shift 223
- Malapropisms 330
- Synonyms 534
- Thesaurus 546
- Vague Words 561

Sentences and Paragraphs

Sentence Construction 512
- Appositives 41
- Clauses 71
- Complements 90
- Expletives 182
- Modifiers 349
- Objects 371
- Phrases 395
- Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements 483
- Syntax 535

Sentence Faults 516
- Comma Splice 77
- Dangling Modifiers 117
- Garbled Sentences 225
- Mixed Constructions 349
- Run-on Sentences 504
- Sentence Fragments 532

Paragraphs 382
- Coherence 72
- Transition 554
- Unity 558

Parts of Speech and Grammar

Grammar 233
- Agreement 24
- Case 63
- English as a Second Language 170
- Gender 226
- Mood 351
- Number (Grammar) 366
- Person 391
- Possessive Case 403
- Pronoun Reference 421
- Tense 541
- Voice 572

Parts of Speech 388
- Adjectives 13
- Adverbs 20
- Articles 41
- Conjunctions 96
- Functional Shift 223
- Interjections 272
- Nouns 364
- Prepositions 406
- Pronouns 422
- Verbals 561
- Verbs 564

Punctuation and Mechanics

Mechanics
- Abbreviations 2
- Acronyms and Initialisms 11
- Ampersands 34
- Capitalization 60
- Compound Words 91
- Contractions 101
- Dates 119
- Italics 292
- Numbers 367
- Prefixes 405
- Proofreaders' Marks 428
- Spelling 529
- Suffixes 534

Punctuation 448
- Apostrophes 35
- Brackets 53
- Colons 75
- Commas 78
- Dashes 118
- Ellipses 163
- Exclamation Marks 181
- Hyphens 250
- Parentheses 387
- Periods 390
- Question Marks 451
- Quotation Marks 457
- Semicolons 510
- Slashes 522

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Handbook of Technical Writing

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Charles T. Brusaw

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Contents

Contents by Topic	*inside front cover*
Preface	ix
Five Steps to Successful Writing	xiii
Checklist of the Writing Process	xxi
***Handbook of Technical Writing*: Alphabetical Entries**	**1–587**
Index	591
Commonly Misused Words and Phrases	642
Model Documents and Figures by Topic	644
Inside LaunchPad Solo for the *Handbook of Technical Writing*, Eleventh Edition	648

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Preface

Like previous editions, the eleventh edition of the *Handbook of Technical Writing* is a comprehensive, easy-access guide to all aspects of technical communication in the classroom and on the job. It places writing in a real-world context with quick reference to hundreds of technical writing topics and scores of model documents and visuals. Anticipating the needs of today's professionals and job seekers, the eleventh edition has updated coverage of the job search based on the best expert advice available to help both students and new professionals secure positions in today's economy. This comprehensive *Handbook* is accompanied by LaunchPad Solo for the *Handbook of Technical Writing,* offering extensive online resources (including digital document models and video tutorials) that can be packaged with the text at no additional cost.

Helpful Features

The ESL Tip boxes throughout the book, updated based on guidance from field experts, offer special advice for multilingual writers. In addition, the "Contents by Topic" on the inside front cover includes a list of entries—ESL Trouble Spots—that may be of particular interest to nonnative speakers of English.

Digital Tip boxes throughout the book direct readers to specific, related resources in LaunchPad Solo. The Digital Tips in the book suggest ways to use technology to simplify complex tasks, such as writing and reviewing documents collaboratively or enhancing formal reports digitally. Expanded Digital Tips in LaunchPad Solo offer video tutorials for completing each task.

"Ethics Notes" throughout the text highlight the ethical concerns of today's technical writers and offer advice for dealing with these concerns. A thorough discussion of copyright and plagiarism clarifies what plagiarism is in the digital age and highlights the ethical aspects of using and documenting sources appropriately.

"Professionalism Notes" throughout the text cover professional behavior, guidelines for online and interpersonal communication for both the workplace and the classroom, and tips on preparing for important projects and presentations.

New to This Edition

Our focus in revising the *Handbook* for this edition has been on refining and updating existing entries and providing new coverage that is especially relevant for securing a job in today's economy and for navigating the technologies needed to succeed on the job. We have made the following additions and improvements:

- **A new entry on social media** helps students effectively and carefully select, join, and use appropriate social-media platforms, depending on the organization they work for and its aims.
- **A new entry on infographics** describes the most effective use of these complex visuals and provides a step-by-step checklist for creating them.
- **A new entry on document management** describes processes and organizing principles for managing, tracking, and quickly retrieving digital documents within a document archive.
- **A thorough updating of the job-search and résumé entries** provides current advice on how to network using professional and social media and offers many tips on developing application materials that will spark the interest of prospective employers.
- **Updated coverage of copyrights, patents, and trademarks** prepares students to delineate the differences among them and to understand what is necessary when seeking to protect themselves or use the works of others.
- **Updated advice on documenting sources** provides current guidelines for following APA, IEEE, and MLA styles.
- **New and updated Digital Tips** throughout the book advise students on relevant skills, including using technologies to schedule and conduct meetings, digitally enhancing formal reports, and using wikis and other collaborative software to circulate and revise documents. Online video tutorials expand on the tips in print, providing students with step-by-step instruction.
- **LaunchPad Solo for the *Handbook of Technical Writing*** provides engaging online resources and new ways to get the most out of your course. Featuring digital document models, video tutorials, and expanded Digital Tips, this customizable online course space allows you to assign and mix publisher-provided resources with yours. To package LaunchPad Solo for free, use ISBN 978-1-319-02414-7. Students who buy used books can purchase access to LaunchPad Solo for the *Handbook of Technical Writing* at ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e.***
- **Now available in popular e-book formats.** Students can purchase the *Handbook of Technical Writing* in popular e-book formats for computers, tablets, and e-readers. For details, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/ebooks.***

How to Use This Book

The *Handbook of Technical Writing* is made up of alphabetically organized entries with color tabs. Within each entry, underlined cross-references—for example, **proposals**—link readers to related entries that contain further information. Many entries present advice and guidelines in the form of convenient "Writer's Checklists."

The *Handbook*'s alphabetical organization enables readers to find specific topics quickly and easily; however, readers with general questions will discover several alternate ways to find information in the book.

- **Contents by Topic.** The complete "Contents by Topic" on the inside front cover groups the alphabetical entries into topic categories. This topical key can help a writer focusing on a specific task or problem browse all related entries; it can also help instructors correlate the *Handbook* with standard textbooks or their own course materials.
- **Commonly Misused Words and Phrases.** The list of "Commonly Misused Words and Phrases" on pages 642–43 extends the "Contents by Topic" by listing all of the usage entries, which appear in *italics* throughout the book.
- **Model Documents and Figures by Topic.** The topically organized list of model documents and figures on the inside back cover makes it easier to browse the book's most commonly referenced sample documents and visuals to find specific examples of technical writing genres.
- **Checklist of the Writing Process.** The checklist on pages xxi–xxii helps readers reference key entries in a sequence useful for planning and carrying out a writing project.
- **Comprehensive Index.** The user-friendly Index lists all the topics covered in the book—including subtopics and model documents—within the main entries in the alphabetical arrangement.

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We offer heartfelt thanks to Barbara Brusaw for her patience and time spent preparing the manuscript for the first five editions. We also gratefully acknowledge the ongoing contributions of many students and instructors at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. Finally, special thanks go to Janice Alred for her many hours of help in coordination and for continuing to hold everything together.

G. J. A.
C. T. B.
W. E. O.

Five Steps to Successful Writing

Successful writing on the job is not the product of inspiration, nor is it merely the spoken word converted to print; it is the result of knowing how to structure information using both text and design to achieve an intended purpose for a clearly defined audience. The best way to ensure that your writing will succeed—whether it is a proposal, a résumé, a Web page, or any other document—is to approach writing using the following steps:

1. Preparation
2. Research
3. Organization
4. Writing
5. Revision

You will no doubt need to follow those steps consciously at first. The same is true the first time you use new software, interview a job candidate, or chair a committee meeting. With practice, the steps become nearly automatic. That is not to suggest that writing becomes easy. It does not. However, the easiest and most efficient way to write effectively is to do it systematically.

As you master the five steps, keep in mind that they are interrelated and often overlap. For example, your readers' needs and your purpose, which you determine in step 1, will affect decisions you make in subsequent steps. You may also need to retrace steps. When you conduct research, for example, you may realize that you need to revise your initial impression of the document's purpose and audience. Similarly, when you begin to organize in step 3, you may discover the need to return to research (step 2) to gather more information.

The time required for each step varies with different writing tasks. When writing an informal memo, for example, you might follow the first three steps (preparation, research, and organization) by simply listing the points in the order you want to cover them. In such situations, you gather and organize information mentally as you consider your purpose and audience. For a formal report, the first three steps require well-organized research, careful note-taking, and detailed outlining. For a routine e-mail message to a coworker, the first four steps merge as you type the information onto the screen. In short, the five steps expand, contract, and at times must be repeated to fit the complexity or context of the writing task.

Dividing the writing process into steps is especially useful when you are writing as a part of a team. In that case, you typically divide work among team members, keep track of a project, and save time by not duplicating efforts. When you collaborate, you can use e-mail to share text and other files, suggest improvements to each other's work, and generally keep everyone informed of your progress as you follow the steps in the writing process.

Preparation

Writing, like most professional tasks, requires solid **preparation**.* In fact, adequate preparation is as important as **writing a draft**. In preparation for writing, your goal is to accomplish the following four major tasks:

- Establish your primary **purpose**.
- Assess your **audience** (or readers) and the **context**.
- Determine the **scope** of your coverage.
- Select the appropriate medium. See **selecting the medium**.

Establishing Your Purpose. To establish your primary purpose, simply ask yourself what you want your readers to know, to believe, or to be able to do after they have finished reading what you have written. Be precise. Often a writer states a purpose so broadly that it is almost useless. A purpose such as "to report on possible locations for a new research facility" is too general. However, "to compare the relative advantages of Paris, Singapore, and San Francisco as possible locations for a new research facility so that top management can choose the best location" is a purpose statement that can guide you throughout the writing process. In addition to your primary purpose, consider possible secondary purposes for your document. For example, a secondary purpose of the research-facility report might be to make corporate executive readers aware of the staffing needs of the new facility so that they can ensure its smooth operation in whichever location is selected.

Assessing Your Audience and Context. The next task is to assess your audience. Again, be precise and ask key questions. Who exactly is your reader? Do you have multiple readers? Who needs to see or to use the document? What are your readers' needs in relation to your subject? What are your readers' attitudes about the subject? (Are they skeptical? Supportive? Anxious? Bored?) What do your readers already know about the subject? Should you define basic terminology, or will such definitions merely bore, or even impede, your readers? Are you com-

*Throughout this book, words and phrases shown as links—underlined and set in an alternate typeface—refer to specific entries in the book.

municating with international readers and therefore dealing with issues inherent in **global communication**?

For the research-facility report, the readers are described as "top management." Who is included in that category? Will one of the people evaluating the report be the human resources manager? That person likely would be interested in the availability of qualified professionals as well as in the presence of training, housing, and even recreational facilities available to potential employees in each city. The purchasing manager would be concerned with available sources for needed materials. The marketing manager would give priority to a facility's proximity to the primary markets and transportation to important clients. The chief financial officer would want to know about land and building costs and about each city's tax structure. The chief executive officer would be interested in all this information and perhaps more. As in this example, many workplace documents have audiences composed of multiple readers. You can accommodate their needs through one of a number of approaches described in the entry **audience**.

Part of knowing the needs and interests of your readers is learning as much as you can about the context. Simply put, context is the environment or circumstances in which writers produce documents and within which readers interpret their meanings. Everything is written within a context, as illustrated in many entries and examples throughout this book. To determine the effect of context on the research-facility report, you might ask both specific and general questions about the situation and about your readers' backgrounds: Is this the company's first new facility, or has the company chosen locations for new facilities before? Have the readers visited all three cities? Have they already seen other reports on the three cities? What is the corporate culture in which your readers work, and what are its key values? What specific factors, such as competition, finance, and regulation, are recognized as important within the organization?

ESL TIP for Considering Audiences

In the United States, **conciseness**, **coherence**, and **clarity** characterize good writing. Make sure readers can follow your writing, and say only what is necessary to communicate your message. Of course, no writing style is inherently better than another, but to be a successful writer in any language, you must understand the cultural values that underlie the language in which you are writing. See also **awkwardness**, **global communication**, **plagiarism**, **plain language**, and **English as a second language**.

(*continued*)

ESL TIP for Considering Audiences (*continued*)

Throughout this book, we have included ESL Tip boxes like this one with information that may be particularly helpful to nonnative speakers of English. See the "Contents by Topic" on the inside front cover for listings of ESL Tips and ESL Trouble Spots, entries that may be of particular help to ESL writers.

Determining the Scope. Determining your purpose and assessing your readers and context will help you decide what to include and what not to include in your writing. Those decisions establish the scope of your writing project. If you do not clearly define the scope, you will spend needless hours on research because you will not be sure what kind of information you need or even how much. Given the purpose and audience established for the report on facility locations, the scope would include such information as land and building costs, available labor force, cultural issues, transportation options, and proximity to suppliers. However, it probably would not include the early history of the cities being considered or their climate and geological features, unless those aspects were directly related to your particular business.

Selecting the Medium. Finally, you need to determine the most appropriate medium for communicating your message. Professionals on the job face a wide array of options—from **e-mail**, **text messaging**, and videoconferencing to more traditional means like **letters**, **memos**, **reports**, and face-to-face **meetings**.

The most important considerations in selecting the appropriate medium are the audience and the purpose of the communication. For example, if you need to collaborate with someone to solve a problem or if you need to establish rapport with someone, written exchanges could be far less efficient than a phone call or a face-to-face meeting. However, if you need precise wording or you need to provide a record of a complex message, communicate in writing. If you need to make information that is frequently revised accessible to employees at a large company, the best choice might be to place the information on the company's intranet site. If reviewers need to make handwritten comments on a proposal, you may need to provide paper copies that can be faxed, or you may use collaborative software and insert comments electronically. The comparative advantages and primary characteristics of the most typical means of communication are discussed in **selecting the medium**.

Research

The only way to be sure that you can write about a complex subject is to thoroughly understand it. To do that, you must conduct adequate

research, whether that means conducting an extensive investigation for a major proposal—through interviewing, library and Internet research, careful **note-taking**, and **documenting sources**—or simply checking a reputable Web site and jotting down points before you send an e-mail message to a colleague.

Methods of Research. Researchers frequently distinguish between primary and secondary research, depending on the types of sources consulted and the method of gathering information. *Primary research* refers to the gathering of raw data compiled from interviews, direct observation, surveys, experiments, **questionnaires**, and audio and video recordings, for example. In fact, direct observation and hands-on experience are the only ways to obtain certain kinds of information, such as the behavior of people and animals, certain natural phenomena, mechanical processes, and the operation of systems and equipment. *Secondary research* refers to gathering information that has been analyzed, assessed, evaluated, compiled, or otherwise organized into accessible form. Such forms or sources include books, articles, reports, Web documents, e-mail discussions, and brochures. Use the methods most appropriate to your needs, recognizing that some projects may require several types of research and that collaborative projects may require those research tasks to be distributed among team members.

Sources of Information. As you conduct research, keep in mind all the sources of information that are available to you:

- Your own knowledge and that of your colleagues
- The knowledge of people outside your workplace, gathered through **interviewing for information**
- Internet sources, including Web sites, directories, archives, and discussion groups
- Library resources, including databases and indexes of articles as well as books and reference works
- Printed and electronic sources in the workplace, such as brochures, memos, e-mail, and Web documents

The amount of research you will need to do depends on the scope of your project.

Organization

Without organization, the material gathered during your research will be incoherent to your readers. To organize information effectively, you need to determine the best way to structure your ideas; that is, you must choose a primary **method of development**.

Methods of Development. To choose the development method best suited to your document, consider your subject, your readers' needs, and your purpose. An appropriate method will help focus your information and make it easy for readers to follow your presentation.

For example, if you were writing instructions for assembling office equipment, you might naturally present the steps of the process in the order readers should perform them: the **sequential method of development**. If you were writing about the history of an organization, your account might naturally go from the beginning to the present: the **chronological method of development**. If your subject naturally lends itself to a certain method of development, use it—do not attempt to impose another method on it.

Often you will need to combine methods of development. For example, a persuasive brochure for a charitable organization might combine a specific-to-general method of development with a **cause-and-effect method of development**. That is, you could begin with persuasive case histories of individual people in need and then move to general information about the positive effects of donations on recipients.

Outlining. Once you have chosen a method of development, you are ready to prepare an outline. **Outlining** breaks large or complex subjects into manageable parts. It also enables you to emphasize key points by placing them in the positions of greatest importance. By structuring your thinking at an early stage, a well-developed outline ensures that your document will be complete and logically organized, allowing you to focus exclusively on writing when you begin the rough draft. An outline can be especially helpful for maintaining a collaborative writing team's focus throughout a large project. However, even a short letter or memo needs the logic and structure that an outline provides, whether the outline exists in your mind, on-screen, or on paper.

At this point, consider **layout and design** elements that will be helpful to your readers and appropriate to your subject and purpose. For example, if **visuals** such as photographs or tables will be useful, this is a good time to think about where they may be deployed and what kinds of visual elements will be effective, especially if they need to be prepared by someone else while you write and revise the draft. The outline can also suggest where **headings**, **lists**, and other special design features may be useful.

Writing

When you have established your purpose, your readers' needs, and your scope, and you have completed your research and your outline, you will be well prepared to write a first draft. Expand your outline into **paragraphs**, without worrying about **grammar**, **usage**, or **punctuation**. Writing and revising are different activities; refinements come with **revision**.

Write the rough draft, concentrating entirely on converting your outline into sentences and paragraphs. You might try writing as though you were explaining your subject to a reader sitting across from you. Do not worry about a good opening. Just start. Do not be concerned in the rough draft about exact **word choice** unless it comes quickly and easily—concentrate instead on ideas.

Even with good preparation, writing the draft remains a chore for many writers. The most effective way to get started and keep going is to use your outline as a map for your first draft. Do not wait for inspiration—you need to treat writing a draft as you would any on-the-job task. The entry **writing a draft** describes tactics used by experienced writers—discover which ones are best suited to you and your task.

Consider writing the **introduction** last because then you will know more precisely what is in the body of the draft. Your opening should announce the subject and give readers essential background information, such as the document's primary purpose. For longer documents, an introduction should serve as a frame into which readers can fit the detailed information that follows.

Finally, you will need to write a **conclusion** that ties the main ideas together and emphatically makes a final, significant point. The final point may be to recommend a course of action, make a prediction or a judgment, or merely summarize your main points—the way you conclude depends on the purpose of your writing and your readers' needs.

Revision

The clearer a finished piece of writing seems to the reader, the more effort the writer has likely put into its **revision**. If you have followed the steps of the writing process to this point, you will have a rough draft that needs to be revised. Revising, however, requires a different frame of mind than does writing the draft. During revision, be eager to find and correct faults and be honest. Be hard on yourself for the benefit of your readers. Read and evaluate the draft as if you were a reader seeing it for the first time.

Check your draft for accuracy, completeness, and effectiveness in achieving your purpose and meeting your readers' needs and expectations. Trim extraneous information: Your writing should give readers exactly what they need, but it should not burden them with unnecessary information or sidetrack them into loosely related subjects.

Do not try to revise for everything at once. Read your rough draft several times, each time looking for and correcting a different set of problems or errors. Concentrate first on larger issues, such as **unity** and **coherence**; save mechanical corrections, like **spelling** and punctuation, for later **proofreading**.

Finally, for important documents, consider having others review your writing and make suggestions for improvement. For collaborative writing, of course, team members must review each other's work on segments of the document as well as the final master draft. Use the "Checklist of the Writing Process" on pages xxi–xxii to guide you not only as you revise but also throughout the writing process. See also **ethics in writing**.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE **Style Guides and Standards** Organizations and professional associations often follow such guides as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, and *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* to ensure consistency in their publications on issues of usage, format, and documentation. Because advice in such guides often varies from one guide to another, some organizations set their own standards for documents. Where such standards or specific style guides are recommended or required by regulations or policies, you should follow those style guidelines. For a selected list of style guides and standards, see ***macmillanhigher.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

Checklist of the Writing Process

This checklist arranges key entries of the *Handbook of Technical Writing* according to the sequence presented in "Five Steps to Successful Writing," which begins on page xiii. This checklist is useful both for following the steps and for diagnosing writing problems.

Preparation 405

- ✔ Establish your **purpose** 449
- ✔ Identify your **audience** or **readers** 44, 462
- ✔ Consider the **context** 99
- ✔ Determine your **scope** of coverage 506
- ✔ **Select the medium** 506

Research 473

- ✔ **Brainstorm** to determine what you already know 53
- ✔ Conduct **research** 473
- ✔ Take notes (**note-taking**) 362
- ✔ **Interview for information** 277
- ✔ Create and use **questionnaires** 452
- ✔ Avoid **plagiarism** 398
- ✔ **Document sources** 135

Organization 376

- ✔ Choose the best **methods of development** 345
- ✔ **Outline** your notes and ideas 377
- ✔ Develop and integrate **visuals** 568
- ✔ Consider **layout and design** 310
  - **logic errors** 327
  - **positive writing** 402
  - **voice** 572
- ✔ Check for **ethics in writing** 178
  - **biased language** 48
  - **copyrights, patents, and trademarks** 102
  - **plagiarism** 398
- ✔ Check for appropriate **word choice** 580
  - **abstract / concrete words** 6
  - **affectation**, **buzzwords**, **jargon**, and **plain language** 23, 58, 295, 399
  - **clichés** 72
  - **connotation / denotation** 97
  - **defining terms** 120
- ✔ Eliminate problems with **grammar** 233

Writing a Draft 581

- ✔ Select an appropriate **point of view** 401
- ✔ Adopt an appropriate **style** and **tone** 530, 549
- ✔ Use effective **sentence construction** 512

- ✔ Construct effective **paragraphs** 382
- ✔ Use **quotations** and **paraphrasing** 459, 387
- ✔ Write an **introduction** 285
- ✔ Write a **conclusion** 94
- ✔ Choose a **title** 546

Revision 502

- ✔ Check for **unity** and **coherence** 558, 72
  - **conciseness** 91
  - **pace** 382
  - **transition** 554
- ✔ Check for **sentence variety** 519
  - **emphasis** 168
  - **parallel structure** 385
  - **subordination** 532
- ✔ Check for **clarity** 70
  - **agreement** 24
  - **ambiguity** 33
  - **awkwardness** 46
  - **case** 63
  - **modifiers** 349
  - **pronoun reference** 421
  - **sentence faults** 516
- ✔ Review mechanics and **punctuation** 448
  - **abbreviations** 2
  - **capitalization** 60
  - **contractions** 101
  - **dates** 119
  - **italics** 292
  - **numbers** 367
  - **proofreading** 426
  - **spelling** 529

Handbook of Technical Writing

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A

a / an

A and *an* are indefinite **articles** because the **noun** designated by the article is not a specific person, place, or thing but is one of a group.

- She installed *a* program.
  [This is not a specific program but an unnamed program.]

Use *a* before words or abbreviations beginning with a consonant or consonant sound, including *y* or *w*.

- *A* manual is available in several formats.
- It was *a* historic event for the Institute.
  [*Historic* begins with the consonant *h*.]
- We received *a* DNA sample.
- The year's activities are summarized in *a* one-page report.
  [*One* begins with the consonant sound "wuh."]

Use *an* before words or abbreviations beginning with a vowel or a consonant with a vowel sound.

- The report is *an* overview of the year's activities.
- The applicant arrived *an* hour early.
  [*Hour* begins with a silent *h*.]
- She received *an* STC award.
  [*STC* begins with a vowel sound "ess."]

Do not use unnecessary indefinite articles in a sentence.

- Fill with *a* half *a* pint of fluid.
  [Choose one article and eliminate the other.]

See also **adjectives**.

a lot

A lot is often incorrectly written as one word (*alot*). The phrase *a lot* is informal and often too vague for technical writing. Use *many* or *numerous* for estimates or give a specific number or amount.

▸ We received ~~a lot of~~ 152 e-mails supporting the new policy.

abbreviations

DIRECTORY

Using Abbreviations 2
Writer's Checklist: Using Abbreviations 3
Forming Abbreviations 3
Names of Organizations 3
Measurements 4
Personal Names and Titles 4
Common Scholarly Abbreviations and Terms 4
Postal Abbreviations 5

Abbreviations are shortened versions of words or combinations of the first letters of words (*Corp./Corporation, URL/Uniform Resource Locator*). If used appropriately, abbreviations can be convenient for both the reader and the writer. Like symbols, they can be important space savers in technical writing.

Abbreviations that are formed by combining the initial letter of each word in a multiword term are called *initialisms*. Initialisms are pronounced as separate letters (*AC* or *ac/alternating current*). Abbreviations that combine the first letter or letters of several words—and can be pronounced—are called *acronyms* (*PIN/personal identification number, LAN/local area network*).

Using Abbreviations

The most important consideration in the use of abbreviations is whether they will be understood by your **audience**. The same abbreviation, for example, can have two different meanings (STC stands for both the Society for Technical Communication and the Science and Technology Corporation). Like **jargon**, shortened forms are easily understood within a group of specialists; outside the group, however, shortened forms might be incomprehensible. In fact, abbreviations can be easily overused, either as an **affectation** or in a misguided attempt to make writing concise, even with **instant messaging** where abbreviations are often appropriate. Remember that **memos**, **e-mail**, or **reports** addressed to specific people may be read by others, so consider those secondary audiences as well. A good rule to follow: "When in doubt, spell it out."

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Abbreviations

- ✔ Except for commonly used abbreviations (*U.S.*, *a.m.*), spell out a term to be abbreviated the first time it is used, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter, the abbreviation may be used alone.
- ✔ In long documents, repeat the full term in parentheses after the abbreviation at regular intervals to remind readers of the abbreviation's meaning, as in "Submit the CAR (Capital Appropriations Request) by October 15." For digital texts, consider linking abbreviations to a glossary or providing the definition in a pop-up that appears when the cursor hovers over an abbreviation.
- ✔ Do not add an additional period at the end of a sentence that ends with an abbreviation. ("The official name of the company is DataBase, Inc.")
- ✔ For abbreviations specific to your profession or discipline, use a style guide recommended by your professional organization or company.
- ✔ Write acronyms in capital letters without periods. The only exceptions are acronyms that have become accepted as common nouns, which are written in lowercase letters, such as *scuba* (*s*elf-*c*ontained *u*nderwater *b*reathing *a*pparatus).
- ✔ Generally, use periods for lowercase initialisms (*a.k.a.*, *p.m.*) but not for uppercase ones (*GDP*, *IRA*). Exceptions include geographic names (*U.S.*, *U.K.*, *E.U.*) and the traditional expression of academic degrees (*B.S.*, *M.S.E.E.*, *Ph.D.*).
- ✔ Form the plural of an acronym or initialism by adding a lowercase *s*. Do not use an **apostrophe** (*CARs*, *DVDs*).
- ✔ Do not follow an abbreviation with a word that repeats the final term in the abbreviation (*HIV transmission* not *HIV virus transmission*).
- ✔ Avoid creating your own abbreviations; they will confuse readers.

Forming Abbreviations

Names of Organizations. A company may include in its name a term such as *Brothers, Incorporated, Corporation, Company, or Limited Liability Company*. If the term is abbreviated in the official company name that appears on letterhead stationery or on its Web site, use the abbreviated form: *Bros., Inc., Corp., Co., or LLC*. If the term is not abbreviated in the official name, spell it out in writing, except with addresses, footnotes, **bibliographies**, and **lists** where abbreviations may be used. Likewise, use an **ampersand** (&) only if it appears in the official company name. For names of divisions within organizations, terms such as *Department* and *Division* should be abbreviated only when space is limited (*Dept.* and *Div.*).

Measurements. Except for abbreviations that may be confused with words (*in.* for *inch* and *gal.* for *gallon*), abbreviations of measurement do not require periods (*yd* for *yard* and *qt* for *quart*). Abbreviations of units of measure are identical in the singular and plural: *1 cm* and *15 cm* (not *15 cms*). Some abbreviations can be used in combination with other symbols (*°F* for *degrees Fahrenheit* and *ft*^{2} for *square feet*).

For a listing of abbreviations for the basic units used in the International System of Units (SI), see *http://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Units/units.html*. For additional definitions and background, search the National Institute of Standards and Technology Web site at *www.nist.gov* and generally online for *units of information*. For information on abbreviating dates and time, see **numbers**.

Personal Names and Titles. Personal names generally should not be abbreviated: *Thomas* (not *Thos.*) and *William* (not *Wm.*). An academic, civil, religious, or military title should be spelled out and in lowercase when it does not precede a name. ("The *captain* checked the orders.") When they precede names, some titles are customarily abbreviated (*Dr. Smith*, *Mr. Mills*, *Ms. Katz*). See also **Ms. / Miss / Mrs.**

An abbreviation of a title may follow the name; however, be certain that it does not duplicate a title before the name (*Angeline Martinez, Ph.D.* or *Dr. Angeline Martinez*). When addressing **correspondence** and including names in other documents, you normally should spell out titles (*The Honorable Mary J. Holt*; *Professor Charles Matlin*). Traditionally, periods are used with academic degrees, although some style guides suggest omitting these (*M.A./MA*, *M.B.A./MBA*, *Ph.D./PhD*).

Common Scholarly Abbreviations and Terms. The following is a partial list of abbreviations commonly used in reference books and for documenting sources in research papers and reports. Other than in such documents, generally avoid such abbreviations.

anon.	anonymous
bibliog.	bibliography, bibliographer, bibliographic
ca., c.	*circa*, "about" (used with approximate dates: *ca. 1756*)
cf.	*confer*, "compare"
chap.	chapter
diss.	dissertation
ed., eds.	edited by, editor(s), edition(s)

e.g.	*exempli gratia*, "for example" (see **e.g. / i.e.**)
esp.	especially
et al.	*et alii*, "and others"
etc.	*et cetera*, "and so forth" (see **etc.**)
f., ff.	and the following page(s) or line(s)
GPO	Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
i.e.	*id est*, "that is"
MS, MSS	manuscript, manuscripts
n., nn.	note, notes (used immediately after page number: *56n., 56n.3, 56nn.3–5*)
N.B., n.b.	*nota bene*, "take notice, mark well"
n.d.	no date (of publication)
n.p.	no place (of publication); no publisher; no page
p., pp.	page, pages
proc.	proceedings
pub.	published by, publisher, publication
rev.	revised by, revised, revision; review, reviewed by (Spell out "review" where "rev." might be ambiguous.)
rpt.	reprinted by, reprint
sec., secs.	section, sections
sic	so, thus; inserted after a misspelled or misused word in quotations ([*sic*]). For details and examples, see **brackets**.
supp., suppl.	supplement
trans.	translated by, translator, translation
UP	University Press (used in MLA style, as in *Oxford UP*)
viz.	*videlicet*, "namely"
vol., vols.	volume, volumes
vs., v.	*versus*, "against" (*v.* preferred in titles of legal cases)

Postal Abbreviations. For a list of the official state and place-name abbreviations used by the United States Postal Service, go to *www.usps.com*.

above

Avoid using *above* to refer to a preceding passage or **visual** because its reference is vague and often an **affectation**. The same is true of *aforesaid* and *aforementioned*. (See also **former / latter**.) To refer to something previously mentioned, repeat the **noun** or **pronoun**, or construct your **paragraph** so that your reference is obvious.

your travel voucher
▶ Please complete and submit ~~the above~~ by March 1.

absolutely

Absolutely means "definitely," "entirely," "completely," or "unquestionably." Avoid it as a redundant **intensifier** to mean "very" or "much."

- We are ~~absolutely~~ certain we can meet the deadline.

abstract / concrete words

Abstract words refer to general ideas, qualities, conditions, acts, or relationships—intangible things that cannot be detected by the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell), such as *learning*, *leadership*, and *technology*. *Concrete words* identify things that can be perceived by the five senses, such as *diploma*, *attending physician*, and *stethoscope*.

Abstract words must often be further defined or described.

to interview the maintenance technicians

- The accident-investigation team needs freedom ^.

Abstract words are best used with concrete words to help make intangible concepts specific and vivid.

- Public transportation [abstract] in Chicago includes buses [concrete] and commuter trains [concrete].

The use of abstract and concrete words depends on your **purpose** and the **context** in which you are using those words. See also **word choice**.

abstracts

An abstract summarizes and highlights the major points of a **formal report**, **trade journal article**, dissertation, or other long work. Its primary purpose is to enable readers to decide whether to read the work in full. For a discussion of how summaries differ from abstracts, see **executive summaries**.

Although abstracts, typically 200 to 250 words long, are published with the longer works they condense, they can also be published separately in periodical indexes, by abstracting services, and in introductory sections of online journals (see **research**). For this reason, an abstract should be readable apart from the original document and contain appropriate key search terms for researchers using online databases.

Types of Abstracts

Depending on the kind of information they contain, abstracts are often classified as descriptive or informative (see Figure A–1). A *descriptive abstract* summarizes the **purpose**, **scope**, and methods used to arrive at the reported findings. It is a slightly expanded **table of contents** in sentence and paragraph form. A descriptive abstract need not be longer

ABSTRACT

The Effects of Long-Distance Running on Male and Female Runners Aged 50 to 72 Years

by Sandra Young

Purpose

Methods and scope

Findings

Descriptive section

The long-term effects of long-distance running on the bones, joints, and general health of runners aged 50 to 72 can help determine whether physicians should recommend long-distance running for their older patients. Recent studies conducted at Stanford University and the University of Florida tested and compared male and female long-distance runners aged 50 to 72 with a control group of runners and nonrunners. The groups were matched by sex, race, education, and occupation. The Florida study used only male runners who had run at least 20 miles a week for five years and compared them with a group of runners and nonrunners. Both studies based findings on medical histories and on physical and X-ray examinations. Both studies conclude that long-distance running is not associated with increased degenerative joint disease. Control groups were more prone to spur formation, sclerosis, and joint-space narrowing and showed more joint degeneration than runners. Female long-distance runners exhibited somewhat more sclerosis in knee joints and the lumbar spine area than matched control subjects. Both studies support the role of exercise in retarding bone loss with aging. The investigation concludes that the health risk factors are fewer for long-distance runners than for those less active aged 50 to 72. The investigation recommends that physicians recognize that an exercise program that includes long-distance running can be beneficial to their aging patients' health.

Conclusions

Recommendations

Keywords: bone loss, exercise programs, geriatric patients, health risk, joint and lumbar degeneration, long-distance running, runners, sclerosis.

FIGURE A–1. Informative Abstract (for an Article)

than several sentences. An *informative abstract* is an expanded version of the descriptive abstract. In addition to information about the purpose, scope, and research methods used, the informative abstract summarizes any results, **conclusions**, and recommendations. The informative abstract retains the **tone** and essential scope of the original work, while omitting its details. The first four sentences of the abstract shown in Figure A–1 on page 7 alone would be descriptive; with the addition of the sentences that detail the conclusions of the report, the abstract becomes informative.

The type of abstract you should write depends on your **audience** and the organization or publication for which you are writing. Informative abstracts work best for wide audiences that need to know conclusions and recommendations; descriptive abstracts work best for compilations, such as proceedings and progress reports that do not contain conclusions or recommendations.

Writing Strategies

Write the abstract *after* finishing the report or document. Otherwise, the abstract may not accurately reflect the longer work. Begin with a topic sentence that announces the subject and scope of your original document. Then, using the major and minor headings of your outline or table of contents to distinguish primary ideas from secondary ones, decide what material is relevant to your abstract. (See **outlining**.) Write with **clarity** and **conciseness**, eliminating unnecessary words and ideas. Do not, however, become so terse that you omit articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) and important transitional words and phrases (*however*, *therefore*, *but*, *next*). Write complete sentences, but avoid stringing together a group of short sentences end to end; instead, combine ideas by using **subordination** and **parallel structure**. Spell out all but the most common **abbreviations**. In a report, an abstract follows the title page and is numbered page iii.

accept / except

Accept is a **verb** meaning "consent to," "agree to take," or "admit willingly." ("I *accept* the responsibility.") *Except* is normally used as a **preposition** meaning "other than" or "excluding." ("We agreed on everything *except* the schedule.")

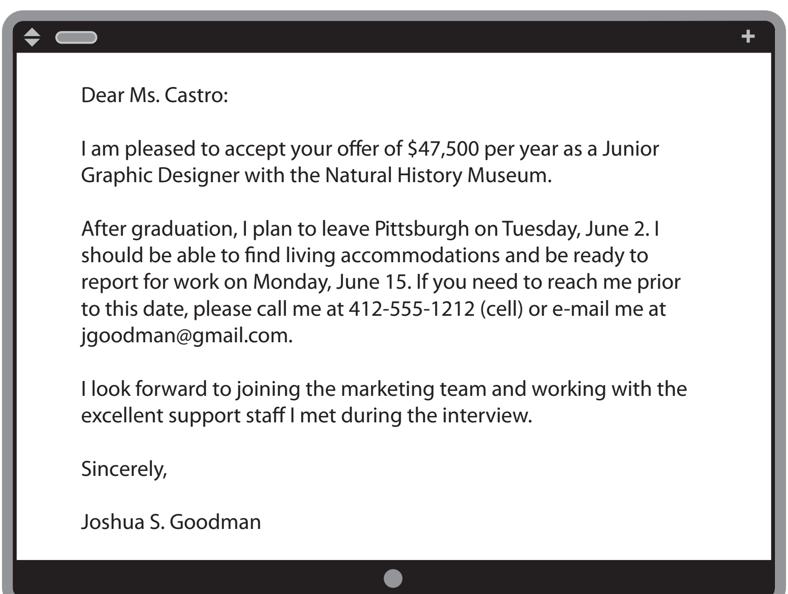
acceptance / refusal letters (for employment)

When you decide to accept a job offer, you can notify your new employer by telephone or in a meeting—but to make your decision official, you should send an acceptance in writing. What you include in your message and whether you send a **letter** or an **e-mail** depends on your previous conversations with your new employer. See also **correspondence**. Figure A–2 shows an example of a job acceptance letter written by a graduating student. (See his **résumé** in Figure R–8 on page 488.)

In the first paragraph of Figure A–2, the writer identifies the job he is accepting and the salary he has been offered—doing so can avoid any misunderstandings about the job or the salary. In the second paragraph, the writer details his plans for relocating and reporting for work. Even if the writer discussed these arrangements during earlier conversations, he needs to confirm them, officially, in this written message. The writer concludes with a brief but enthusiastic statement that he looks forward to working for the new employer.

When you decide to reject a job offer, send a written job refusal to make that decision official, even if you have already notified the employer during a meeting or on the phone. Writing to an employer is an important goodwill gesture.

In Figure A–3, an example of a job refusal, the applicant mentions something positive about his contact with the employer and refers to the specific job offered. He indicates his serious consideration of the offer, provides a logical reason for the refusal, and concludes on a pleasant note. (See his résumé in Figure R–9 on pages 489–90.) For general advice on handling refusals and negative messages, see **refusal letters**.



Dear Ms. Castro:

I am pleased to accept your offer of $47,500 per year as a Junior Graphic Designer with the Natural History Museum.

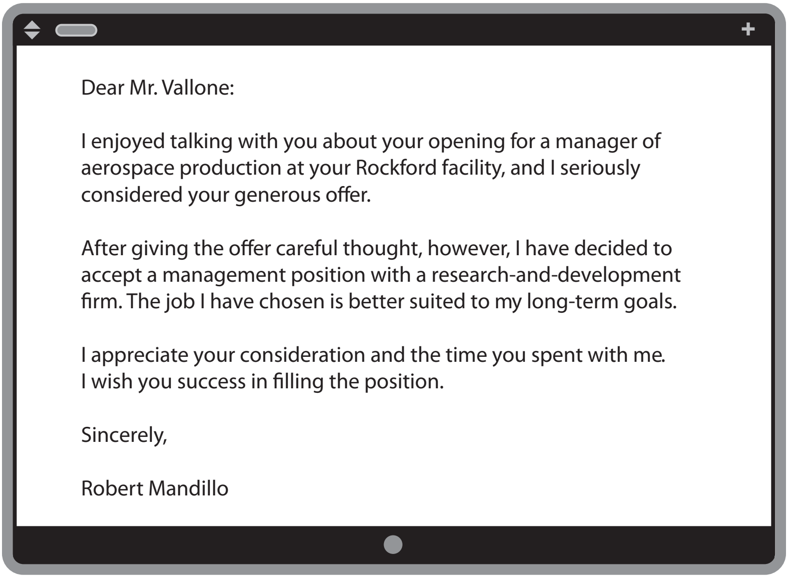
After graduation, I plan to leave Pittsburgh on Tuesday, June 2. I should be able to find living accommodations and be ready to report for work on Monday, June 15. If you need to reach me prior to this date, please call me at 412-555-1212 (cell) or e-mail me at jgoodman@gmail.com.

I look forward to joining the marketing team and working with the excellent support staff I met during the interview.

Sincerely,

Joshua S. Goodman

FIGURE A–2. Acceptance Letter (for Employment)



Dear Mr. Vallone:

I enjoyed talking with you about your opening for a manager of aerospace production at your Rockford facility, and I seriously considered your generous offer.

After giving the offer careful thought, however, I have decided to accept a management position with a research-and-development firm. The job I have chosen is better suited to my long-term goals.

I appreciate your consideration and the time you spent with me. I wish you success in filling the position.

Sincerely,

Robert Mandillo

FIGURE A–3. Refusal (for Employment)

◖ **PROFESSIONALISM NOTE** Be especially tactful and courteous—the employer you are refusing has spent time and effort interviewing you and may have counted on your accepting the job. Remember, you may apply for another job at that company in the future. ◗

accuracy / precision

Accuracy means error-free and correct. *Precision*, mathematically, refers to the "degree of refinement with which a measurement is made." Thus, a measurement carried to five decimal places (*5.28371*) is more precise than one carried to two decimal places (*5.28*), but it is not necessarily more accurate.

acknowledgment letters

When a colleague or client sends you something or makes a request, you should acknowledge what was sent, respond to the request, or explain that you cannot respond to the request immediately in a short, polite

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: Jonathan Evans <evans@medhosp.org>

CC: Show BCC

Subject: 1240 PET Scanner Report

Dear Mr. Evans:

Your comprehensive report arrived today. When I finish studying it in detail, I'll send you our cost estimate for the installation of the ECAT 1240 Pet Scanner.

Thank you for preparing such a thorough analysis.

Regards,

Roger Vonblatz

FIGURE A–4. Acknowledgment

note. Send a message, like the one shown in Figure A–4, in the medium used or preferred by your reader, whether a **letter**, an **e-mail**, or a **text message**. See also **correspondence**.

acronyms and initialisms

Acronyms are formed by combining the first letter or letters of several words; they are pronounced as words and written without periods (*ANSI/American National Standards Institute*). *Initialisms* are formed by combining the initial letter of each word in a multiword term; they are pronounced as separate letters (*STC/Society for Technical Communication*). See **abbreviations** for the use of acronyms and initialisms.

activate / actuate

Both *activate* and *actuate* mean "make active," although *actuate* is usually applied only to mechanical processes.

- The relay *actuates* the trip hammer. [mechanical process]
- The electrolyte *activates* the battery. [chemical process]
- The governor *activated* the National Guard. [legal process]

active voice (*see* voice)

ad hoc

Ad hoc is Latin for "for this" or "for this particular occasion." An ad hoc committee is one set up temporarily to consider a particular issue. The term has been fully assimilated into English and thus does not have to be italicized. See also **foreign words in English**.

adapt / adept / adopt

Adapt is a verb meaning "adjust to a new situation." *Adept* is an adjective meaning "highly skilled." *Adopt* is a verb meaning "take or use as one's own."

► The company will *adopt* a policy of finding engineers who are *adept* administrators and who can *adapt* to new situations.

adapting to new technologies

In the classroom or in the workplace, hardware, software, and other technologies quickly become out of date. This entry is designed to help you cope with such changes by providing useful approaches to working with new technologies. See also **selecting the medium**.

Technology You Need to Know

When faced with a new technology, ask "How much do I *need* to know about the specific technology to do my work?" What you need to learn will depend on your workplace **context**. Sometimes you may need only basic knowledge to accomplish specific and limited tasks. Other times, you may need much more in-depth knowledge—even expert knowledge—to serve as an adviser or a resource for your colleagues. The checklist that follows provides suggestions for navigating the functions and operations of devices and programs with which you are unfamiliar.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Strategies for Learning a New Technology**

✔ *Experiment.* Acquaint yourself with a new technology simply by using it. This approach, in which you "play" with a new tool until it becomes familiar, will help you develop greater confidence with new technologies and will rarely have negative consequences.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Strategies for Learning a New Technology** *(continued)*

- ✔ *Conduct careful Internet searches*. Search for an issue using precise terminology; include the name of the tool and keywords that describe your specific problem. Consider as well browsing relevant Internet message boards and the Web site of the company that developed the tool.
- ✔ *Consult IT staff and trusted colleagues*. Seek help from your organization's technology specialists and trainers as you begin to use a new tool. If such specialists are not available, tech-savvy colleagues on your team may be willing to help.
- ✔ *Use built-in help and official help manuals*. Use built-in tutorials, digital or printed instructional materials, and links to searchable online help sites. Many help documents are written in plain, easy-to-understand language.
- ✔ *Take product workshops and online tutorials*. Enroll in a workshop; those offered face-to-face or online teach everything from the basics to advanced functions of devices and software, and they offer the benefit of other users' experience. Check for workshops and tutorials provided by the product vendor before also looking for paid and free tutorials from sites such as Lynda.com, PCWorld, and YouTube.
- ✔ *Refer to third-party help manuals*. Look for how-to guides for computer software and hardware. With full-color printing, plenty of photos, and a casual, friendly tone, these books often simplify information.

DIGITAL TIP

Assessing Hardware and Software

When individuals or organizations consider adopting a new or substantially updated technology, they need to ask a number of questions to assess the value of the technology for themselves or other organizations. To see a list of these questions, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Assessing Hardware and Software."

adjectives

DIRECTORY

Limiting Adjectives 14
Comparison of Adjectives 15
Placement of Adjectives 16
Use of Adjectives 17

An adjective is any word that modifies a **noun** or **pronoun**. *Descriptive adjectives* identify a quality of a noun or pronoun. *Limiting adjectives* impose boundaries on the noun or pronoun.

- ▸ *hot* surface [descriptive]
- ▸ *three* phone lines [limiting]

Limiting Adjectives

Limiting adjectives include the following categories:

- Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*)
- Demonstrative adjectives (*this*, *that*, *these*, *those*)
- Possessive adjectives (*my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*)
- Numeral adjectives (*two*, *first*)
- Indefinite adjectives (*all*, *none*, *some*, *any*)

Articles. Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) are traditionally classified as adjectives because they modify nouns by either limiting them or making them more specific. See also **a / an**, **articles**, and **English as a second language**.

Demonstrative Adjectives. A demonstrative adjective points to the thing it modifies, specifying the object's position in space or time. *This* and *these* specify a closer position; *that* and *those* specify a more remote position.

- ▸ *This* version is more current than *that* version produced last month.
- ▸ *These* sales figures are more recent than *those* reported last week.

Demonstrative adjectives often cause problems when they modify the nouns *kind*, *type*, and *sort*. Demonstrative adjectives used with those nouns should agree with them in number.

- ▸ *this* kind, *these* kinds; *that* type, *those* types

Confusion often develops when the preposition *of* is added (*this kind of*, *these kinds of*) and the object of the preposition does not conform in number to the demonstrative adjective and its noun. See also **agreement** and **prepositions**.

- ▸ *This kind of* human resources ~~policies are~~ *policy is* standard.
- ▸ *These kinds of* human resources ~~policy is~~ *policies are* standard.

Avoid demonstrative adjectives like *kind*, *type*, and *sort* that can easily lead to vagueness. Be more specific. See also **kind of / sort of**.

Possessive Adjectives. Because possessive adjectives (*my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*) directly modify nouns, they function as adjectives, even though they are pronoun forms (*my* idea, *her* plans, *their* projects). See also **functional shift**.

Numeral Adjectives. Numeral adjectives identify quantity, degree, or place in a sequence. They always modify count nouns. Numeral adjectives are divided into two subclasses: cardinal and ordinal. A *cardinal adjective* expresses an exact quantity (*one* pencil, *two* computers); an *ordinal adjective* expresses degree or sequence (*first* quarter, *second* edition).

In most writing, an ordinal adjective should be spelled out if it is a single word (*tenth*) and written in figures if it is more than one word (*312th*). Ordinal numbers can also function as adverbs. ("John arrived *first*.") See also **first / firstly** and **numbers**.

Indefinite Adjectives. Indefinite adjectives do not designate anything specific about the nouns they modify (*some* monitors, *all* designers). The articles *a* and *an* are included among the indefinite adjectives (*a* chair, *an* application).

Comparison of Adjectives

Most adjectives in the positive form show the comparative form with the suffix *-er* for two items and the superlative form with the suffix *-est* for three or more items.

- ▸ The first report is *long*. [positive form]
- ▸ The second report is *longer*. [comparative form]
- ▸ The third report is *longest*. [superlative form]

Many two-syllable adjectives and most three-syllable adjectives are preceded by the word *more* or *most* to form the comparative or the superlative.

- ▸ The new media center is *more* impressive than the old one. It is the *most* impressive in the county.

A few adjectives have irregular forms of comparison (*much*, *more*, *most*; *little*, *less*, *least*). Some adjectives (*round*, *unique*, *exact*, *accurate*), often called *absolute words*, are not logically subject to comparison. See also **equal / unique / perfect**.

ESL TIP for Using Adjectives

Do not add *-s* or *-es* to an adjective to make it plural.

- ▶ the *long* trip
- ▶ the *long* trips

Capitalize adjectives of origin (city, state, nation, continent).

- ▶ the *Venetian* canals
- ▶ the *Texas* longhorn steer
- ▶ the *French* government
- ▶ the *African* deserts

In English, verbs of feeling (for example, *bore, interest, surprise*) have two adjectival forms: the present participle (*-ing*) and the past participle (*-ed*). Use the present participle to describe what causes the feeling. Use the past participle to describe the person who experiences the feeling.

- ▶ We heard the *surprising* election results.
  [The *election results* cause the feeling.]
- ▶ Only the losing candidate was *surprised* by the election results.
  [The *candidate* experienced the feeling of surprise.]

Adjectives follow nouns in English in only two cases: when the adjective functions as a subjective complement ("That project is not *finished*") and when an adjective phrase or clause modifies the noun ("The project *that was suspended temporarily*"). In all other cases, adjectives are placed before the noun.

When a sentence has multiple adjectives, it is often difficult to know the right order. The guidelines illustrated in the following example would apply in most circumstances, but there are exceptions. (Normally do not use a phrase with so many stacked **modifiers**.) See also **adverbs** and **articles**.

- ▶ The six extra-large rectangular brown cardboard take-out containers

determiner, number, comment, size, shape, color, material, qualifier, noun

Placement of Adjectives

When limiting and descriptive adjectives appear together, the limiting adjectives precede the descriptive adjectives, with the articles usually in the first position.

- *The ten yellow* taxis were sold at auction. [article (*The*), limiting adjective (*ten*), descriptive adjective (*yellow*)]

Within a sentence, adjectives may appear before the nouns they modify (the attributive position) or after the nouns they modify (the predicative position).

- *The small* jobs are given priority. [attributive position]
- The exposure is *brief*. [predicative position]

Use of Adjectives

Nouns often function as adjectives to clarify the meaning of other nouns.

- The *accident* report prompted a *product* redesign.

When adjectives modifying the same noun can be reversed and still make sense or when they can be separated by *and* or *or*, they should be separated by commas.

- The company seeks *bright, energetic, creative* managers.

Notice that there is no comma after *creative*. Never use a comma between a final adjective and the noun it modifies. When an adjective modifies a phrase, no comma is required.

- We need an *updated Web-page design*.
  [*Updated* modifies the phrase *Web-page design*.]

Writers sometimes string together a series of nouns used as adjectives to form a unit modifier, thereby creating stacked (jammed) **modifiers**, which can confuse readers. See also **word choice**.

adjustment letters

An adjustment **letter** or **e-mail** is written in response to a **complaint** and tells a customer or client what your organization intends to do about the complaint. Although sent in response to a problem, an adjustment letter actually provides an excellent opportunity to build goodwill for your organization. An effective adjustment letter, such as the examples shown in Figures A–5 and A–6, can not only repair any damage done but also restore the customer's confidence in your company.

No matter how unreasonable the complaint, the **tone** of your response should be positive and respectful. Avoid emphasizing the problem, but do take responsibility for it when appropriate. Focus your

INTERNET SERVICES CORPORATION
10876 Crispen Way
Chicago, Illinois 60601

May 12, 2015

Mr. Jason Brandon
4319 Anglewood Street
Tacoma, WA 98402

Dear Mr. Brandon:

We are sorry that your experience with our customer support help line did not go smoothly. We are eager to restore your confidence in our ability to provide dependable, high-quality service. Your next three months of Internet access will be complimentary as our sincere apology.

Providing dependable service is what is expected of us, and when our staff doesn’t provide quality service, it is easy to understand our customers’ disappointment. I truly wish we had performed better in our guidance for setup and log-in procedures and that your experience had been a positive one. To prevent similar problems in the future, we plan to use your letter, anonymized, in training sessions with customer support personnel.

We appreciate your taking the time to write us. It helps to receive comments such as yours, and we conscientiously follow through to be sure that proper procedures are being met.

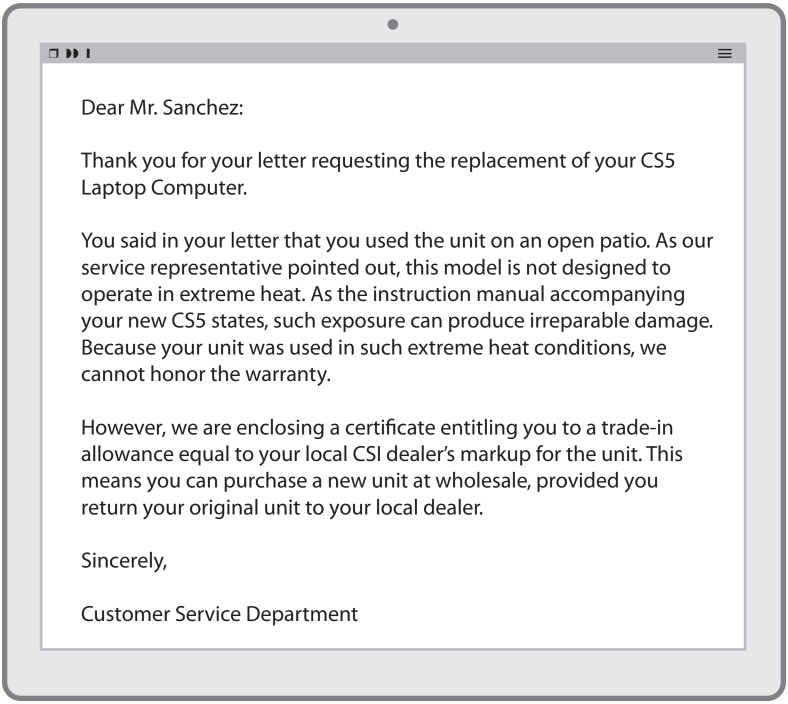
Yours truly,

Inez Carlson

Inez Carlson, Vice President
Customer Support Services

www.isc.com

FIGURE A–5. Adjustment Letter (When Company Takes Responsibility)



Dear Mr. Sanchez:

Thank you for your letter requesting the replacement of your CS5 Laptop Computer.

You said in your letter that you used the unit on an open patio. As our service representative pointed out, this model is not designed to operate in extreme heat. As the instruction manual accompanying your new CS5 states, such exposure can produce irreparable damage. Because your unit was used in such extreme heat conditions, we cannot honor the warranty.

However, we are enclosing a certificate entitling you to a trade-in allowance equal to your local CSI dealer's markup for the unit. This means you can purchase a new unit at wholesale, provided you return your original unit to your local dealer.

Sincerely,

Customer Service Department

FIGURE A–6. Partial Adjustment (Accompanying a Product)

response on what you are doing to correct the problem. Settle such matters quickly and courteously, and lean toward giving the customer or client the benefit of the doubt at a reasonable cost to your organization. See also **refusal letters** and **"you" viewpoint**.

Full Adjustments

Before granting an adjustment to a claim for which your company is at fault, first determine what happened and what you can do to satisfy the customer. Be certain that you are familiar with your company's adjustment policy—and be careful with **word choice**.

- ▶ We have just received your letter of May 7 about our defective gas grill.

Saying something is "defective" could be ruled in a court of law as an admission that the product is in fact defective. When you are in doubt, seek legal advice.

Grant adjustments graciously: A settlement made grudgingly will do more harm than good. Not only must you be gracious, but you must also acknowledge the error in such a way that the customer will not lose confidence in your company. Emphasize early what the reader will consider good news.

- Enclosed is a replacement for the damaged part.
- Yes, you were incorrectly billed for the delivery.
- Please accept our apologies for the error in your account.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE If an explanation will help restore your reader's confidence, explain what caused the problem. You might point out any steps you are taking to prevent a recurrence of the problem. Explain that customer feedback helps your firm keep the quality of its product or service high. Close pleasantly, looking toward the future, and avoid recalling the problem in your closing (do not write, "Again, we apologize . . .").

The adjustment letter in Figure A–5, for example, begins by accepting responsibility and offers an apology for the customer's inconvenience, as well as complimentary Internet service (note the use of the pronouns *we* and *our*). The second paragraph expresses a desire to restore goodwill and describes specifically how the writer intends to make the adjustment. The third paragraph expresses appreciation to the customer for calling attention to the problem and assures him that his complaint has been taken seriously.

Partial Adjustments

You may sometimes need to grant a partial adjustment—even if a claim is not really justified—to regain the lost goodwill of a customer or client. If, for example, a customer incorrectly uses a product or service, you may need to help that person better understand the correct use of that product or service. In such a circumstance, remember that your customer or client believes that his or her claim is justified. Therefore, you should give the explanation before granting the claim—otherwise, your reader may never get to the explanation. If your explanation establishes customer responsibility, do so tactfully. Figure A–6 is an example of a partial adjustment letter. See also **correspondence**.

adverbs

An adverb modifies the action or condition expressed by a **verb**.

- The wrecking ball hit the side of the building *hard*.
  [The adverb tells *how* the wrecking ball hit the building.]

An adverb also can modify an **adjective**, another adverb, or a **clause**.

▸ The brochure design used *remarkably* bright colors.
[*Remarkably* modifies the adjective *bright*.]

▸ The redesigned brake pad lasted *much* longer.
[*Much* modifies the adverb *longer*.]

▸ *Surprisingly*, the engine failed.
[*Surprisingly* modifies the clause *the engine failed*.]

Use adverbs sparingly in technical writing. Because they are often subjective (hot/cold, hard/soft, long/short), consider providing specifics that define them or provide context. How hot? (Give the temperature.) How fast? (State the speed or rate.) How short or long? (State the length.) How cautiously or carefully? (State why caution is necessary or the consequences of not being careful.)

Types of Adverbs

A simple adverb can answer one of the following questions:

Where? (adverb of place)

▸ Move the display *forward* slightly.

When? or *How often?* (adverb of time)

▸ Replace the thermostat *immediately*.

▸ I worked overtime *twice* this week.

How? (adverb of manner)

▸ Add the solvent *cautiously*.

How much? (adverb of degree)

▸ The *nearly* completed report was sent to the director.

An interrogative adverb can ask a question (*Where? When? Why? How?*):

▸ *How* many hours did you work last week?

▸ *Why* was the hard drive reformatted?

A conjunctive adverb can modify the clause that it introduces as well as join two independent clauses with a **semicolon**. The most common conjunctive adverbs are *however*, *nevertheless*, *moreover*, *therefore*, *further*, *then*, *consequently*, *besides*, *accordingly*, *also*, and *thus*.

▸ I rarely work on weekends; *however*, this weekend will be an exception.

In this example, note that a semicolon precedes and a comma follows *however*. The conjunctive adverb (*however*) introduces the independent clause (*this weekend will be an exception*) and indicates its relationship to the preceding independent clause (*I rarely work on weekends*). See also **transition**.

Comparison of Adverbs

Most one-syllable adverbs show comparison with the suffixes *-er* and *-est*.

- ▶ This motor runs *fast*. [positive form]
- ▶ This motor runs *faster* than the old one. [comparative form]
- ▶ This motor runs the *fastest* of the three tested. [superlative form]

Most adverbs with two or more syllables end in *-ly*, and most adverbs ending in *-ly* are compared by inserting the comparative *more* or *less* or the superlative *most* or *least* in front of them.

- ▶ The patient recovered *more quickly* than the staff expected.
- ▶ *Most surprisingly*, the engine failed during the final test phase.

A few irregular adverbs require a change in form to indicate comparison (*well*, *better*, *best*; *badly*, *worse*, *worst*; *far*, *farther*, *farthest*).

- ▶ The training program functions *well*.
- ▶ Our training program functions *better* than most others in the industry.
- ▶ Many consider our training program the *best* in the industry.

Placement of Adverbs

An adverb usually should be placed in front of the verb it modifies.

- ▶ The pilot *methodically* performed the preflight check.

An adverb may, however, follow the verb (or the verb and its object) that it modifies.

- ▶ The system failed *unexpectedly*.
- ▶ They replaced the hard drive *quickly*.

An adverb may be placed between a helping verb and a main verb.

- ▶ In this temperature range, the pressure will *quickly* drop.

Adverbs such as *only*, *nearly*, *almost*, *just*, and *hardly* should be placed immediately before the words they limit. See also **modifiers** and **only**.

affect / effect

Affect is a **verb** that means "influence." ("The decision could *affect* the company's stock value.") *Effect* can function as a **noun** that means "result" ("The decision had a positive *effect*") or as a verb that means "bring about" or "cause." However, avoid *effect* as a verb when you can replace it with a less formal word, such as *make* or *produce*.

▸ The new manager will make ~~effect~~ several changes to network security.

affectation

Affectation is the use of language that is more formal, technical, or showy than necessary to communicate information to the reader. Affectation is a widespread writing problem in the workplace because many people feel that it lends a degree of authority to their writing. In fact, affectation can alienate customers, clients, and colleagues because it forces readers to work harder to understand the writer's meaning.

Affected writing typically contains inappropriate abstract, highly technical, or foreign words and is often liberally sprinkled with trendy **buzzwords**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** **Jargon** and **euphemisms** can become affectation, especially if their purpose is to hide relevant facts or give a false impression of competence. See **ethics in writing**. ❖

Writers easily slip into affectation through the use of long variants—words created by adding prefixes and suffixes to simpler words (*orientate* for *orient*; *utilization* for *use*). Unnecessarily formal words (such as *penultimate* for *next to last*), created words using *-ese* (such as *managementese*), and outdated words (such as *aforesaid*) can produce affectation. (See also **above**.) Elegant variation—attempting to avoid repeating a word within a paragraph by substituting a pretentious synonym—is also a form of affectation. Either repeat the term or use a pronoun.

▸ The use of digital modules in the assembly process has increased production and ~~. Modular utilization has also~~ cut costs.

Another type of affectation is **gobbledygook**, which is wordy, roundabout writing with many legal- and technical-sounding terms (such as *wherein* and *morphing*).

Understanding the possible reasons for affectation is the first step toward avoiding it. The following are some causes of affectation.

- *Impression*. Some writers use pretentious language to try to impress the reader with fancy words instead of evidence and logic.
- *Insecurity*. Writers who are insecure about their facts, conclusions, or arguments may try to hide behind a smoke screen of pretentious words.
- *Imitation*. Perhaps unconsciously, some writers imitate the poor writing they see around them.
- *Intimidation*. A few writers, consciously or unconsciously, try to intimidate or overwhelm their readers with words, often to protect themselves from criticism.
- *Initiation*. Writers who are new to a field often feel that one way to prove their professional expertise is to use as much technical terminology and jargon as possible.
- *Imprecision*. Writers who are having trouble being precise sometimes find that an easy solution is to use a vague, trendy, or pretentious word.

See also **clichés**, **conciseness**, **nominalizations**, and **word choice**.

affinity

Affinity refers to the attraction of two persons or things to each other. *Affinity* should not be used to mean "ability" or "aptitude."

aptitude

► She has an ~~affinity~~ for problem solving.

agreement

DIRECTORY

Subject-Verb Agreement 25
Compound Subjects 27
Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement 28

Grammatical agreement is the correspondence in form between different elements of a sentence to indicate **number**, **person**, **gender**, and **case**.

A subject and its **verb** must agree in number.

► The *design is* acceptable.
[The singular subject, *design*, requires the singular verb, *is*.]

- The new *products are* going into production soon.
  [The plural subject, *products*, requires the plural verb, *are*.]

A subject and its verb must agree in person.

- *I am* the designer.
  [The first-person singular subject, *I*, requires the first-person singular verb, *am*.]
- *They are* the designers.
  [The third-person plural subject, *they*, requires the third-person plural verb, *are*.]

A **pronoun** and its antecedent must agree in person, number, gender, and case.

- The *employees* report that *they* are more efficient in the new facility.
  [The third-person plural subject, *employees*, requires the third-person plural pronoun, *they*.]
- *Kaye McGuire* will meet with the staff on Friday, when *she* will assign duties.
  [The third-person singular subject, *Kaye McGuire*, requires *she*, the third-person feminine pronoun, in the subjective case.]

See also **sentence construction**.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-verb agreement is not affected by intervening **phrases** and **clauses**.

- *One* in 20 hard drives we receive from our suppliers *is* faulty.
  [The verb, *is*, must agree in number with the subject, *one*, not *hard drives* or *suppliers*.]

The same is true when **nouns** fall between a subject and its verb.

- Only *one* of the emergency lights *was* functioning.
  [The subject of the verb is *one*, not *lights*.]
- *Each* of the switches *controls* a separate circuit.
  [The subject of the verb is *each*, not *switches*.]

Note that *one* and *each* are normally singular.

Indefinite pronouns such as *some*, *none*, *all*, *more*, and *most* may be singular or plural, depending on whether they are used with a mass noun ("*Most* of the oil *has* been used") or with a count noun ("*Most* of the drivers *know* why they are here"). Mass nouns are singular, and count nouns are plural. Other words, such as *type*, *part*, *series*, and *portion*, take singular verbs even when they precede a phrase containing a plural noun.

- ▸ A *series* of meetings *was* held to improve design.
- ▸ A large *portion* of most annual reports *is* devoted to promoting the corporate image.

Modifying phrases can obscure a simple subject.

- ▸ The *advice* of two engineers, one lawyer, and three executives *was* obtained prior to making a commitment.
  [The subject of the verb *was* is *advice*.]

Inverted word order can cause problems with agreement.

- ▸ From this work *have come* several important *improvements*.
  [The subject of the verb is *improvements*, not *work*.]

The number of a subjective **complement** does not affect the number of the verb—the verb must always agree with the subject.

- ▸ The *topic* of his report *is* employee benefits.
  [The subject of the sentence is *topic*, not *benefits*.]

A subject that expresses measurement, weight, mass, or total often takes a singular verb even when the subject word is plural in form. Such subjects are treated as a unit.

- ▸ *Four weeks is* the normal duration of the training program.

A verb following the relative pronoun *who* or *that* agrees in number with the noun to which the pronoun refers (its antecedent).

- ▸ Steel is one of those *industries* that *are* most affected by global competition.
  [*That* refers to *industries*.]
- ▸ She is one of those *employees* who *are* rarely absent.
  [*Who* refers to *employees*.]

The word *number* sometimes causes confusion. When used to mean a specific number, it is singular.

- ▸ *The number* of committee members *was* six.

When used to mean an approximate number, it is plural.

- ▸ *A number* of people *were* waiting for the announcement.

Relative pronouns (*who*, *which*, *that*) may take either singular or plural verbs, depending on whether the antecedent is singular or plural. See also **who / whom**.

- He is a manager *who seeks* the views of others.
- He is one of those managers *who seek* the views of others.

Some abstract nouns are singular in meaning but plural in form: *mathematics*, *news*, *physics*, and *economics*.

- *Mathematics is* essential in computer science.

Some words, such as the plural *jeans* and *scissors*, cause special problems.

- The *scissors were* ordered last week.
  [The subject is the plural *scissors*.]
- *A pair* of scissors *is* on order.
  [The subject is the singular *pair*.]

A book with a plural title takes a singular verb.

- *Basic Medical Laboratory Techniques* is an essential resource.

A collective noun (*committee*, *faculty*, *class*, *jury*) used as a subject takes a singular verb when the group is thought of as a unit and a plural verb when the individuals in the group are thought of separately.

- The *committee is* unanimous in its decision.
- The *committee are* returning to their offices.

A clearer way to emphasize the individuals would be to use a phrase.

- The *committee members are* returning to their offices.

Compound Subjects

A compound subject is composed of two or more elements joined by a **conjunction** such as *and*, *or*, *nor*, *either . . . or*, or *neither . . . nor*. Usually, when the elements are connected by *and*, the subject is plural and requires a plural verb.

- *Writing skill and technical aptitude are* prerequisites for this position.

One exception occurs when the elements connected by *and* form a unit or refer to the same thing. In that case, the subject is regarded as singular and takes a singular verb.

- ▸ *Bacon and eggs is* a high-cholesterol meal.
- ▸ Our greatest *challenge and business opportunity is* the Internet.

A compound subject with a singular element and a plural element joined by *or* or *nor* requires that the verb agree with the closer element.

- ▸ Neither the director nor the *project assistants were* available.
- ▸ Neither the project assistants nor the *director was* available.

If *each* or *every* modifies the elements of a compound subject, use the singular verb.

- ▸ *Each* manager and supervisor *has* a production goal to meet.
- ▸ *Every* manager and supervisor *has* a production goal to meet.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Every pronoun must have an antecedent—a noun to which it refers. See also **pronoun reference**.

- ▸ When *employees* are hired, *they* must review the policy manual. [The pronoun *they* refers to the antecedent *employees*.]

Gender. A pronoun must agree in gender with its antecedent.

- ▸ *Mr. Swivet* in the accounting department acknowledges *his* share of responsibility for the misunderstanding, just as *Ms. Barkley* in the research division must acknowledge *hers*.

Traditionally, a masculine, singular pronoun was used to agree with such indefinite antecedents as *anyone* and *person*. ("*Each* may stay or go as *he* chooses.") Because such usage ignores or excludes women, use alternatives when they are available. One solution is to use the plural. Another is to use both feminine and masculine pronouns, although that combination is clumsy when used too often.

- ▸ ~~Every employee~~ *All employees* must sign ~~his~~ *their* time ~~card~~ *cards*.
- ▸ Every employee must sign his *or her* time card.

Do not attempt to avoid expressing gender by resorting to a plural pronoun when the antecedent is singular. You may be able to avoid the pronoun entirely.

▶ Every employee must sign a ~~their~~ time card.

Avoid gender-related stereotypes in general references, as in "the nurse . . . *she*" or "the doctor . . . *he*." What if the nurse is male or the doctor female? See also **biased language**.

Number. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number. Many problems of agreement are caused by expressions that are not clear in number.

▶ Although the typical engine runs well in moderate temperatures, it ~~they~~ often stalls ~~stall~~ in extreme cold.

Use singular pronouns with the antecedents *everybody* and *everyone* unless to do so would be illogical because the meaning is obviously plural. See also **everybody / everyone**.

▶ *Everyone* pulled *his or her* share of the load.

▶ *Everyone* thought my plan should be revised, and I really couldn't blame *them*.

Collective nouns may use a singular or plural pronoun, depending on the meaning.

▶ The *committee* agreed to the recommendations only after *it* had deliberated for days.
[*committee* thought of as collective singular]

▶ The *committee* quit for the day and went to *their* respective offices.
[*committee* thought of as plural]

Demonstrative **adjectives** sometimes cause problems with agreement of number. *This* and *that* are used with singular nouns, and *these* and *those* are used with plural nouns. Demonstrative adjectives often cause problems when they modify the nouns *kind*, *type*, and *sort*. When used with those nouns, demonstrative adjectives should agree with them in number.

▶ *this* kind, *these* kinds; *that* type, *those* types

Confusion often develops when the **preposition** *of* is added (*this kind of*, *these kinds of*) and the object of the preposition does not agree in number with the demonstrative adjective and its noun.

- This kind of retirement ~~plans are~~ *plan is* best.

Avoid that error by remembering to make the demonstrative adjective, the noun, and the object of the preposition—all three—agree in number. The agreement makes the sentence not only correct but also more precise. Using demonstrative adjectives with words like *kind*, *type*, and *sort* can easily lead to vagueness. See **kind of / sort of**.

Compound Antecedents. A compound antecedent joined by *or* or *nor* is singular if both elements are singular and plural if both elements are plural.

- Neither the *engineer* nor the *technician* could do *his* job until *he* understood the new concept.
- Neither the *executives* nor the *directors* were pleased at the performance of *their* company.

When one of the antecedents connected by *or* or *nor* is singular and the other plural, the pronoun agrees with the closer antecedent.

- Either the *computer* or the *printers* should have *their* serial numbers registered.
- Either the *printers* or the *computer* should have *its* serial number registered.

A compound antecedent with its elements joined by *and* requires a plural pronoun.

- *Seon Ju and Juanita* took *their* layout drawings with them.

If both elements refer to the same person, however, use the singular pronoun.

- The noted *biologist and author* departed from *her* prepared speech.

all ready / already

All ready is a two-word phrase meaning "completely prepared." *Already* is an **adverb** that means "before this time" or "previously." ("They were *all ready* to cancel the order; fortunately, we had *already* corrected the shipments.")

all right

All right means "all correct." ("The answers were *all right*.") In workplace writing, it should not be used to mean "good" or "acceptable." It is always written as two words, with no hyphen; *alright* is nonstandard English.

all together / altogether

All together means "all acting together" or "all in one place." ("The necessary instruments were *all together* on the tray.") *Altogether* means "entirely" or "completely." ("The trip was *altogether* unnecessary.")

allude / elude / refer

Allude means to make an indirect reference to something. ("The report simply *alluded* to the problem, rather than stating it explicitly.") *Elude* means to escape notice or detection. ("The leak *eluded* the inspector.") *Refer* is used to indicate a direct reference to something. ("She *referred* to the merger during her presentation.")

allusion / illusion

An *allusion* is an indirect reference to something not specifically mentioned. ("The report made an *allusion* to metal fatigue in the support structures.") An *illusion* is a mistaken perception or a false image. ("County officials are under the *illusion* that the landfill will last indefinitely.")

allusions

An allusion is an indirect reference to something from past or current events, literature, or other familiar sources. The use of allusion promotes economical writing because it is a shorthand way of referring to a body of material in a few words or of helping to explain a new and unfamiliar process in terms of one that is familiar. In the following example, the writer sums up a description with an allusion to a well-known story. The allusion, with its implicit reference to "right standing up to might," concisely emphasizes the writer's point.

▶ As it currently exists, the review process involves the consumer's attorney sitting alone, usually without adequate technical assistance, faced by two or three government attorneys, two or three attorneys from AccroSystems, and large teams of experts who support the government and the corporation. The process is a classic David versus Goliath confrontation.

Be sure, of course, that your reader is familiar with the material to which you allude. Allusions should be used with restraint, especially in **international correspondence**. If overdone, allusions can lead to **affectation** or can be viewed merely as **clichés**. See also **technical writing style**.

almost / most

Do not use *most* as a colloquial substitute for *almost* in your writing.

▶ New shipments arrive *almost* ~~most~~ every day.

also

Also is an **adverb** that means "additionally." ("Two 5,000-gallon tanks are on-site, and several 2,500-gallon tanks are *also* available.") *Also* should not be used as a connective in the sense of "and."

▶ He brought the reports, the memos, *and* ~~also~~ the director's recommendations.

Avoid opening sentences with *also*. It is a weak transitional word that suggests an afterthought rather than planned writing.

▶ *In addition* ~~Also~~, he brought a cost analysis to support his proposal.

▶ *He also* ~~Also, he~~ brought a cost analysis to support his proposal.

ambiguity

A word or passage is ambiguous when it can be interpreted in two or more ways, yet provides the reader with no certain basis for choosing among the alternatives.

▸ Language is more valuable to a writer than a computer.
[Does that mean a writer is more in need of language than a computer is? Or does it mean that language is more valuable to a writer than a computer is?]

Ambiguity can take many forms, as in ambiguous **pronoun reference**.

AMBIGUOUS	Inadequate quality-control procedures have resulted in more equipment failures. This is our most serious problem at present. [Does *this* refer to *inadequate quality-control procedures* or to *equipment failures*?]
SPECIFIC	Inadequate quality-control procedures have resulted in more equipment failures. *These failures* are our most serious problem at present.
SPECIFIC	Inadequate quality-control procedures have resulted in more equipment failures. *Quality control* is our most serious problem at present.

Incomplete **comparison** and missing or misplaced **modifiers** (including **dangling modifiers**) cause ambiguity.

▸ Ms. Lee values rigid quality-control standards more than
does
Mr. Rosenblum.

[Complete the comparison.]

▸ *also*
He lists his hobby as cooking. He is especially fond of cocker spaniels.

[Add the missing modifier.]

The placement of some modifiers enables them to be interpreted in either of two ways.

▸ She volunteered *immediately* to deliver the bad news.

By moving the word *immediately*, the meaning can be clarified.

▸ She *immediately* volunteered to deliver the bad news.

▸ She volunteered to deliver the bad news *immediately*.

Imprecise **word choice** (including faulty **idioms**) can cause ambiguity.

▶ The general manager has denied reports that the plant's recent fuel-allocation cut will be rescinded ~~restored~~. [inappropriate word choice]

Various forms of **awkwardness** also can cause ambiguity.

amount / number

Amount is used with things that are thought of in bulk and that cannot be counted (mass **nouns**), as in "the *amount* of electricity." *Number* is used with things that can be counted as individual items (count nouns), as in "the *number* of employees."

ampersands

The ampersand (&) is a symbol sometimes used to represent the word *and*, especially in the names of organizations (*Kirkwell & Associates*). When you are writing the name of an organization in sentences, addresses, or references, spell out the word *and* unless the ampersand appears in the organization's official name on its letterhead stationery or Web site.

and/or

And/or means that either both circumstances are possible or only one of two circumstances is possible. This term is awkward and confusing because it makes the reader stop to puzzle over your distinction.

AWKWARD Use A *and/or* B.

IMPROVED Use A or B or both.

antonyms

An antonym is a word with a meaning opposite that of another word (*good/bad*, *wet/dry*, *fresh/stale*). Many pairs of words that look as if they are antonyms, such as *limit/delimit*, are not. When in doubt, consult thesauruses or **dictionaries** for antonyms as well as **synonyms**.

apostrophes

An apostrophe (’) is used to show possession or to indicate the omission of letters. Sometimes it is also used to avoid confusion with certain plurals of words, letters, and **abbreviations**.

Showing Possession

An apostrophe is used with an *s* to form the possessive case of some nouns (the *report’s* title). For further advice on using apostrophes to show possession, see **possessive case**.

Indicating Omission

An apostrophe is used to mark the omission of letters or **numbers** in a **contraction** or a date (*can’t*, *I’m*, *I’ll*, the class of *’15*).

Forming Plurals

An apostrophe can be used in forming the plurals of letters, words, or lowercase abbreviations if confusion might result from using *s* alone and thus forming a word.

- The search program does not find *a*’s and *i*’s.
- Do not replace all *of which*’s in the document.
- *I*’s need to be distinguished from the number 1.
- The prescription included several bid’s. [*bid* is an abbreviation used for “twice daily medications.”]

In general, however, add only *s* in roman (or regular) type when referring to words as words or capital letters. See also **italics**.

- Five *and*s appear in the first sentence.
- The applicants received *A*s and *B*s in their courses.

Do not use an apostrophe for plurals of abbreviations with all capital letters (*PDFs*) or a final capital letter (*ten PhDs*) or for plurals of numbers (*7s*, *the late 1990s*).

appendixes

An appendix, located at the end of a **formal report**, a **proposal**, or another long document, supplements or clarifies the information in the body of the document. Appendixes (or *appendices*) can provide information that is too detailed or lengthy for the primary **audience** of the document. For example, an appendix could contain such material as **maps**, statistical analyses, **résumés** of key personnel involved in a proposed project, or other documents needed by secondary readers.

A document may have more than one appendix, with each providing only one type of information. When you include more than one appendix, arrange them in the order they are mentioned in the body of the document. Begin each appendix on a new page, and identify each with a letter, starting with the letter *A* (*Appendix A: Sample Questionnaire*). If you have only one appendix, title it simply "Appendix." List the titles and beginning page numbers of the appendixes in the **table of contents**.

application cover letters

Job applications require both a **résumé** and a cover letter, even if it is a relatively short **e-mail** (or *e-note*) with an attached résumé. The application cover letter is essentially a sales letter in which you demonstrate how your skills, knowledge, and experience will benefit an employer by meeting the requirements of a position. See also **cover letters**, **letters**, and **persuasion**.

The letter must quickly capture the employer's attention, allow readers to easily skim the contents, and point to the attached or enclosed résumé. It should (1) introduce you as a candidate with the skills that can contribute to the particular organization, (2) explain what particular job interests you and why, (3) highlight for the reader specific qualifications in your résumé that match the position, and (4) provide the opportunity for an interview. See **job search** and **interviewing for a job**.

The job ad in Figure A–7 seeks someone with experience in a professional design environment for a natural history museum. Figure A–8 shows a cover message for a résumé that responds to the job ad in Figure A–7. Notice that the applicant (Joshua Goodman) points to his substantial volunteer activities at a local public museum. He also points to his graphic design expertise, which is highlighted in his résumé (shown in Figure R–8 on page 488).

The sample application letters shown in Figures A–9 and A–10 also follow the guidelines described in this entry. In each sample, the **emphasis**, **tone**, and **style** are tailored to fit the employer's need and highlight the applicant's qualifications. Note that the letter shown in Figure A–10 matches the résumé in Figure R–9 (Robert Mandillo) on pages 489–90.

Position: Junior Graphic Designer
Company: Natural History Museum
Location: Los Angeles, CA 90015

Description
The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is an equal-opportunity employer committed to ecological biodiversity, preservation, conservation, and education. The Museum seeks a full-time Junior Graphic Designer to join an in-house Promotions team, conceptualizing and creating digital and print content for exhibits, lectures, concerts, summer festival days, and related events. This position requires a collaborative approach to design, resourcefulness in executing a wide range of projects, an artistic and critical eye, and superior organization and communication skills. Video experience a plus. This position will report to the Creative Services Manager.

Requirements
B.A. or B.F.A. in graphic design or related field
Experience in a professional design environment
Online portfolio demonstrating visual branding solutions

Expert use of Adobe Creative Suite, especially Photoshop and Illustrator
Proficiency in HTML and CSS (hand-coding a plus)
Experience with project management software (Basecamp a plus)

FIGURE A–7. Partial Job Ad (Description and Requirements)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Tailoring a Cover Letter to a Job Ad**

- ✔ Read the job ad carefully and follow the instructions precisely.
- ✔ Provide context by referring to the job ad or mentioning how you learned about a possible opening.
- ✔ Match the tone of your letter to the language of the ad.
- ✔ Show how the job is appropriate for you with vocabulary from the ad. See **word choice**.
- ✔ Avoid copying sections of text verbatim from the job ad.
- ✔ Show that you meet or exceed the employer's minimum requirements.
- ✔ Describe how you are upgrading skills for any areas in which you fall short.

Send Cancel Save Draft Add Attachment Signature Options

TO Judith Castro <jcastro@naturalhistoryla.org>

CC Show BCC

Subject JUNIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER

jsgoodman-gdesign-resume.pdf Download

Dear Ms. Castro:

A graphic designer at Dyer/Khan, Jodi Hammel, informed me that you are recruiting for a Junior Graphic Designer in your Marketing Department. Having participated in substantial volunteer activities at a local public museum, I would fit well in this position.

I bring strong, up-to-date academic and practical skills in multimedia tools and graphic arts production, as indicated in my enclosed resume. Further, I have recent project management experience at Dyer/Khan, where I was responsible for the development of client brochures, newsletters, and posters. As Project Manager, I coordinated the project timelines, budgets, and production with clients, staff, and vendors.

My experience in the Los Angeles area media and entertainment community should help me make use of state-of-the-art design. For example, I helped upgrade the CGI logo for Paramount Pictures and the Director of Marketing commended my work. My work with leading motion picture, television, and music companies should help me develop exciting marketing tools that museum visitors and patrons will find attractive.

Could we schedule a meeting at your convenience? Please e-mail me at jgoodman@gmail.com or call me any weekday morning at 412-555-1212 (cell). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joshua S. Goodman

Portfolio: www.gooddesign.com

FIGURE A–8. Application Cover Letter (Graduate Applying for a Graphic Design Job)

Opening

In the opening paragraph, provide **context** by indicating how you heard about the position and name the specific job title or area. If you have been referred to a company by an employee, a career counselor, a professor, or someone else, be sure to say so (“I understand from Mr. John

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: Patrice Crandall <pcrandall@abels.com>

CC: Show BCC

Subject: Application for Summer Internship

Parker_Resume.doc Download

Dear Ms. Crandall:

I learned from your Web site that you are hiring undergraduates for summer internships. An internship with Abel's buyer-training program interests me because your program is one of the best in the industry.

My experiences at Metro University with the Alumni Relations Program and the University Center Committee demonstrate my communication and persuasive abilities as well as my understanding of compromise and negotiation. For example, in the alumni program, I persuaded both uninvolved and active alumni to become more engaged with the direction of the university. On the University Center Committee, I balanced the students' demands with the financial and structural constraints of the administration. With these skills, as outlined in the attached résumé, I can ably assist the members of your department with their summer projects.

I look forward to an interview with you at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marsha S. Parker

1251 Pine St.
Providence, RI 02901
(401) 555-9568

FIGURE A–9. Application Cover Letter Sent as an E-mail (College Student Applying for an Internship)

Smith, Director of Operations, that your agency . . ."). Show enthusiasm by explaining why you are interested in the job and demonstrate your initiative as well as your knowledge of the organization by relating your interest to some facet of the organization, as in Figure A–8.

Body

In the middle **paragraphs**, use specific examples to demonstrate that you are qualified for the job. Aim for **conciseness** and limit the content by focusing on one basic point clearly stated in each topic sentence. For example, your second paragraph might focus on educational achievements and your third paragraph might focus on work experience. Do not just tell readers that you are qualified—*show* them by including examples

Dear Ms. Smathers:

During the recent NOMAD convention in Washington, Karen Jarrett, Director of Operations, informed me of an opening at Aerospace Technologies for a manager of new product development. My extensive background in engineering exhibit design and management makes me an ideal candidate for this position.

I have been manager of the Exhibit Design Lab at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base for the past seven years. During that time, I received two Congressional Commendations for models of a space station laboratory and a docking/repair port. My experience in advanced exhibit design would enable me to help develop AT's wind tunnel and aerospace models. Further, I have just learned this week that my exhibit design presented at NOMAD received a "Best of Show" Award.

As described on the enclosed résumé, I not only have workplace management experience but also have recently received an M.B.A. from the University of Dayton. As a student in the M.B.A. program, I won the Luson Scholarship to complete my coursework as well as the Jonas Outstanding Student Award.

I would be happy to discuss my qualifications in an interview at your convenience. Please contact me at (937) 255-4137 or at mand@juno.com. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Robert Mandillo

Enclosure: Résumé

FIGURE A–10. Application Cover Letter (Applicant with Years of Experience)

and details. ("Most recently, as an intern at SJX Engineering, I assisted in the infrastructure design for a multi-million-dollar seaside resort.") Highlight a notable achievement that portrays your value and refer the reader to your enclosed résumé. Do not simply list information found in your résumé; rather, indicate how your talents can make valuable contributions to the company.

Closing

In the final paragraph, request an interview. Let the reader know how to reach you by including your phone number and professional e-mail address (see Writer's Checklist: Maintaining Professionalism on page 164). End with a statement of goodwill, as shown in the examples in this entry.

Proofreading and Follow-up

Proofread your letter *carefully*. Research shows that many employers eliminate candidates from consideration when they notice even one spelling, grammatical, or mechanical error. Such errors give employers the impression that you are careless in the way you present yourself professionally. See **proofreading**.

After a reasonable period, consider following up with a reminder. ("I wrote to you a week ago about your graphic design position, and I wonder if that position is still available.") Your initiative will portray your sincere interest in the opportunity. This approach may also provoke a need for action in the reviewer—for example, the need to pass your application to the hiring authority.

appositives

An appositive is a **noun** or noun **phrase** that follows and amplifies another noun or noun phrase. It has the same grammatical function as the noun it complements.

- ▸ Dennis Gabor, *the famous British scientist*, developed holography as an "exercise in serendipity."
- ▸ The famous British scientist *Dennis Gabor* developed holography as an "exercise in serendipity."

For detailed information on the use of **commas** with appositives, see **restrictive and nonrestrictive elements**.

If you are in doubt about the **case** of an appositive, check it by substituting the appositive for the noun it modifies. See also **pronouns**.

- ▸ My boss gave the two of us, Jim and ~~I~~ *me*, the day off.

  [You would not say, "My boss gave *I* the day off."]

articles

Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) function as **adjectives** because they modify the items they designate by either limiting them or making them more specific. Articles may be indefinite or definite.

The indefinite articles, *a* and *an*, denote an unspecified item.

- ▸ *A* package was delivered yesterday. [*not* a specific package]

The choice between *a* and *an* depends on the sound rather than on the letter following the article, as described in the entry **a / an**.

The definite article, *the*, denotes a particular item.

▶ *The* package was delivered yesterday. [*one* specific package]

Do not omit all articles from your writing in an attempt to be concise. Including articles costs nothing; eliminating them makes reading more difficult. (See also **telegraphic style**.) However, do not overdo it. An article can be superfluous.

▶ Fill with *a* half *a* pint of fluid.
[Choose one article and eliminate the other.]

Do not capitalize articles in titles except when they are the first word (*The New Scientist* published "Save the Climate by Saving the Forests").

ESL TIP for Using Articles

Whether to use a definite or an indefinite article is determined by what you can safely assume about your audience's knowledge. In each of these sentences, you can safely assume that the reader can clearly identify the noun. Therefore, use a definite article.

▶ *The* sun rises in the east.
[The Earth has only one *sun*.]

▶ Did you know that yesterday was *the* coldest day of the year so far?
[The modified noun refers to *yesterday*.]

▶ *The* man who left his briefcase in the conference room was in a hurry.
[The relative phrase *who left his briefcase in the conference room* restricts and, therefore, identifies the meaning of *man*.]

In the following sentence, however, you cannot assume that the reader can clearly identify the noun.

▶ *A* package is on the way.
[It is impossible to identify specifically what package is meant.]

A more important question for some nonnative speakers of English is when *not* to use articles. These generalizations will help. Do not use articles with the following:

Singular proper nouns

▶ Utah, Main Street, Harvard University, Mount Hood

Plural nonspecific count nouns (when making generalizations)

(*continued*)

ESL TIP **for Using Articles** (*continued*)

▶ Helicopters are the new choice of transportation for the rich and famous.

Singular mass nouns

▶ She loves coffee.

Plural count nouns used as complements

▶ Those women are physicians.

See also **English as a second language**.

as / because / since

As, *because*, and *since* are commonly used to mean "because." To express cause, *because* is the strongest and most specific connective in unequivocally stating a causal relationship. ("*Because* she did not have an engineering degree, she was not offered the job.")

Since is a weak substitute for *because* as a connective to express cause. However, *since* is an appropriate connective when the emphasis is on circumstance, condition, or time rather than on cause and effect. ("*Since* it went public, the company has earned a profit every year.")

As is the least definite connective to indicate cause; its use for that purpose is best avoided. See also **subordination**.

Avoid colloquial, nonstandard, or wordy phrases sometimes used instead of *as*, *because*, or *since*. See also **as much as / more than**, **as such**, **as well as**, **conciseness**, and **due to / because of**.

PHRASE	REPLACE WITH
being as, being that	because, since
inasmuch as, insofar as	since, because
on account of	because
on the grounds of / that	because
due to the fact that	because, since

as much as / more than

The phrases *as much as* and *more than* are sometimes incorrectly combined, especially when intervening phrases delay the completion of the phrase.

▶ The engineers had as much~~, if not more,~~ influence in planning the program *as* ~~than~~ the accountants*, if not more*.

as such

The phrase *as such* is seldom useful and should be omitted.

▸ Patients~~, as such,~~ should be partners in their treatment decisions.

as well as

Do not use *as well as* with *both*. The two expressions have similar meanings; use one or the other and adjust the verb as needed.

▸ Both General Motors *and* ~~as well as~~ Ford *are* ~~is~~ marketing hybrid vehicles.

▸ ~~Both~~ General Motors as well as Ford is marketing hybrid vehicles.

audience

Considering the needs of your audience is crucial to achieving your **purpose**. When you are writing to a specific reader, for example, you may find it useful to visualize a reader sitting across from you as you write. (See **correspondence**.) Likewise, when writing to an audience composed of relatively homogeneous **readers**, you might create an image of a composite reader and write for *that* reader. In such cases, using the **"you" viewpoint** and an appropriate **tone** will help you meet the needs of your readers as well as achieve an effective **technical writing style**. For meeting the needs of an audience composed of listeners, see **presentations**.

Analyzing Your Audience's Needs

Determine the readers' needs relative to your purpose and goals by asking key questions during **preparation**.

- Who specifically is your reader? Do you have multiple readers? Who needs to see or use the document?
- What do your readers already know about your subject? What are your readers' attitudes about the subject? (Are they skeptical? Supportive? Anxious? Bored?)
- What particular information about your readers (experience, training, and work habits, for example) might help you write at the appropriate level of detail? (See **scope**.)
- What does the **context** or medium suggest about meeting the readers' expectations for content? (See **layout and design** and **selecting the medium**.)

- Do you need to adapt your message for international readers? If so, see **global communication**, **global graphics**, and **international correspondence**.

In the workplace, your readers are often less familiar with the subject than you are. You have to be careful, therefore, when writing on a topic that is unique to your area of specialization. Be sensitive to the needs of those whose training or experience lies in other areas; provide definitions of nonstandard terms and explanations of principles that you, as a specialist, take for granted. See also **defining terms**.

Writing for Varied and Multiple Audiences

In writing to a broad or varied audience, as is often true for **brochures**, visualize a few readers with different backgrounds but who share a purpose or need in reading your text. For documents aimed at multiple audiences with different needs, consider segmenting the document for different groups of readers: an **executive summary** for top managers, an appendix with detailed data for technical specialists, and the body for those readers who need to make decisions based on a detailed discussion. See also **formal reports** and **proposals**.

When you have multiple audiences with various needs but cannot segment your document, first determine your primary, or most important, readers—such as those who will make decisions based on your content—and be sure to meet their needs. Then meet the needs of secondary readers, such as those who need only some of the document's contents, as long as you do not sacrifice the needs of your primary readers. See also **persuasion** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

augment / supplement

Augment means to increase or magnify in size, degree, or effect. ("Our retirees can *augment* their incomes through consulting.") *Supplement* means to add something to make up for a deficiency. ("This patient should *supplement* his diet with Vitamin D3.")

average / median / mean

The *average* (or arithmetic *mean*) is determined by adding two or more quantities and dividing the sum by the number of items totaled. For example, if one report is 10 pages, another is 30 pages, and a third is 20 pages, their *average* length is 20 pages. It is incorrect to say that "each report averages 20 pages" because each report is a specific length.

The three reports average
▶ ~~Each report averages~~ 20 pages.

The *median* is the middle number in a sequence of numbers. For example, the *median* of the series 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 is 4.

awhile / a while

The **adverb** *awhile* means "for a short time." The **preposition** *for* should not precede *awhile* because *for* is inherent in the meaning of *awhile*. The two-word noun **phrase** *a while* means "a period of time."

▶ Wait ~~for~~ *awhile* before testing the sample.

a while
▶ Wait for ~~awhile~~ before testing the sample.

awkwardness

Any writing that strikes readers as awkward—that is, as forced or unnatural—impedes their understanding. The following checklist and the entries indicated will help you smooth out most awkward passages.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Eliminating Awkwardness**

- ✔ Strive for **clarity** and **coherence** during **revision**.
- ✔ Check for **organization** to ensure your writing develops logically.
- ✔ Keep **sentence construction** as direct and simple as possible.
- ✔ Use **subordination** appropriately and avoid needless **repetition**.
- ✔ Correct any **logic errors** within your sentences.
- ✔ Revise for **conciseness** and avoid **expletives** where possible.
- ✔ Use the active **voice** unless you have a justifiable reason to use the passive voice.
- ✔ Eliminate jammed or misplaced **modifiers** and, for particularly awkward constructions, apply the tactics in **garbled sentences**.

B

bad / badly

Bad is the **adjective** form that follows such linking **verbs** as *feel* and *look*. ("We don't want to look *bad* at the meeting.") *Badly* is an **adverb**. ("The iron frame corroded *badly*.") To say "I feel *badly*" would mean, literally, that your sense of touch is impaired. See also **good / well**.

be sure to

The **phrase** *be sure and* is colloquial. Use *be sure to* in technical writing. See also **idioms**.

- When you sign the contract, be sure ~~and~~ *to* keep a copy.

beside / besides

Besides, meaning "in addition to" or "other than," should be carefully distinguished from *beside*, meaning "next to" or "apart from." ("*Besides* two of us from Radiology, three interns from Neurology stood *beside* the director during the ceremony.")

between / among

Between is normally used to relate two items or persons. ("The alloy offers a middle ground *between* durability and cost.") *Among* is used to relate more than two. ("The subcontracting was distributed *among* three firms.") *Amongst* is a variant, mainly British spelling.

B

between you and me

The expression *between you and I* is incorrect. Because the **pronouns** are **objects** of the **preposition** *between*, the objective form of the personal pronoun (*me*) must be used. See also **case**.

▶ Between you and ~~I~~ *me*, Joan should be promoted.

bi- / semi-

When used with periods of time, *bi-* means "two" or "every two," as in *published biweekly*, meaning "once in two weeks." Likewise, *semi-* means "half of" or "occurring twice within a period of time," as in *published semimonthly*, meaning "twice a month." Because these **prefixes** often cause confusion, substitute expressions like *every two months* or *twice a month* where possible. Normally *bi-* and *semi-* are joined with the following element without a space or **hyphen**.

biannual / biennial

In conventional usage, *biannual* means "twice during the year," and *biennial* means "every other year." See also **bi- / semi-**.

biased language

Biased language refers to words and expressions that offend because they make inappropriate assumptions or stereotypes about gender, ethnicity, physical or mental disability, age, or sexual orientation. Even if used unintentionally, biased language can damage your credibility.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE The easiest way to avoid bias is simply not to mention differences among people unless the differences are relevant to the discussion. Keep current with accepted usage and, if you are unsure of the appropriateness of an expression or the tone of a passage, have several colleagues review the material and give you their assessments.

Sexist Language

Sexist language can be an outgrowth of sexism, the arbitrary stereotyping of men and women — it can breed and reinforce inequality. To avoid sexism in your writing, treat men and women equally and use nonsexist occupational descriptions.

INSTEAD OF	CONSIDER
chairman, chairwoman	chair, chairperson
foreman	supervisor, manager
man-hours	staff hours, worker hours
policeman, policewoman	police officer
salesman, saleswoman	salesperson

Use parallel terms to describe men and women.

INSTEAD OF	USE
ladies and men	ladies and gentlemen, women and men
man and wife	husband and wife
Ms. Jones and Bernard Weiss	Ms. Jones and Mr. Weiss, Mary Jones and Bernard Weiss

One common way of handling **pronoun references** that could apply equally to a man or a woman is to use the expression *his or her*. To avoid this awkward usage, try rewriting the sentence in the plural. See also **he / she**.

All employees *their* *reports*

▶ ~~Every employee~~ should submit ~~his or her~~ expense ~~report~~ by Monday.

Another solution is to omit pronouns completely if they are not essential to the meaning of the sentence.

an

▶ Every employee should submit ~~his or her~~ expense report by Monday.

Other Types of Biased Language

Identifying people by racial, ethnic, or religious categories is simply not relevant in most workplace writing. Telling readers that an accountant is Native American or an attorney is Jewish almost never conveys useful information.

Consider how you refer to people with disabilities. If you refer to "a disabled employee," you imply that the part (*disabled*) is as significant as the whole (*employee*). Use "an employee with a disability" instead. Similarly, the preferred usage is "a person who uses a wheelchair" rather than "a wheelchair-bound person," an expression that inappropriately equates the wheelchair with the person. Likewise, references to a person's age can be inappropriate, as in expressions like "middle-aged manager" or "young social-media coordinator." See also **ethics in writing**.

B

bibliographies

A bibliography is an alphabetical list of books, articles, online sources, and other works that have been consulted in preparing a document or that are useful for reference purposes. A bibliography provides a convenient list of sources in a standardized form for readers interested in getting further information on the topic or in assessing the scope of the **research**.

A list of references or works cited refers to works actually cited in the text; a bibliography also includes works consulted for general background information. For information on using various citation styles, see **documenting sources**.

Entries in a bibliography are listed alphabetically by the author's last name. If an author is unknown, the entry is alphabetized by the first word in the title (other than *A*, *An*, or *The*). Entries also can be arranged by subject and then ordered alphabetically within those categories.

An annotated bibliography includes complete bibliographic information about a work (author, title, place of publication, publisher, and publication date) followed by a brief description or evaluation of what the work contains. The following is an annotation of a historical bibliography:

> Alred, Gerald J., Diana C. Reep, and Mohan R. Limaye. *Business and Technical Writing: An Annotated Bibliography of Books, 1880–1980*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1981.
>
> This 240-page bibliography annotates books that "deal significantly with writing or the analysis of writing, either for business or in technical and professional contexts" from 1880 through 1980. The nine-page "Introduction" surveys and assesses the collected works. Each 100- to 250-word annotation describes the purpose of the book, its scope, primary and unusual topics covered, pedagogical materials, and historical interest. Included are 27 previous bibliographies (books and articles), 847 books in the main section, and 230 items in unannotated lists ("Industry and Society Style Guides"; "Government Style Guides"; "Publishing"; "Oral Communication"; and "Style, Language, and Readability"). The book concludes with coauthor, title, and subject indexes.

blogs and forums

A *blog* (from *Web log*) is a Web-based journal in which an individual or a blogger team post entries (displayed from the most recent to the earliest posting) that document experiences, express opinions, provide information, and respond to other bloggers on subjects of mutual interest. A blog should have a well-defined focus (or subject), **audience**, and **purpose**. You will also need to establish and maintain a regular posting schedule. As you plan a blog, survey such popular blogging platforms as WordPress (www.wordpress.com) or Tumblr (www.tumblr.com) and consult with your information technology (IT) and marketing staff on how a blog might contribute to your organization.

Although blogs may allow readers to post comments, a *forum* typically fosters a wider "conversation" in which site visitors can not only respond to the posts of others but also begin new topics or discussion threads. Organizations often use forums for customer or technical support. If your Web site features a forum, you must promote it, contribute content, and solicit content from users or the forum will quickly lose its usefulness and fade. See also **social media** and **writing for the Web**.

Organizational Uses

Organizations create blogs and forums to help meet such goals as attracting and retaining clients or customers, promoting goodwill, obtaining valuable feedback on their products and services, and even developing a sense of community among their customers and employees. Blogs and forums can be both external and internal.

External sites are publicly available on the Internet both for an organization's customers or clients and for executives, spokespeople, or employees to share their views. Blogs and forums can help to build loyalty for a company because customers can make a direct connection with an organization's representatives and with other customers. They can also exchange current information that may not be available in published documents and elsewhere online. *Internal sites* are usually created for an organization's employees and can be accessed only through its intranet. Internal blogs may serve as interactive **newsletters** that help build a sense of community within an organization or to share "breaking news" information about product development, employee benefits, or new team members. Internal forums may provide a space for employees to ask questions of each other and initiate and participate in work-related discussions outside their own department.

Writing Style

Write blog or forum entries in an informal, conversational **style** that uses **contractions**, first **person**, and active **voice**.

BLOG POSTING Check out the latest concept for our new Toyota Camry dashboard—we've added enough space to hold your coffee and a digital device by moving the air ducts to. . . . Tell us what you think.

FORUM POSTING I'm new to this thread, but I'm surprised no one's discussed the issue of confidentiality. My experience has been that Facebook's recent changes in privacy settings are just confusing. Have I missed something?

Keep your sentences and paragraphs concise. Use bulleted **lists**, **italics**, and other **layout and design** elements, such as boldface and white space if possible. Doing so can help readers scan the postings or text to find information that is interesting or relevant to them. Keep headlines short and direct to catch attention and increase the visual appeal and readability. Where helpful, provide links to other sites and resources that participants might find useful. When blogs expand or forums become popular, you may need to organize them using *categories* (links to discussion topics) or *tags* (keywords for searching the site's postings).

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Because organizations expect employees to assume full responsibility for the content they post on a company blog or forum, you must maintain high ethical standards. See also **ethics in writing**.

- Do not post information that is confidential, proprietary, or sensitive to your employer.
- Do not attack competitors or use abusive language toward other participants while making strong points on topics; be respectful.
- Do not post content that is profane, libelous, or harassing, or that violates the privacy of others. See also **biased language**.
- Be aware that everything that you post becomes permanently accessible to a wide public audience, especially for external sites.
- Obtain permission before using any material that is protected by **copyright**, and identify sources for **quotations**. See also **plagiarism**. ❖

both . . . and

Statements using the *both . . . and* construction should always be balanced grammatically and logically. See also **parallel structure**.

▸ To succeed in engineering, you must be able *both* to develop writing skills *and* to master ~~mastering~~ mathematics.

brackets

The primary use of brackets ([ ]) is to enclose a word or words inserted by the writer or editor into a quotation.

- The text stated, "Web sites can be categorized as either static [non-changing] or interactive [responding to user activity]."

Brackets are used to set off a parenthetical item within parentheses.

- We must credit Emanuel Foose (and his brother Emilio [1912–1982]) for founding the institute.

Brackets are also used to insert the Latin word *sic*, indicating that a writer has quoted material exactly as it appears in the original, even though it contains a misspelled or wrongly used word. See also **abbreviations** and **quotations**.

- The contract states, "Tinted windows will be installed to protect against son [*sic*] damage."

brainstorming

Brainstorming, a form of free association used to generate ideas about a topic, can be done individually or in groups. Brainstorming can stimulate creative thinking and reveal fresh perspectives and new connections. When brainstorming alone, jot down as many random ideas as you can think of about the topic. When working in a group, designate a person to record ideas the group suggests. Do not stop to analyze ideas or hold back, looking for only the "best" ideas; just note everything that comes to mind. After compiling a list of initial ideas, ask *what*, *when*, *who*, *where*, *how*, and *why* for each idea, then list additional details that those questions bring to mind. When you run out of ideas, analyze each one you recorded, discarding those that are redundant or not relevant. Then group the remaining items in the most logical order, based on your **purpose** and the needs of the **audience** to create a tentative outline of the document. Although the outline will be sketchy and incomplete, it will show where further brainstorming or research is needed and provide a framework for any new details that additional research yields. (See **outlining**.)

Many writers find a technique called *clustering* (also called *mind mapping*), as shown in Figure B–1, helpful in recording and organizing

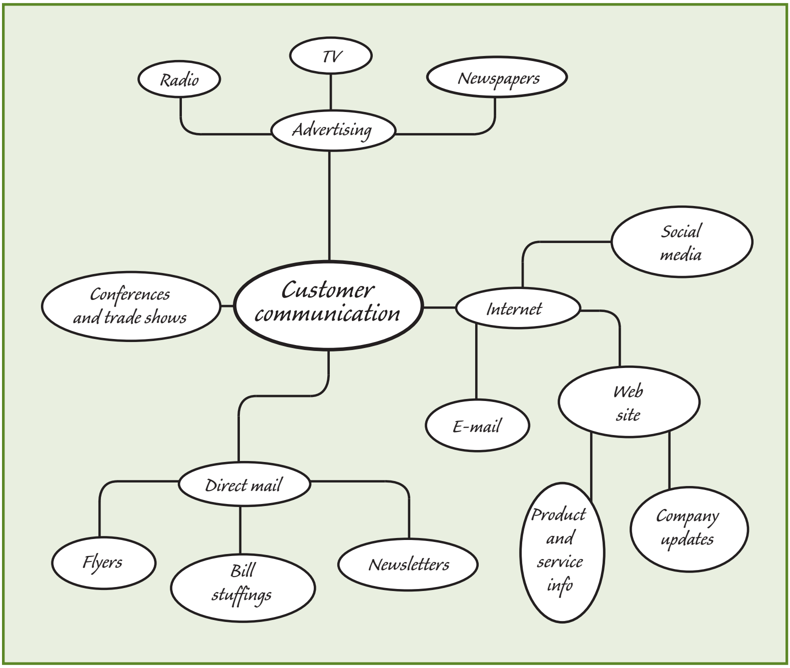


FIGURE B–1. Cluster Map from a Brainstorming Session

ideas created during a brainstorming session. To cluster, begin on a blank page, a flip chart, or an outline tool such as *bubbl.us*. Think of a key term that best characterizes your topic and put it in a boxed or bubbled area at the center of the page. Figure B–1 shows brainstorming about the best way to communicate with customers, so that topic could be "Customer communication." Then think of subtopics most closely related to the main topic. In Figure B–1, the main topic ("Customer communication") might lead to such subtopics as "Advertising," "Internet," and "Direct mail." Place the subtopics in boxes or bubbles, connecting each to the center topic, like spokes to a wheel hub. Repeat the exercise for each subtopic. In Figure B–1, for example, the subtopic "Internet" could stimulate additional subtopics such as "E-mail," "Web site," and "Social media." Continue the process until you exhaust all possible ideas. The resulting "map" will show clusters of terms grouped around the central concept from which you can create a topic outline.

brochures

Brochures are publications that promote the products and services offered by a business or that promote the image of a business or an organization by providing general or specific technical information important to a target **audience**. The goal of a brochure is to inform or to persuade or to do both. See also **persuasion**.

Types of Brochures

The two major types of brochures are sales brochures and informational brochures. *Sales brochures* are created specifically to sell a company's products and services. A technically oriented sales brochure can promote the performance data of various models of a product or list the benefits or capabilities of different types of equipment available for specific jobs. For example, the brochure of a microwave-oven manufacturer might describe the various models and their accessories and how the ovens are to be installed over stovetops. *Informational brochures* are created to inform and to educate the reader, as well as to promote goodwill and to raise the profile of an organization. For example, an informational brochure for a pesticide company might show the reader how to identify various types of pests, like silverfish and termites; detail the damage they can do; and explain how to protect your home from them.

Designing the Brochure

Before you begin to write, determine the specific **purpose** of the brochure — Is it to provide information about a service? to sell a product? You must also identify your target audience — Is it a general reader? an expert? a potential or an existing client? Understanding your purpose, audience, and **context** is essential to creating content and a design that will be both appropriate and persuasive to your target audience. To help you develop an effective design and to stimulate your thinking, gather or search online for sample brochures for products or services similar to yours.

Cover Panel. The main goal of the cover panel is to gain the audience's attention. It should clearly identify the organization or product being promoted and provide a carefully selected visual image or headline geared toward the interest of the audience. Keep the amount of text to a minimum — for example, a statement about the organization's mission and success or a brief promotional quotation from a satisfied customer. Figure B–2 shows a template for designing the cover panel of

B

a brochure. This cover features eye-catching **visuals** of professionals at work and drawings that could suggest the scope or service areas of an organization. Such a cover might also preview the content of the brochure or identify the organization with a logo or an identifying Web address.

First Inside Panel. The first inside panel of a brochure should again identify the organization and attract the reader with headlines and brief, readable content. The first inside panel of the brochure template in Figure B–3 uses boldface **headings** to highlight content and expand on graphics introduced on the cover in greater detail.

Csuzda/Dreamstime.com

FIGURE B–2. Brochure Template (Cover Panel)

Subsequent Panels. Subsequent panels should describe the product or service with the reader's needs in mind, clearly stating the benefits and solutions to problems that your product or service offers. Include relevant and accurate supporting facts and **visuals**, such as **photographs** and cutaway **drawings**. You might further establish credibility with a brief company or product history or with a list of current clients or testimonials. Use subheadings and bulleted **lists** to break up the text and highlight key points. In Figure B–3, the inside panels suggest how checklists or comments might be featured. In the final panel, be clear about the action you want the reader to take, such as visiting a Web site for more information or placing an order.

Design Style and Unity. Develop a style that follows the brand image of your organization and unifies and complements the content of your brochure—and follow that style consistently throughout. For example, a brochure for a cruise line would feature many attractive photos of

Czuzda/Dreamstime.com

FIGURE B–3. Brochure Template (Inside Panels of Brochure in Figure B–2)

passengers and scenery. A brochure related to the operation of an organization, as in Figures B–2 and B–3, might use images of professionals and key functions in workplace settings. See also **layout and design**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Designing a Brochure**

- ✔ Examine other brochures to stimulate your thinking as you consider the goals, content, and design for your brochure.
- ✔ Create a thumbnail sketch that maps out the content of each panel to help you select visuals, color schemes, and the number of panels.

(continued)

B

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Designing a Brochure** *(continued)*

- ✔ Experiment with margins, spacing, and the arrangement and amount of text on each panel; make appropriate changes to content or length and allow adequate white space for readability.
- ✔ Experiment with fonts and formatting, such as enlarging the first letter of the first word in a paragraph, but do not overuse unusual fonts or alternative styles.
- ✔ Choose colors coordinated with your organizational brand, but consider inexpensive black and white, which can be effective for printed brochures.
- ✔ Evaluate the selection of images: Do they accurately portray the subject? Are they balanced? Are they high quality?
- ✔ Avoid the use of clip art, and use licensed stock imagery only if it fulfills the brochure's purpose. See **copyrights, patents, and trademarks**.
- ✔ Evaluate the impact of the design with your content. Have you adequately considered the needs of your audience?
- ✔ Consider ways to brand your brochure for organizational marketing and to repurpose it for digital accessibility, for your organization's Web site, and for use on **social media**.

bulleted lists (*see* lists)

buzzwords

Buzzwords are popular words or phrases that, because of an intense period of overuse, tend to lose their freshness and preciseness. They often become popular through their association with technology, popular culture, or even sports. See also **jargon** and **word choice**.

▶ win-win	F2F meeting	24/7
touch base	take-away [as a **noun**]	same page
action items	impact [as a **verb**]	face time

Obviously, the words in this example are appropriate when used in the right **context**.

▶ We must establish an *interface* between our system and the satellite hardware.
[*Interface* is appropriately used as a noun.]

When writers needlessly shift from the normal function of a word, however, they often create a buzzword that is imprecise.

cooperate

▶ We must ~~interface~~ with the Radiology Department.

[*Interface* is inappropriately used as a verb; *cooperate* is more precise.]

We include such words in our vocabulary because they *seem* to give force and vitality to our language. Actually, buzzwords often sound like an **affectation** in technical writing.

C

C

can / may

In writing, *can* refers to capability ("I *can* have the project finished today"). *May* refers to possibility ("I *may* be in Boston on Monday") or permission ("*May* I leave early?").

cannot

Cannot is one word.

▶ We ~~can not~~ *cannot* meet the deadline specified in the contract.

capitalization

DIRECTORY

Proper Nouns 60
Common Nouns 61
First Words 61
Specific Groups 61
Specific Places 61
Specific Institutions, Events, Concepts 62
Titles of Works 62
Professional and Personal Titles 62
Abbreviations and Letters 63
Miscellaneous Capitalizations 63

The use of capital, or uppercase, letters is determined by custom. Capital letters are used to call attention to certain words, such as proper **nouns** and the first word of a sentence. Use capital letters carefully because they can affect a word's meaning (march / March, china / China) and because many spell checkers would fail to identify such an error.

Proper Nouns

Capitalize proper nouns that name specific persons, places, or things (Pat Wilde, Peru, Technical Writing 205, Microsoft). When in doubt, consult a general or subject-area **dictionary**.

Common Nouns

Common nouns name general classes or categories of people, places, things, concepts, or qualities rather than specific ones and are not capitalized (person, country, technical writing class, company).

First Words

The first letter of the first word in a sentence is always capitalized. ("Of the plans submitted, ours is best.") The first word after a **colon** is capitalized when the colon introduces two or more sentences (independent **clauses**) or if the colon precedes a statement requiring special emphasis.

- The meeting will address only one issue: What is the firm's role in environmental protection?

If a subordinate element follows the colon or if the thought is closely related, use a lowercase letter following the colon.

- We kept working for one reason: the approaching deadline.

The first word of a complete sentence in **quotation marks** is capitalized.

- Albert Einstein stated, "Imagination is more important than knowledge."

The first word in the salutation (Dear Mr. Smith:) and in the complimentary close (Sincerely yours,) are capitalized, as are the names of the recipients. See also **letters**.

Specific Groups

Capitalize the names of ethnic groups, religions, and nationalities (Native American, Christianity, Mongolian). Do not capitalize the names of social and economic groups (middle class, unemployed).

Specific Places

Capitalize the names of all political divisions (Ward Six, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois) and geographic divisions (Europe, Asia, North America, the Middle East). Do not capitalize geographic features unless they are part of a proper name.

- The mountains in some areas, such as the *Great Smoky Mountains*, make cell-phone reception difficult.

The words *north*, *south*, *east*, and *west* are capitalized when they refer to sections of the country. They are not capitalized when they refer to directions.

- I may relocate further *west*, but my family will remain in the *South*.

Capitalize the names of stars, constellations, and planets (North Star, Andromeda, Saturn). Do not capitalize *earth*, *sun*, and *moon* except when they are referred to formally as astronomical bodies.

- My workday was so long that I saw the *sun* rise over the lake and the *moon* appear as darkness settled over the *earth*.
- The various effects of the *Sun* on *Earth* and the *Moon* were discussed at the symposium.

Specific Institutions, Events, Concepts

Capitalize the names of institutions, organizations, and associations (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). An organization usually capitalizes the names of its internal divisions and departments (Aeronautics Division, Human Resources Department). Types of organizations are not capitalized unless they are part of an official name (a technical communication association; Society for Technical Communication). Capitalize historical events (the Great Depression of the 1930s). Capitalize words that designate holidays, specific periods of time, months, or days of the week (Labor Day, the Renaissance, January, Monday). Do not capitalize seasons of the year (spring, summer, autumn, winter) unless they are used in a title (Winter Semester Schedule).

Capitalize the scientific names of classes, families, and orders but not the names of species or English derivatives of scientific names (Mammalia / mammal, Carnivora / carnivorous).

Titles of Works

Capitalize the initial letters of the first, last, and major words in the title of a book, an article, a play, or a film. Do not capitalize **articles**, coordinating **conjunctions**, or **prepositions** unless they begin or end the title (*The Lives of a Cell*). Capitalize prepositions within **titles** when they contain five or more letters (*Between*, *Within*, *Until*, *After*), unless you are following a style that recommends otherwise. The same rules apply to the subject lines of **e-mails** or **memos**.

Professional and Personal Titles

Titles preceding proper names are capitalized (Ms. Berger, Senator King). Appositives following proper names normally are not capitalized (Angus King, *senator* from Maine). However, the word *president* is often capitalized when it refers to the chief executive of a national government. See **appositives**.

C

Job titles used with personal names are capitalized (H. S. Kim, *Division Manager*). Job titles used without personal names are not capitalized. ("The *division manager* will meet us tomorrow.") Use capital letters to designate family relationships only when they occur before a name (my uncle, Uncle Fred).

Abbreviations and Letters

Capitalize **abbreviations** if the words they stand for would be capitalized, such as BSChE (Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering). Capitalize letters that serve as names or indicate shapes (vitamin B, T-square, U-turn).

Miscellaneous Capitalizations

The first word of a complete sentence enclosed in **dashes**, **brackets**, or **parentheses** is not capitalized when it appears as part of another sentence.

- ▶ We must improve our safety record this year (accidents last year were up 10 percent).

Certain units, such as parts and chapters of books and rooms in buildings, when specifically identified by number, are capitalized (Chapter 5, Ch. 5; Room 72, Rm. 72). Minor divisions within such units are not capitalized unless they begin a sentence (page 11, verse 14, seat 12).

case

DIRECTORY

Subjective Case 64
Objective Case 65
Possessive Case 65
Appositives 65
Determining the Case of Pronouns 66

Grammatical case indicates the functional relationship of a **noun** or a **pronoun** to the other words in a sentence. Nouns change form only in the possessive case; pronouns may show change for the subjective, the objective, or the possessive case.

The case of a noun or pronoun is always determined by its function in a **phrase**, **clause**, or sentence. If it is the subject of a phrase, clause, or sentence, it is in the subjective case; if it is an **object** in a phrase, clause, or sentence, it is in the objective case; if it reflects possession or ownership and modifies a noun, it is in the possessive case. Figure C–1 is a chart of pronouns in the subjective, objective, and possessive cases. See also **sentence construction**.

C

SINGULAR	SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	POSSESSIVE
First person	I	me	my, mine
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its
PLURAL	**SUBJECTIVE**	**OBJECTIVE**	**POSSESSIVE**
First person	we	us	our, ours
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	they	them	their, theirs

FIGURE C–1. Pronoun-Case Chart

The subjective case can indicate the person or thing acting ("*He* sued the vendor"), the person or thing acted upon ("*He* was sued by the vendor"), or the topic of description ("*He* is the vendor"). The objective case can indicate the thing acted on ("The vendor sued *him*") or the person or thing acting but in the objective position ("The vendor was sued by *him*"). (See also **voice**.) The possessive case indicates the person or thing owning or possessing something ("It was *his* company"). See also **modifiers**.

Subjective Case

A pronoun is in the subjective case (also called *nominative case*) when it represents the person or thing acting or is the receiver of the action even though it is in the subject position.

- *I* wrote a proposal.
- *I* was praised for my proposal writing.

A linking **verb** links a pronoun to its antecedent to show that they identify the same thing. Because they represent the same thing, the pronoun is in the subjective case even when it follows the verb, which makes it a subjective complement.

- *He* is the head of the Quality Control Group. [subject]
- The head of the Quality Control Group is *he*. [subjective complement]

The subjective case is used after the words *than* and *as* because of the understood (although unstated) portion of the clauses in which those words appear.

- George is as good a designer as *I* [am].
- Our subsidiary can do the job better than *we* [can].

Objective Case

A pronoun is in the objective case (also called the *accusative case*) when it indicates the person or thing receiving the action that is expressed by a verb in the active voice.

- They selected *me* to attend the conference.

Pronouns that follow action verbs (which excludes all forms of the verb *be*) must be in the objective case. Do not be confused by an additional name.

- The company promoted *me* in July.
- The company promoted John and *me* in July.

A pronoun is in the objective case when it is the object of a gerund or **preposition** or the subject of an infinitive.

- Between *you* and *me*, his facts are questionable. [objects of a preposition]
- Many of *us* attended the conference. [object of a preposition]
- Training *him* was the best thing I could have done. [object of a gerund]
- We asked *them* to return the deposit. [subject of an infinitive]

English does not differentiate between direct objects and indirect objects; both require the objective form of the pronoun. See also **complements**.

- The interviewer seemed to like *me*. [direct object]
- They wrote *me* a letter. [indirect object]

Possessive Case

A noun or pronoun is in the possessive case when it represents a person, place, or thing that possesses something. To make a singular noun possessive, add *'s* (the *manufacturer's* robotic inventory system). With plural nouns that end in *s*, show the possessive by placing an apostrophe after the *s* that forms the plural (a *managers'* meeting). For other guidelines, see **possessive case**.

Appositives

An **appositive** is a noun or noun phrase that follows and amplifies the meaning of another noun or noun phrase. Because it has the same grammatical function as the noun it complements, an appositive should be in the same case as the noun with which it is in apposition.

- ▶ Two nurses, Jim Knight and *I*, were asked to review the patient's chart. [subjective case]
- ▶ The group leader selected two members to represent the department—Mohan Pathak and *me*. [objective case]

Determining the Case of Pronouns

One test to determine the proper case of a pronoun is to try it with some transitive verb such as *resembled* or *hit*. If the pronoun would logically precede the verb, use the subjective case; if it would logically follow the verb, use the objective case.

- ▶ *She* [*He*, *They*] resembled her father. [subjective case]
- ▶ Angela resembled *him* [*her*, *them*]. [objective case]

In the following example, try omitting the noun to determine the case of the pronoun.

SENTENCE (*We* / *Us*) pilots fly our own airplanes.

INCORRECT *Us* fly our own airplanes. [This incorrect usage is obviously wrong.]

CORRECT *We* fly our own airplanes. [This correct usage sounds right.]

To determine the case of a pronoun that follows *as* or *than*, mentally add the words that are omitted but understood.

- ▶ The other technical writer is not paid as well as *she* [is paid]. [You would not write, "*Her* is paid."]
- ▶ His partner was better informed than *he* [was informed]. [You would not write, "*Him* was informed."]

If pronouns in compound constructions cause problems, try using them singly to determine the proper case.

SENTENCE (*We* / *Us*) and the clients are going to lunch.

CORRECT *We* are going to lunch.
[You would not write, "*Us* are going to lunch."]

For advice on when to use *who* and *whom*, see **who / whom**.

cause-and-effect method of development

The cause-and-effect **method of development** is a common strategy to explain why something happened or why you think something will happen. The goal of the cause-and-effect method of development is to make as plausible as possible the relationship between a situation and either its cause or its effect. The conclusions you draw about the relationships should be based on evidence you have gathered. Like all methods, this one is often used in combination with others. If you were examining a problem with multiple causes, for example, you might combine cause-and-effect with **order-of-importance method of development** as you examine each cause and its effect.

Evaluating Evidence

Because not all evidence you gather will be of equal value, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- *Your facts and arguments should be relevant to your topic*. Be careful not to draw a conclusion that your evidence does not lead to or support. You may have researched some statistics, for example, showing that an increasing number of Americans are licensed to fly small airplanes. You cannot use that information as evidence for a decrease in new car sales in the United States—the evidence does not lead to that conclusion.
- *Your evidence should be adequate*. Incomplete evidence can lead to false conclusions.

  ▶ Driver-training classes do not help prevent auto accidents. Two people I know who completed driver-training classes were involved in accidents.

  A thorough investigation of the usefulness of driver-training classes in keeping down the accident rate would require more than one or two examples. It would require a systematic comparison of the driving records for a representative sample of drivers who had completed driver training and those who had not.
- *Your evidence should be representative*. If you conduct a survey to obtain your evidence, do not solicit responses only from individuals or groups whose views are identical to yours; be sure you obtain responses from a diverse population.
- *Your evidence should be demonstrable*. Two events that occur close to each other in time or place may or may not be causally related. For example, that new traffic signs were placed at an intersection and the next day an accident occurred does not necessarily prove that the signs caused the accident. You must demonstrate the relationship between the two events with pertinent facts and arguments. See **logic errors**.

Linking Causes to Effects

To show a true relationship between a cause and an effect, you must demonstrate that the existence of the one *requires* the existence of the other. It is often difficult to establish beyond any doubt that one event was the cause of another event. More often, a result will have more than one cause. As you research a subject, your task is to determine which cause or causes are most plausible.

When several probable causes are equally valid, report your findings accordingly, as in the following excerpt from an article on the use of an energy-saving device called a furnace-vent damper. The damper is a metal plate that fits inside the flue or vent pipe of a natural-gas or fuel-oil furnace to allow poisonous gases to escape up the flue. Tests run on several dampers showed a number of probable causes for their malfunctioning.

▸ One damper was sold without proper installation instructions, and another was wired incorrectly. Two of the units had slow-opening dampers (15 seconds) that prevented the [furnace] burner from firing. And one damper jammed when exposed to a simulated fuel temperature of more than 700 degrees.

—Don DeBat, "Save Energy but Save Your Life, Too," *Family Safety*

The investigator located more than one cause of damper malfunctions and reported on them. Without such a thorough account, recommendations to prevent malfunctions would be based on incomplete evidence.

center on

Use the phrase *center on* in writing, not *center around*. ("The experiments *center on* the new discovery.") "Center around" is illogical because "around" does not refer to a center and so cannot be "around" anything. Often the idea intended by *center on* is better expressed by other words.

dealt with

▸ The hearings on computer security ~~centered on~~ access codes.

chronological method of development

The chronological **method of development** arranges the events under discussion in sequential order, as in Figure C–2, emphasizing time as it begins with the first event and continues chronologically to the last. **Trip reports**, **instructions**, **progress reports**, work schedules, some **minutes of meetings**, and certain **incident reports** are among the types of writing in which information is organized chronologically. Chronological order is typically used in **narration**.

Memorandum

To: Charles Artmier, Chairman, Safety Committee
From: Willard Ricke, Plant Superintendent, Sequoia Plant
Date: November 17, 2015
Subject: Fire at Our Sequoia Plant in Ardville

The following description provides an account of the conditions and development of the fire at our Sequoia Plant in Ardville. Because this description will be incorporated into the report that the Safety Committee will prepare, please let me know if any details should be added or clarified.

Three piles of scrap paper were located about 100 feet south of Building A and 150 feet west of Building B at our Sequoia Chemical Plant in Ardville. Building A, which consisted of one story and a partial attic, was used in part as an electrical shop and in part for equipment storage. Six pallets of Class I flammable liquids in 55-gallon drums were temporarily stored just outside Building A, along its west wall.

A spark created in the electrical shop in Building A started a fire. The night watchman first noticed the fire in the electrical shop about 6:00 a.m. and immediately called the fire department and the plant superintendent. Before the fire department arrived, the fire spread to the drums of flammable liquid just outside the west wall and quickly engulfed Building A in flames. The fire then spread to the scrap paper outside, with a 40 mph wind blowing it in the direction of Building B.

During this time, the watchman began to hose down the piles of scrap paper between the buildings to try to keep the fire from reaching Building B. He also set up lawn sprinklers between the fire and Building B as part of his attempt to protect Building B from the fire. However, he saw smoke coming from Building B at 6:15 a.m., in spite of his best efforts to protect it.

The volunteer fire department, which was 20 miles away, reached the scene at 6:57 a.m., nearly an hour after the fire was discovered. It is estimated that the fire department's pumps were started after the fire had been burning in Building B for at least 20 minutes. . . .

FIGURE C–2. Chronological Method of Development

The section of an incident report shown in Figure C–2 describes the development of a fire at an industrial facility. After providing important background information, the writer presents both the events and the steps taken in chronological order.

cite / sight / site

Cite means "acknowledge" or "quote an authority." ("The speaker *cited* several environmental experts.") *Sight* is the ability to see. ("He feared that he might lose his *sight*.") *Site* is a plot of land (a construction *site*) or the place where something is located (a Web *site*).

clarity

Clarity is essential to effective communication with your **readers**. You cannot achieve your **purpose** or a goal like **persuasion** without clarity. Many factors contribute to clarity, just as many other elements can defeat it.

A logical **method of development** and an outline will help you avoid presenting your reader with a jumble of isolated thoughts. A method of development and an outline that puts your thoughts into a logical, meaningful sequence brings **coherence** as well as **unity** to your writing. Clear **transition** contributes to clarity by providing the smooth flow that enables the reader to connect your thoughts with one another without conscious effort. See also **outlining**.

Proper **emphasis** and **subordination** are mandatory if you want to achieve clarity. If you do not use those two complementary techniques wisely, all your clauses and sentences will appear to be of equal importance. Your reader will only be able to guess which are most important, which are least important, and which fall somewhere in between. The **pace** at which you present your ideas is also important to clarity; if the pace is not carefully adjusted to both the topic and the reader, your writing will appear cluttered and unclear.

Point of view establishes through whose eyes or from what vantage point the reader views the subject. A consistent point of view is essential to clarity; if you inappropriately switch from the first person to the third person in midsentence, you are certain to confuse your reader.

Precise **word choice** contributes to clarity and helps eliminate **ambiguity** and **awkwardness**. **Vague words**, **clichés**, poor use of **idioms**, and inappropriate **usage** detract from clarity. That **conciseness** is a requirement of clearly written communication should be evident to anyone who has ever attempted to decipher a product liability or privacy statement.

For the sake of clarity, remove unnecessary words from your writing. See also **plain English**.

clauses

A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate and that functions as a sentence or as part of a sentence. (See **sentence construction**.) Every subject-predicate word group in a sentence is a clause, and every sentence must contain at least one independent clause; otherwise, it is a **sentence fragment**.

A clause that could stand alone as a simple sentence is an *independent clause*. ("*The scaffolding fell* when the rope broke.") A clause that could not stand alone if the rest of the sentence were deleted is a *dependent* (or *subordinate*) *clause*. ("I was at the St. Louis branch *when the decision was made*.")

Dependent (or subordinate) clauses are useful in making the relationship between thoughts clearer and more succinct than if the ideas were presented in a series of simple sentences or compound sentences.

FRAGMENTED	The recycling facility is located between Millville and Darrtown. Both villages use it. [The two thoughts are of approximately equal importance.]
SUBORDINATED	The recycling facility, *which is located between Millville and Darrtown*, is used by both villages. [One thought is subordinated to the other.]

Subordinate clauses are especially effective for expressing thoughts that describe or explain another statement. Too much **subordination**, however, can be confusing and foster wordiness. See also **conciseness**.

- He selected instructors whose classes ~~had a slant that was~~ *were* specifically designed for ~~students who intended to go into engineering.~~ *engineering students.*

A clause can be connected to the rest of its sentence by a coordinating **conjunction**, a subordinating conjunction, a relative **pronoun**, or a conjunctive **adverb**.

- It was 500 miles to the facility, *so* we made arrangements to fly. [coordinating conjunction]
- Drivers will need to be alert *because* snow may cause hazardous conditions near the entrance to the warehouse. [subordinating conjunction]

C

- Robert M. Fano was the scientist *who* developed the earliest multiple-access computer system at MIT. [relative pronoun]
- We arrived in the evening; *nevertheless*, we began the tour of the facility. [conjunctive adverb]

clichés

Clichés are expressions that have been used for so long they are no longer fresh but come to mind easily because they are so familiar. Clichés are often wordy as well as vague and can be confusing, especially to speakers of **English as a second language**. A better, more direct word or phrase is given for each of the following clichés.

INSTEAD OF	USE
all over the map	scattered, unfocused
the game plan	strategy, schedule
last but not least	last, finally

Some writers use clichés in a misguided attempt to appear casual or spontaneous, just as other writers try to impress readers with **buzzwords**. Although clichés may come to mind easily while you are **writing a draft**, eliminate them during **revision**. See also **affectation**, **conciseness**, and **international correspondence**.

coherence

Writing is coherent when the relationships among ideas are clear to readers. The major components of coherent writing are a logical sequence of related ideas and clear transitions between those ideas. See also **clarity** and **organization**.

Presenting ideas in a logical sequence is the most important requirement in achieving coherence. The key to achieving a logical sequence is a good outline. (See **outlining**.) An outline forces you to establish a beginning, a middle, and an end. That structure contributes greatly to coherence by enabling you to experiment with sequences and lay out the most direct route to your **purpose** without digressing.

Thoughtful **transition** is also essential; without it, your writing cannot achieve the smooth flow from sentence to sentence and **paragraph** to paragraph that results in coherence.

During **revision**, check your draft carefully for coherence. If possible, have someone else review your draft for how well it expresses the relationships between ideas. See also **unity**.

collaborative writing

Collaborative writing occurs when two or more writers work together to produce a single document for which they share responsibility and decision-making authority. Collaborative writing teams are formed when (1) the size of a project or the time constraints imposed on it require a joint effort, (2) the project involves multiple areas of expertise, or (3) the project requires the melding of divergent views into a single perspective that is acceptable to the whole team or to another group. Many types of collaborations are possible, from the collaboration of a primary writer with a variety of contributors and reviewers to a highly interactive collaboration in which everyone on a team plays a relatively equal role in shaping the document.

Tasks of the Collaborative Writing Team

The collaborating team strives to achieve a compatible working relationship by dividing the work in a way that uses each writer's expertise and experience to its advantage. The team should also designate a coordinator who will guide the team members' activities, organize the project, and ensure **coherence** and consistency within the document. The coordinator's duties can be determined by mutual agreement, assigned by management, or assigned on a rotating basis if the team often works together.

Planning. The team members collectively identify the **audience**, **purpose**, **context**, and **scope** of the project. See also **meetings** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

At this stage, the team establishes a project plan that may include guidelines for communication among team members, version control (naming, dating, and managing document drafts), review procedures, and writing **style** standards that team members are expected to follow. The plan includes a schedule with due dates for completing initial research tasks, outlines, drafts, reviews, revisions, and the final document.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Deadlines must be met because team members rely on each other and one missed deadline can delay the entire project. A missed project deadline can result in a lost opportunity or, in the case of **proposals**, disqualify an application. Individual writers must adjust their schedules and focus on their own writing process to finish drafts and meet the deadline.

Research and Writing. The team next completes initial **research** tasks, elicits comments from team members, creates a broad outline of the document (see **outlining**), and assigns writing tasks to individual team members based on their expertise. Depending on the project, each team member further researches an assigned segment of the document, expands and develops the broad outline, and produces a draft from the detailed outline. See also **writing a draft**.

Reviewing. Keeping the audience's needs and the document's purpose in mind, each team member critically yet diplomatically reviews the other team members' drafts, from the overall **organization** to the **clarity** of each **paragraph**, and offers advice to help improve the writers' work. Team members can easily solicit feedback by sharing files and then working with track and comment features that allow reviewers to suggest changes without deleting the original text.

Revising. In this final stage, individual writers evaluate their colleagues' reviews and accept, reject, or build on their suggestions. Then the team coordinator can consolidate all drafts into a final master copy and maintain and evaluate it for consistency, **tone**, and coherence. See also **revision**.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE As you collaborate, be ready to tolerate some disharmony, but temper it with mutual respect. Team members may not agree on every subject, and differing perspectives can easily lead to conflict, ranging from mild differences over minor points to major showdowns. However, creative differences resolved respectfully can energize the team and, in fact, strengthen a finished document by compelling writers to reexamine assumptions and issues in unanticipated ways. See also **listening**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Collaboratively**

- ✔ Designate one person as the team coordinator.
- ✔ Identify the audience, purpose, context, and scope of the project.
- ✔ Create a project plan, including a schedule and style or format standards.
- ✔ Create a working outline of the document.
- ✔ Assign sections or tasks to each team member.
- ✔ Research and write drafts of each document section.
- ✔ Use the agreed-upon standards for style and format.
- ✔ Exchange sections for team member reviews.
- ✔ Revise sections as needed.
- ✔ Meet the established deadlines for drafts, revisions, and final versions.

Collaborative Writing Software

Software and online systems can help teams of students, employees, researchers, and others work together on a common writing task whether they are in the same office or in different countries. Online synchronous whiteboards, for example, allow teams to collaborate online and discuss and edit texts in real time. Many such technologies also make it easy to conduct live chat sessions for brainstorming ideas, to share documents with new collaborators, to track changes from one version of a document to the next, to alert collaborators when a document is altered, and to export documents for offline editing. Word processing, Web-based file sharing, and collaborative systems like wikis enable team members to draft, review, edit, and comment with text or voice on their collective work. Dedicated project-management programs can also help organize and manage schedules as well as track versions and deadlines for collaborative writing projects. See also **document management**.

DIGITAL TIP

Using Collaborative Software

For a list of software programs that support collaborative writing and tips for using these programs effectively, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Reviewing Collaborative Documents," "Using Collaborative Software," or "Using Wikis for Collaborative Work."

colons

The colon (:) is a mark of introduction that alerts readers to the close connection between the preceding statement and what follows.

Colons in Sentences

A colon links independent **clauses** to words, **phrases**, clauses, or lists that identify, rename, explain, emphasize, amplify, or illustrate the sentence that precedes the colon.

- Two topics will be discussed: *the new lab design and the revised safety procedures*. [phrases that identify]

- Only one thing will satisfy Mr. Sturgess: *our finished report*. [appositive (renaming) phrase for **emphasis**]
- Any organization is confronted with two separate, though related, information problems: *It must maintain an effective internal communication system and an effective external communication system*. [clause to amplify and explain]
- Heart patients should make key lifestyle changes: *stop smoking, exercise regularly, eat a low-fat diet, and reduce stress*. [list to identify and illustrate]

Colons with Salutations, Titles, Citations, and Numbers

A colon follows the salutation in formal **correspondence**, even when the salutation refers to a person by first name.

- Dear Professor Jeffers: *or* Dear Mary:

Colons separate titles from subtitles and separate references to sections of works in citations. See also **documenting sources**.

- *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*
- *Technical Communication* 59:8–28 [volume 59, pages 8–28]

Colons separate numbers in time references and indicate numerical ratios.

- 9:30 a.m. [9 hours and 30 minutes]
- The cement is mixed with water and sand at a ratio of 5:3:1. [The colon is read as the word *to*.]

Punctuation and Capitalization with Colons

A colon always goes outside **quotation marks**.

- This was the real meaning of the manager's "suggestion": Cooperation within our department must improve.

As this example shows, the first word after a colon may be capitalized if the statement following the colon is a complete sentence and functions as a formal statement or question. If the element following the colon is subordinate, however, use a lowercase letter to begin that element. See also **capitalization**.

- We have only one way to stay within our present budget: to reduce expenditures for research and development.

C

Unnecessary Colons

Do not place a colon between a **verb** and its **objects**.

- ▸ Three fluids that clean pipettes are~~:~~ water, alcohol, and acetone.

Likewise, do not use a colon between a **preposition** and its objects.

- ▸ I may be transferred to~~:~~ Tucson, Boston, or Miami.

Do not insert a colon after *including*, *such as*, or *for example* to introduce a simple list.

- ▸ Do not use the office Internet access for personal activities such as~~:~~ social networking, online shopping, downloading music, and accessing personal e-mail.

One common exception is made when a verb or preposition is followed by a stacked **list**; however, it may be possible to introduce the list with a complete sentence instead.

The following manufacturers *:*
- ▸ ~~Manufacturers that~~ produce computer monitors ~~include~~:

Apple	Acer	Gateway
HP	Philips	Samsung

comma splice

A comma splice is a grammatical error in which two independent **clauses** are joined by only a **comma**.

INCORRECT It was 500 miles to the facility, we arranged to fly.

A comma splice can be corrected in several ways.

1. Substitute a **semicolon**, a semicolon and a conjunctive **adverb** followed by a comma, or a comma and a coordinating **conjunction**.
   - It was 500 miles to the facility*;* we arranged to fly. [semicolon]
   - It was 500 miles to the facility*; therefore*, we arranged to fly. [conjunctive adverb]
   - It was 500 miles to the facility*, so* we arranged to fly. [coordinating conjunction]
2. Create two sentences.
   - It was 500 miles to the facility. *We* arranged to fly.

3. Subordinate one clause to the other. (See **subordination**.)
   - *Because it was 500 miles to the facility,* we arranged to fly.

C

See also **sentence construction** and **sentence faults**.

commas

DIRECTORY

Linking Independent Clauses 78
Enclosing Elements 79
Introducing Elements 80
Separating Items in a Series 81
Clarifying and Contrasting 82
Showing Omissions 82
Using with Numbers and Names 82
Using with Other Punctuation 83
Avoiding Unnecessary Commas 84

Like all **punctuation**, the comma (,) helps **readers** understand the writer's meaning and prevents **ambiguity**. Notice how the comma helps make the meaning clear in the second example.

AMBIGUOUS To be successful nurses with M.S. degrees must continue their education.

CLEAR To be successful, nurses with M.S. degrees must continue their education.
[The comma makes clear where the main part of the sentence begins.]

Do not follow the old myth that you should insert a comma wherever you would pause if you were speaking. Although you would pause wherever you encounter a comma, you should not insert a comma wherever you might pause. Effective use of commas depends on an understanding of **sentence construction**.

Linking Independent Clauses

Use a comma before a coordinating **conjunction** (*and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, and sometimes *so*, *yet*, and *for*) that links independent **clauses**.

▸ The new microwave disinfection system was delivered, *but* the installation will require an additional week.

However, if two independent clauses are short and closely related—and there is no danger of confusing the reader—the comma may be omitted. Both of the following examples are correct.

- The cable snapped and the power failed.
- The cable snapped, and the power failed.

Enclosing Elements

Commas are used to enclose nonessential information in nonrestrictive clauses, phrases, and parenthetical elements. See also **restrictive and nonrestrictive elements**.

- Our new factory, *which began operations last month*, should add 25 percent to total output. [nonrestrictive clause]
- The technician, *working quickly and efficiently*, finished early. [nonrestrictive phrase]
- We can, *of course*, expect their lawyer to call us. [parenthetical element]

Yes and *no* are set off by commas.

- *Yes,* I think we can finish by the deadline.

A **direct address** should be enclosed in commas.

- You will note*, Jeff*, that the surface of the brake shoe complies with the specification.

An **appositive** phrase (which re-identifies another expression in the sentence) is enclosed in commas.

- Our company*, Envirex Medical Systems,* won several awards last year.

Interrupting parenthetical and transitional words or phrases are usually set off with commas. See also **transition**.

- The report, *therefore,* needs to be revised.

Commas are omitted when the word or phrase does not interrupt the continuity of thought.

- I *therefore* recommend that we begin construction.

For other means of punctuating parenthetical elements, see **dashes** and **parentheses**.

Introducing Elements

Clauses and Phrases. Generally, place a comma after an introductory clause or phrase, especially if it is long, to identify where the introductory element ends and the main part of the sentence begins.

- *Because of limited vaccine production for this year's strain of influenza,* we recommend that high-risk patients receive priority for available vaccine supplies.

A long modifying phrase that precedes the main clause should always be followed by a comma.

- *During the first series of field-performance tests at our Colorado proving ground,* the new engine failed to meet our expectations.

When an introductory phrase is short and closely related to the main clause, the comma may be omitted.

- *In two seconds* a 5°C temperature rise occurs in the test tube.

A comma should always follow an absolute phrase, which modifies the whole sentence.

- *The test completed,* we organized the data for the final report.

Words and Quotations. Certain types of introductory words are followed by a comma. One example is a transitional word or phrase (*however*, *in addition*) that connects the preceding clause or sentence with the thought that follows.

- *Furthermore,* steel can withstand a humidity of 99 percent, provided that there is no chloride or sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere.
- *For example,* this change will make us more competitive in the global marketplace.

When an **adverb** closely modifies the **verb** or the entire sentence, it should not be followed by a comma.

- *Perhaps* we can still solve the high turnover problem. *Certainly* we should try.
  [*Perhaps* and *certainly* closely modify each statement.]

A proper **noun** used in an introductory direct address is followed by a comma, as is an **interjection** (such as *oh*, *well*, *why*, *indeed*, *yes*, and *no*).

- *Nancy,* enclosed is the article you asked me to review. [direct address]

- *Indeed,* I will ensure that your request is forwarded. [interjection]

Use a comma to separate a direct **quotation** from its introduction.

- Morton and Lucia White *said,* "People live in cities but dream of the countryside."

Do not use a comma when giving an indirect quotation.

- Morton and Lucia White *said that* people dream of the country-side, even though they live in cities.

Separating Items in a Series

Although the comma before the last item in a series is sometimes omitted, it is generally clearer to include it.

- Random House, Bantam, Doubleday, and Dell were once separate publishing companies.
  [Without the final comma, "Doubleday and Dell" might refer to one company or two.]

Phrases and clauses in coordinate series are also punctuated with commas.

- Plants absorb noxious gases, act as receptors of dirt particles, and cleanse the air of other impurities.

When phrases or clauses in a series contain commas, use **semicolons** rather than commas to separate the items.

- Among those present were John Howard, President of Evironex LLC; Thomas Martin, CEO of AIR Recycling, Inc.; and Larry Stanley, President of Northpark Chemicals.

When **adjectives** modifying the same noun can be reversed and make sense, or when they can be separated by *and* or *or*, they should be separated by commas.

- The aircraft featured a *modern, sleek, swept-wing* design.

When an adjective modifies a phrase, no comma is required.

- She was investigating the *damaged inventory-control system.*
  [The adjective *damaged* modifies the phrase *inventory-control system.*]

Never separate a final adjective from its noun.

- He is a conscientious, honest, reliable~~,~~ worker.

C

Clarifying and Contrasting

Use a comma to separate two contrasting thoughts or ideas.

- The project was finished on time, but not within the budget.

Use a comma after an independent clause that is only loosely related to the dependent clause that follows it or that could be misread without the comma.

- I should be able to finish the plan by July, even though I lost time because of illness.

Showing Omissions

A comma sometimes replaces a verb in certain elliptical constructions.

- Some were punctual; *others*, *late*.
  [The comma replaces *were*.]

It is better, however, to avoid such constructions in technical writing.

Using with Numbers and Names

Commas are conventionally used to separate distinct items. Use commas between the elements of an address written on the same line (but not between the state and the ZIP Code).

- Kristen James, 4119 Mill Road, Dayton, Ohio 45401

A full date that is written in month-day-year format uses a comma preceding and following the year.

- November 30, 2025, is the payoff date.

Do not use commas for dates in the day-month-year format, which is used in many parts of the world and by the U.S. military. See also **international correspondence**.

- Note that 30 November 2025 is the payoff date.

Do not use commas when showing only the month and year or month and day in a **date**.

- The target date of May 2015 is optimistic, so I would like to meet on March 4 to discuss our options.

Use commas to separate the elements of large Arabic numbers.

- 1,528,200 feet

Be aware that in many countries the comma is a decimal marker with periods or spaces used for large numbers (1.528.200 meters *or* 1 528 200 meters).

A comma may be substituted for the colon in the salutation of a personal **letter** or **e-mail**. Do not, however, use a comma in the salutation of a formal business letter or e-mail, even if you use the person's first name.

- Dear Marie, [personal letter or e-mail]
- Dear Marie: [formal business letter or e-mail]

Use commas to separate the elements of geographic names.

- Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Use a comma to separate names that are reversed (*Smith, Alvin*) and commas with professional **abbreviations**.

- Jim Rogers Jr., M.D., chaired the conference.
  [*Jr.* or *Sr.* does not require a comma.]

Using with Other Punctuation

Conjunctive adverbs (*however*, *nevertheless*, *consequently*, *for example*, *on the other hand*) that join independent clauses are preceded by a **semicolon** and followed by a comma. Such adverbs function both as **modifiers** and as connectives.

- The idea is good; *however,* our budget is not sufficient.

As shown earlier in this entry, use semicolons rather than commas to separate items in a series when the items themselves contain commas.

When a comma should follow a phrase or clause that ends with words in parentheses, the comma always appears outside the closing parenthesis.

- Although we left late (at 7:30 p.m.), we arrived in time for the keynote address.

Commas always go inside **quotation marks**.

- The status display indicates "*ready,*" but the unit requires an additional warm-up period.

Except with abbreviations, a comma should not be used with a dash, an **exclamation mark**, a **period**, or a **question mark**.

- "Have you finished the project?~~,~~ she asked."

Avoiding Unnecessary Commas

A number of common writing errors involve placing commas where they do not belong. As stated earlier, such errors often occur because writers assume that a pause in a sentence should be indicated by a comma.

Do not place a comma between a subject and verb or between a verb and its **object**.

- ▶ The conditions at the test site in the Arctic~~,~~ made accurate readings difficult.
- ▶ She has often said~~,~~ that one company's failure is another's opportunity.

Do not use a comma between the elements of a compound subject or compound predicate consisting of only two elements.

- ▶ The director of the design department~~,~~ and the supervisor of the quality-control section were opposed to the new schedules.
- ▶ The design director listed five major objections~~,~~ and asked that the new schedule be reconsidered.

Do not include a comma after a coordinating conjunction such as *and* or *but*.

- ▶ The chairperson formally adjourned the meeting, but~~,~~ the members of the committee continued to argue.

Do not place a comma before the first item or after the last item of a series.

- ▶ The new products we discontinued include~~,~~ desks, chairs, and tables.
- ▶ It was a fast, simple, inexpensive~~,~~ process.

Do not use a comma to separate a prepositional phrase from the rest of the sentence unnecessarily.

- ▶ We discussed the final report~~,~~ on the new project.

compare / contrast

When you *compare* things, you point out similarities or both similarities and differences. ("He *compared* the two brands before making his choice.") When you *contrast* things, you point out only the differences. ("Their speaking styles *contrasted* sharply.") In either case, you compare or contrast only things that are part of a common category.

When *compare* is used to establish a general similarity, it is followed by *to*. ("He *compared* our receiving the grant *to* winning a marathon.") When *compare* is used to indicate a close examination of similarities or differences, it is followed by *with*. ("We *compared* the features of the new copier *with* those of the current one.")

Contrast is normally followed by *with*. ("The new policy *contrasts* sharply *with* the earlier one.") When the **noun** form of *contrast* is used, one speaks of the *contrast between* two things or of one thing being *in contrast to* the other.

▸ There is a sharp *contrast between* the old and new policies.

▸ The new policy is *in* sharp *contrast to* the earlier one.

comparison

When you are making a comparison, be sure that both or all of the elements being compared are clearly evident to your **reader**.

than the Nicom 2 software
▸ The Nicom 3 software is better.

The things being compared must be of the same kind.

luggage
▸ Hard-side luggage offers more protection than fabric.

Be sure to point out the parallels or differences between the things being compared. Do not assume your reader will know what you mean.

it is from
▸ Washington is farther from Boston than Philadelphia.

A double comparison in the same sentence requires that the first comparison be completed before the second one is stated.

▸ The discovery of electricity was one of the great ~~if not the greatest~~
, if not the greatest
scientific discoveries in history.

Do not attempt to compare things that are not comparable.

▸ Agricultural experts note that ~~storage space is reduced by 40 per-~~
requires 40 percent less storage space than loose hay requires
~~cent compared with~~ baled hay.

[*Storage space* is not comparable to *baled hay*.]

comparison method of development

C

As a **method of development**, comparison points out similarities and differences between the elements of your subject. The comparison method of development can help **readers** understand a difficult or an unfamiliar subject by relating it to a simpler or more familiar one.

You must first determine the basis for the **comparison**. For example, if you were comparing bids from contractors for a remodeling project at your company, you most likely would compare such factors as price, previous experience, personnel qualifications, availability at a time convenient for you, and completion date. Once you have determined the basis or bases for comparison, you can determine the most effective way to structure your comparison: whole-by-whole or part-by-part.

In the *whole-by-whole method*, all the relevant characteristics of one item are examined before all the relevant characteristics of the next item. The description of typical woodworking glues in Figure C–3 is organized according to the whole-by-whole method. It describes each

> *White glue* is the most useful all-purpose adhesive for light construction, but it cannot be used on projects that will be exposed to moisture, high temperature, or great stress. Wood that is being joined with white glue must remain in a clamp until the glue dries, which takes about 30 minutes.
>
> *Aliphatic resin glue* has a stronger and more moisture-resistant bond than white glue. It must be used at temperatures above 50°F. The wood should be clamped for about 30 minutes. . . .
>
> *Plastic resin glue* is the strongest of the common wood adhesives. It is highly moisture resistant, though not completely waterproof. Sold in powdered form, this glue must be mixed with water and used at temperatures above 70°F. It is slow setting, and the joint should be clamped for four to six hours. . . .
>
> *Contact cement* is a very strong adhesive that bonds so quickly it must be used with great care. It is ideal for mounting sheets of plastic laminate on wood. It is also useful for attaching strips of veneer to the edges of plywood. Because this adhesive bonds immediately when two pieces are pressed together, clamping is not necessary, but the parts to be joined must be carefully aligned before being placed together. Most brands are flammable, and the fumes can be harmful if inhaled. To meet current safety standards, this type of glue must be used in a well-ventilated area, away from flames or heat.

FIGURE C–3. Whole-by-Whole Method of Comparison

type of glue and all its characteristics before moving to the next one. This description would be useful for those readers who wish to learn about all types of wood glues.

If your **purpose** is to help readers consider the various characteristics of all the glues, the information might be arranged according to the *part-by-part method of comparison*, in which the relevant features of the items are compared one by one (as shown in Figure C–4). The

Woodworking adhesives are rated primarily according to their bonding strength, moisture resistance, and setting time.

Bonding strength is categorized as very strong, moderately strong, or adequate for use with little stress. Contact cement and plastic resin glue bond very strongly, while aliphatic resin glue bonds moderately strongly. White glue provides a bond least resistant to stress.

The *moisture resistance* of woodworking glues is rated as high, moderate, or low. Plastic resin glue and contact cement are highly moisture resistant, aliphatic resin glue is moderately moisture resistant, and white glue is least moisture resistant.

Setting time for the glues varies from an immediate bond to a four-to-six-hour bond. Contact cement bonds immediately and requires no clamping. Because the bond is immediate, surfaces being joined must be carefully aligned before being placed together. White glue and aliphatic resin glue set in 30 minutes; both require clamping to secure the bond. Plastic resin, the strongest wood glue, sets in four to six hours and also requires clamping.

FIGURE C–4. Part-by-Part Method of Comparison

	White Glue	Aliphatic Resin Glue	Plastic Resin Glue	Contact Cement
Bonding Strength	Low	Moderate	High	High
Moisture Resistance	Low	Moderate	High	High
Setting Time	Thirty minutes	Thirty minutes	Four to six hours	Bonds on contact
Common Uses	Light construction	General purpose	General purpose	Laminate and veneer to wood

FIGURE C–5. Comparison Using a Table to Illustrate Key Differences

part-by-part method could accommodate further comparison—such as temperature ranges, special warnings, and common use, in this case.

Comparisons can also be made effectively with the use of **tables**, as shown in Figure C–5 on page 87. The advantage of a table is that it provides a quick reference, allowing readers to see and compare all the information at once. The disadvantage is that a table cannot convey as much related detailed information as a narrative description.

complaint letters

A complaint, sent by **e-mail** or **letter** describes a problem that the writer requests the recipient to solve. The **tone** of the message is important: if your message is angry and belligerent, you may not be taken seriously. Likewise, immediately posting a complaint to a company's **social media** site or to a public forum might be seen as an "attack" and not as an honest attempt to work out a problem and reach a resolution. Assume that the recipient will be conscientious in correcting the problem. However, anticipate reader reactions or rebuttals. See **audience** and **correspondence**.

▸ I reviewed my user manual's "safe operating guidelines" carefully before I installed the device.
[This assures readers you followed instructions.]

Without such explanations, readers may be tempted to dismiss your complaint. Figure C–6 shows a complaint letter that details a billing problem. Although the circumstances and severity of the problem may vary, effective complaint letters generally follow this pattern:

1. Identify the problem or faulty item(s) and include relevant invoice numbers, part names, and dates.
2. Include or attach a copy of the receipt, bill, contract, or perhaps a photo of a damaged part and keep the original for your records. See also **photographs**.
3. Explain logically, clearly, and specifically what went wrong, especially for a problem with a service. (Avoid guessing why you *think* some problem occurred.)
4. State what you expect the reader to do to solve the problem.

Be sure to check the company's Web site for any instructions for submitting a complaint. When you cannot find specific instructions, you may address your complaint to Customer Service for large organizations. In smaller organizations, you might write to a vice president in charge of

Send Cancel Save Draft Add Attachment Signature Options

TO customerservice@ST3.com

CC Show BCC

Subject ST3 Diagnostic Scanners

MKeller_ST3-1179R.pdf Download

On July 13, I ordered nine ST3 Diagnostic Scanners (order # ST3-1179R). The scanners were ordered from your customer Web site.

On August 3, I received seven HL monitors from your parts warehouse in Newark, New Jersey. I immediately returned those monitors with a note indicating that a mistake had been made. However, not only have I failed to receive the ST3 scanners that I ordered, but I have also been billed repeatedly for the seven monitors.

I have attached a copy of my confirmation e-mail, the shipping form, and the most recent bill. If you cannot send me the scanners I ordered by September 15, please cancel my order.

Sincerely,

Marissa Keller

FIGURE C–6. Complaint Letter (Sent as E-mail)

sales or service, or directly to the owner. Often, a well-written e-mail, followed, if necessary, by a letter sent through standard mail will solicit the best response. If you do not receive a timely response to your complaint, try sending it to a different person in the company. See also **adjustment letters** and **refusal letters**.

complement / compliment

Complement means "anything that completes a whole" (see also **complements**). It is used as either a **noun** or a **verb**.

- A *complement* of four employees would bring our staff up to its normal level. [noun]
- The two programs *complement* one another perfectly. [verb]

Compliment means "praise." It too is used as either a noun or a verb.

C

- ▸ The manager's *compliment* boosted staff morale. [noun]
- ▸ The manager *complimented* the staff on its proposal. [verb]

complements

A complement is a word, **phrase**, or **clause** used in the predicate of a sentence to complete the meaning of the sentence.

- ▸ Pilots fly *airplanes*. [word]
- ▸ To live is *to risk death*. [phrase]
- ▸ John knew *that he would be late*. [clause]

Four types of complements are generally recognized: direct **object**, indirect object, objective complement, and subjective complement. See also **sentence construction**.

A *direct object* is a **noun** or noun equivalent that receives the action of a transitive **verb**; it answers the question *What?* or *Whom?* after the verb.

- ▸ I designed *a Web site*. [noun phrase]
- ▸ I like *to work*. [verbal]
- ▸ I like *it*. [pronoun]
- ▸ I like *what I saw*. [noun clause]

An *indirect object* is a noun or noun equivalent that occurs with a direct object after certain kinds of transitive verbs such as *give*, *wish*, *cause*, and *tell*. It answers the question *To whom or what?* or *For whom or what?*

- ▸ We should buy the *office* a *scanner*.
  [*Scanner* is the direct object, and *office* is the indirect object.]

An *objective complement* completes the meaning of a sentence by revealing something about the object of its transitive verb. An objective complement may be either a noun or an **adjective**.

- ▸ They call him *a genius*. [noun phrase]
- ▸ We painted the building *white*. [adjective]

A *subjective complement*, which follows a linking verb rather than a transitive verb, describes the subject. A subjective complement may be either a noun or an adjective.

- His sister is *a consultant*. [noun phrase follows linking verb *is*]
- His brother is *ill*. [adjective follows linking verb *is*]

compose / constitute / comprise

Compose and *constitute* both mean "make up the whole." The parts *compose* or *constitute* the whole. ("The nine offices *compose* the division. Unethical activities *constitute* cause for dismissal.") *Comprise* means "include," "contain," or "consist of." The whole *comprises* the parts. ("The division *comprises* nine offices.")

compound words

A compound word is made from two or more words that function as a single concept. A compound may be hyphenated, written as one word, or written as separate words.

high-energy	nevertheless	post office
low-level	underestimate	blood pressure

If you are not certain whether a compound word should use a **hyphen**, check a dictionary.

Be careful to distinguish between compound words (*greenhouse*) and words that simply appear together but do not constitute compound words (*green house*). For plurals of compound words, generally add *s* to the last letter (*bookcases* and *Web sites*). However, when the first word of the compound is more important to its meaning than the last, the first word takes the *s* (*editors in chief*). Possessives are formed by adding *'s* to the end of the compound word (the *editor in chief's* desk, the *pipeline's* diameter, the *post office's* hours). See also **possessive case**.

conciseness

Concise writing is free of unnecessary words, **phrases**, **clauses**, and sentences without sacrificing **clarity** or appropriate detail. Conciseness is not a synonym for brevity; a long **report** may be concise, while its **abstract** may be brief and concise. Conciseness is always desirable, but brevity may or may not be desirable in a given passage, depending on the writer's **purpose**. (See also **text messaging**.) Although concise sentences are not guaranteed to be effective, wordy sentences always sacrifice some of their readability and **coherence**.

C

Causes of Wordiness

Modifiers that repeat an idea implicit or present in the word being modified contribute to wordiness by being redundant. See also **reason is [because]**.

basic essentials	*completely* finished
final outcome	*present* status

Coordinated synonyms that merely repeat each other contribute to wordiness.

each and every	basic and fundamental
finally and for good	first and foremost

Excess qualification also contributes to wordiness.

perfectly clear	*completely* accurate

Expletives, relative **pronouns**, and relative **adjectives**, although they have legitimate purposes, often result in wordiness.

WORDY *There are* [expletive] many Web designers *who* [relative pronoun] are planning to attend the conference, at which [relative adjective] time we should meet.

CONCISE Since many Web designers plan to attend the conference, we should meet then.

Circumlocution (a long, indirect way of expressing things) is a leading cause of wordiness. See also **gobbledygook**.

WORDY The payment to which a subcontractor is entitled should be made promptly so that in the event of a subsequent contractual dispute we, as general contractors, may not be held in default of our contract by virtue of nonpayment.

CONCISE Pay subcontractors promptly. Then, if a contractual dispute occurs, we cannot be held in default of our contract because of nonpayment.

Balance is important. When conciseness is overdone, writing can become choppy and ambiguous. (See also **telegraphic style**.) Too much conciseness can produce a style that is not only too brief but also too blunt, especially in **correspondence**.

C

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Achieving Conciseness

Wordiness is understandable when you are **writing a draft**, but it should not survive **revision**.

✔ Use **subordination** to achieve conciseness.

- The *five-page* financial report was carefully documented. ~~, and it covered five pages.~~

✔ Avoid **affectation** by using simple words and phrases.

WORDY It is the policy of the company to provide Internet access to enable employees to conduct the online communication necessary to discharge their responsibilities; such should not be utilized for personal communications or nonbusiness activities.

CONCISE Employee Internet access should be used only for appropriate company business.

✔ Eliminate redundancy.

WORDY Postinstallation testing, which is offered to all our customers at no further cost to them whatsoever, is available with each Line Scan System One purchased from this company.

CONCISE Free postinstallation testing is offered with each Line Scan System One.

✔ Change the passive **voice** to the **active voice** and the indicative **mood** to the imperative mood whenever possible.

WORDY Bar codes normally are used when an order is intended to be displayed on a monitor, and inventory numbers normally are used when an order is to be placed with the manufacturer.

CONCISE Use bar codes to display the order on a monitor, and use inventory numbers to place the order with the manufacturer.

✔ Eliminate or replace wordy introductory phrases or pretentious words and phrases (*in the case of*, *it may be said that*, *it appears that*, *needless to say*).

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Achieving Conciseness** *(continued)*

C

REPLACE	WITH
in order to, with a view to	to
due to the fact that, for the reason that, owing to the fact that, the reason for	because
by means of, by using, in connection with, through the use of	by, with
at this time, at this point in time, at present, at the present	now, currently

✔ Do not overuse **intensifiers**, such as *very*, *more*, *most*, *best*, *quite*, *great*, *really*, and *especially*. Instead provide specific and useful details.

✔ Use the search-and-replace command to locate and revise wordy expressions, including *to be* and unnecessary helping **verbs** such as *will*.

conclusions

The conclusion of a document ties the main ideas together and can clinch a final significant point. This final point may, for example, make a prediction or offer a judgment, summarize key findings, or recommend a course of action. Figure C–7 is a conclusion from a proposal to reduce health-care costs by increasing employee fitness through sponsoring health-club memberships. Notice that it summarizes key points, points to the benefits, and makes the recommendation.

The way you conclude depends on your **purpose**, the needs of your **audience**, and the **context**. For example, a lengthy sales **proposal** might conclude persuasively with a summary of the proposal's salient points and the company's relevant strengths. The following examples are typical concluding strategies.

RECOMMENDATION

Our findings suggest that you need to alter your marketing to adjust to the changing demographics for your products. We recommend your placement of ads include . . .

SUMMARY

As this report describes, we would attract more recent graduates with the following strategies:

1. Establish our presence on social media to reach college students before they graduate.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Enrolling employees in the deluxe program at AeroFitness would allow them to receive a one-month free trial membership. Those interested in continuing could then join the club and receive a 30 percent discount on the $1,200 annual fee and pay only half of the one-time membership fee of $500. The other half of the membership fee ($250) would be paid for by ABO. If employees leave the company, they would have the option of purchasing ABO's share of the membership to continue at AeroFitness or selling their half of the membership to another ABO employee wishing to join AeroFitness.

Summarizes key points

Club membership allows employees at all five ABO warehouses to participate in the program. The more employees who participate, the greater the long-term savings in ABO's health-care costs. Overall, implementing this program will help ABO, Inc., reduce its health-care costs while building stronger employee relations by offering employees a desirable benefit. If this proposal is adopted, I have some additional thoughts about publicizing the program to encourage employee participation that I would be pleased to share.

Points to benefits

I recommend, therefore, that ABO, Inc., participate in the corporate membership program at AeroFitness Clubs, Inc., by subsidizing employee memberships. Offering this benefit to employees will demonstrate ABO's commitment to the importance of a healthy workforce.

Makes a recommendation

FIGURE C–7. Conclusion

2. Increase our attendance at college career fairs.
3. Establish more internships and work-study programs.

JUDGMENT

Based on the scope and degree of the storm's damage, the current construction code for roofing on light industrial facilities is inadequate.

IMPLICATION

Although our estimate calls for a substantially higher budget than in the three previous years, we believe that it is reasonable given our planned expansion.

C

PREDICTION

Although I have exceeded my original estimate for equipment, I have reduced my labor costs; therefore, I will easily stay within the original bid.

The concluding statement may merely present ideas for consideration, may call for action, or may deliberately provoke thought.

IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION

The new prices become effective the first of the year. Price adjustments are routine for the company, but some of your customers will not consider them acceptable. Please bear in mind the needs of both your customers and the company as you implement these price adjustments.

CALL FOR ACTION

Please make a payment for $250 now if you wish to keep your account active. If you have not responded to our previous letters because of some special hardship, I will be glad to work out a solution with you.

THOUGHT-PROVOKING STATEMENT

Can we continue to accept the losses incurred by inefficiency? Or should we take the necessary steps to control it now?

Be especially careful not to introduce a new topic when you conclude. A conclusion should always relate to and reinforce the ideas presented earlier in your writing. Moreover, the conclusion must be consistent with what the **introduction** promised the report would examine (its purpose) and how it would do so (its method).

For guidance about the location of the conclusion section in a report, see **formal reports**. For short closings, see **correspondence** and entries on specific types of documents throughout this book.

conjunctions

A conjunction connects words, **phrases**, or **clauses** and can also indicate the relationship between the elements it connects.

A *coordinating conjunction* joins two sentence elements that have identical functions. The coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *for*, *nor*, *yet*, and *so*.

- ▸ Nature *and* technology affect petroleum prices. [joins two **nouns**]
- ▸ To hear *and* to listen are two different things. [joins two phrases]

- I would like to include the survey, *but* that would make the report too long. [joins two clauses]

Coordinating conjunctions in the titles of books, articles, plays, and movies should not be capitalized unless they are the first or last word in the title.

- Our library contains *Consulting and Financial Independence* as well as *So You Want to Be a Consultant?*

Occasionally, a conjunction may begin a sentence; in fact, conjunctions can be strong transitional words and at times can provide **emphasis**. See also **transition**.

- I realize that the project is more difficult than expected and that you have encountered staffing problems. *But* we must meet our deadline.

Correlative conjunctions are used in pairs. The correlative conjunctions are *either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, *not only . . . but also*, *both . . . and*, and *whether . . . or*.

- The inspector will arrive on *either* Wednesday *or* Thursday.

A *subordinating conjunction* connects sentence elements of different relative importance, normally independent and dependent clauses. Frequently used subordinating conjunctions are *so*, *although*, *after*, *because*, *if*, *where*, *than*, *since*, *as*, *unless*, *before*, *that*, *though*, and *when*.

- I left the lab *after* I had finished the tests.

A *conjunctive adverb* functions as a conjunction because it joins two independent clauses. The most common conjunctive **adverbs** are *however*, *moreover*, *therefore*, *further*, *then*, *consequently*, *besides*, *accordingly*, *also*, and *thus*.

- The engine performed well in the laboratory; *however*, it failed under road conditions.

connotation / denotation

The *denotations* of a word are its literal meanings, as defined in a dictionary. The *connotations* of a word are its meanings and associations beyond its literal definitions. For example, the denotations of *Hollywood* are “a district of Los Angeles” and “the U.S. movie industry as a whole”; its connotations for many are “glamour, opulence, and superficiality.”

Often words have particular connotations for **audiences** within professional groups and organizations. Choose words with both the most accurate denotations and the most appropriate connotations for the **context**. See also **defining terms** and **word choice**.

consensus

Because *consensus* means "harmony of opinion" among most of those in a group, the phrases *consensus of opinion* and *general consensus* defeat **conciseness**. The word *consensus* can be used to refer only to a group, never to one or two people.

- The ~~general~~ consensus ~~of opinion~~ among researchers is that the drug is ineffective.

content management

Content management refers to a group of technologies that allow organizations to store, manage, and retrieve their documents and other digital content. Such technologies allow multiple writers or systems to access and assemble stored text, images, videos, and other files for different purposes. For example, one writer may use a description or an image of a product in a promotional **brochure** and another may use it in a technical **manual**. Stored content can be simultaneously published to a variety of formats, including print, online, desktop, and mobile. Thus components need be written only once and then may be reused multiple times, greatly increasing efficiency and consistency. See also **document management** and **repurposing**.

Writing for Content Management

Writing for content-management systems is often referred to as "structured authoring" or "topic-based writing." Such systems require writers not only to learn the specific technology but also to use a consistent **tone** and **style** in the text components. Consistency helps ensure the **coherence** of the documents and other products that are assembled for a particular **audience** or a particular **context**. Writers also need to ensure consistency by creating text components that conform to rules defined by a standard, such as Darwin Information Typing Architecture (www.ibm.com/developerworks/library/x-dita1). See also **technical writing style**.

Content-Management Systems

The technologies developed to achieve the goals of content management, *content-management systems*, include the following:

- *Component content-management system*: Manages content for any media at the paragraph, sentence, and even word levels. For example, a safety warning might state, "Don't stick a fork in the toaster." With a component content-management system, a writer can edit this warning to say "Don't stick any silverware into the toaster" and the system could automatically update all instances of this warning in an organization's manuals, help files, brochures, and Web pages.
- *Web content-management system*: Provides tools for creating, updating, and managing Web-site content. Some systems include functions that allow Web managers to monitor workflow and maintain the entire Web site.
- *Document-management system*: Stores and tracks electronic documents or images of paper documents, allowing organizations to replace their hard-copy files with sophisticated indexing, browsing, and searching capabilities. Document-management systems often include workflow tools that help writers track and manage changes to documents during review cycles, such as in collaborative writing projects.
- *Enterprise content-management system*: Blends the functions of Web, document, and often component content-management systems to create an all-in-one system for an entire organization. Such systems aim to generate and organize content for various publications, media, and other important applications, such as e-mail, financial record keeping, and human resource activities.

To learn more about content management and to keep up to date, see The Content Wrangler, http://thecontentwrangler.com/blog/, and TechWhirl, Content Management, http://techwhirl.com/content-management-systems/.

context

Context is the environment or circumstances in which writers produce documents and within which readers interpret the meanings of those documents, whether they are **reports** or **correspondence**. This entry considers the significance of context for workplace writing and suggests how you can be aware of it as you write. See also **audience**.

The context for any document is determined by interrelated events or circumstances both inside and outside an organization. For example, when you write a **proposal** to fund a project within your company, the economic condition of that company is part of the context that will determine how your proposal is received. If the company has recently laid off a dozen employees, its management may not be inclined to approve a proposal to expand its operations—regardless of how well the proposal is written.

When you correspond with someone, the events that prompted you to write shape the context of the message and affect what you say and how you say it. If you write to a customer in response to a complaint, for example, the **tone** and approach of your message will be determined by the context—what you find when you investigate the issue. Is your company fully or partly at fault? Has the customer incorrectly used a product? contributed to a problem? (See also **adjustment letters**.) If you write **instructions** for office staff members who must use high-volume document-processing equipment, other questions will reveal the context. What are the lighting and other physical conditions near the equipment? Will these physical conditions affect the **layout and design** of the instructions? What potential safety issues might the users encounter?

Assessing Context

Each time you write, the context needs to be clearly in your mind so that your document will achieve its **purpose**. The following questions are starting points to help you become aware of the context, how it will influence your approach and your readers' interpretation of what you have written, and how it will affect the decisions you need to make during the writing process. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

- What is your professional relationship with your readers, and how might that affect the tone, **style**, and **scope** of your writing?
- What is "the story" behind the immediate reason you are writing; that is, what series of events or perhaps previous documents led to your need to write?
- What is the preferred medium of your readers and which medium is best suited to your purpose? See also **selecting the medium**.
- What specific factors (such as competition, finance, and regulation) are important to your organization or department?
- What is the corporate culture in which your readers work, and what are the key values that you might find in its mission statement?
- What current events within or outside an organization or a department may influence how readers interpret your writing?
- What national cultural differences might affect your readers' expectations or interpretations of the document? See also **global communication**.

As these questions suggest, context is specific each time you write and often involves, for example, the history of a specific organization or your past dealings with individual readers.

Signaling Context

Because context is so important, remind your reader in some way of the context for your writing, as in the following opening for a cover message to a proposal. (See **cover letters**.)

- During our meeting last week on improving quality, you mentioned that we have previously required usability testing only for documents going to high-profile clients because of the costs involved. The idea occurred to me that we might try less extensive usability testing for many of our other clients. Because you asked for suggestions, I have proposed in the attached document a method of limited usability testing for a broad range of clients in order to improve overall quality while keeping costs at a minimum.

Of course, as described in **introductions**, providing context for a reader may require only a brief background statement or short reminders.

- Several weeks ago, a financial adviser noticed a recurring problem in the software developed by CGF Systems. Specifically, error messages repeatedly appeared when, in fact, no specific trouble . . .
- Jane, as I promised in my e-mail yesterday, I've attached the personnel budget estimates for the next fiscal year.

As the last example suggests, provide context for attachments to **e-mail**.

continual / continuous

Continual implies "happening over and over" or "frequently repeated." ("Writing well requires *continual* practice.") *Continuous* implies "occurring without interruption" or "unbroken." ("The *continuous* roar of the machinery was deafening.")

contractions

A contraction is a shortened spelling of a word or phrase with an **apostrophe** substituting for the missing letter or letters (*cannot / can't*; *have not / haven't*; *will not / won't*; *it is / it's*). Contractions are often used in speech and informal writing; they are generally not appropriate in **reports**, **proposals**, and formal **correspondence**. See also **technical writing style**.

C

copyrights, patents, and trademarks

This entry offers advice for writers both in the classroom and in the workplace related to copyrights, patents, and trademarks. See also **plagiarism** and **visuals**.

Copyrights

Copyright establishes legal protection for original works of authorship, including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and other intellectual works in printed or electronic form; it gives the copyright owner exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, perform, or display a work. Copyright protects all original works from the moment of their creation, regardless of whether they are published or contain a notice of copyright (©).

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Exceptions. Some print and Web material—including text, **visuals**, and other digital forms—may be reproduced without permission. The rules governing copyright can be complex, so it is prudent to carefully check the copyright status of anything you plan to reproduce.

- *Fair use.* A small amount of material from a copyrighted source may be used for educational purposes (such as classroom handouts), commentary, criticism, news reporting, and scholarly reports without permission or payment as long as the use satisfies the "fair-use" criteria, as described at the U.S. Copyright Office Web site, *www.copyright.gov*. Whether a particular use qualifies as fair use depends on all the circumstances.

- *Company boilerplate*. Employees often borrow material freely from in-house manuals and reports, as well as other company documents in doing work for the company to save time and ensure consistency. Using such "boilerplate," or "repurposed," material is not a copyright violation because the company is considered the author of works prepared by its employees on the job. See also **repurposing**.
- *Public domain material*. Works created by or for the U.S. government and not classified or otherwise protected are in the public domain—that is, they are not copyrighted. The same is true for older written works when their copyright has lapsed or never existed. Be aware that some works in the public domain may include "value-added" features—such as introductions, visuals, and indexes—that may be copyrighted separately from the original work and may require permission even if the main work is in the public domain.
- *Copyleft Web material*. Some public access Web sites, such as Wikipedia, follow the "copyleft" principle and grant permission to freely copy, distribute, or modify material, but the modified material is also required to be made freely available on the same basis.*

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** The Internet has changed the face of copyright, creating an illusion of universal access to online material, when in fact permission is often required to alter or use it in any way. Alternative forms of permissions—like those offered by Creative Commons—allow users to freely incorporate specific content into their documents and to license their own original content. Still, even when you use material that may be reproduced or published without permission, you must nonetheless give appropriate credit to the source from which the material is taken, as described in **documenting sources** and **plagiarism**. ❖

Patents

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) defines a patent as an intellectual property right granted by the U.S. government to an inventor for a limited time in exchange for public disclosure of the invention when the patent is granted. U.S. patents differ from copyright in that they protect inventions rather than written, musical, and artistic works.

The USPTO grants three types of patents.

- *Utility patents* cover inventions of machinery, manufacturing processes, or new materials (for example, a personal three-dimensional printer, composite material for a car bumper,

* "Copyleft" is a play on the word *copyright* and is the effort to free materials from many of the restrictions of copyright. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copyleft.

a technique to mine the seabed for minerals) and are valid for 20 years.

- *Design patents* cover the invention of new designs for manufactured items (for example, a design for a mobile phone, desk chair, or car hood) and are valid for 14 years.
- *Plant patents* cover inventions for new plant varieties (for example, an ornamental shrub or a disease-resistant orange tree) and are valid for 20 years.

To obtain information about international patents, links to patent offices around the world, and tutorials on patent laws in different countries and regions, visit the global online patent resource The Lens at www.lens.org.

Trademarks

A trademark is a word, phrase, graphic symbol, logo, or another device that identifies and distinguishes the source of the goods of one merchant or manufacturer from those of others. The two primary marks are trademarks and service marks.

- *Trademarks* identify physical commodities (for example, automobiles, computers, shoes) distributed through interstate commerce.
- *Service marks* identify services (for example, the preparation and sale of food, the provision of transportation or lodging, the sale of life or health insurance).

The term "trademark" is often used to refer to both trademarks and service marks. Note the examples shown in Figure C–8.*

Trademarks for goods and services registered with the USPTO include the ® symbol or the phrase "Reg. U.S. Pat. & TM off." The phrase "Patent Pending" on a manufactured item means that the inventor has applied for a patent on the item. Before trademarks are registered with the USPTO, service providers commonly use the superscript symbol ℠. Trademark names are proper nouns and must be capitalized. When citing a trademark, include the superscript trademark symbol ® if it's used in the trademark name.

To obtain additional information about patents and trademarks, go to the FAQ page of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Web site at www.uspto.gov/faq/index.jsp.

*The USPTO registers other less frequently used types of marks that have different registration requirements than trademarks and service marks: certification marks, collective marks, collective trademarks, and collective service marks. They are described at www.uspto.gov.

FIGURE C–8. Sample Trademarks
Source: http://xfilexplore.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Examples-of-logos-with-Registered-symbol.jpg.

correspondence

DIRECTORY

Audience and Writing Style 105
Openings and Closings 106
Goodwill and the "You" Viewpoint 107
Writer's Checklist: Using Tone to Build Goodwill 108
Direct and Indirect Patterns 109
Clarity and Emphasis 113
Writer's Checklist: Correspondence and Accuracy 114

Correspondence in the workplace—whether through **e-mail**, **letters**, **memos**, or another medium—requires many of the steps described in "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii). As you prepare even a simple e-mail, for example, you might study previous messages (**research**) and then list or arrange the points you wish to cover (**organization**) in an order that is logical for your readers. See also **selecting the medium**.

Corresponding with others in the workplace also requires that you focus on both establishing or maintaining a positive working relationship with your readers and conveying a professional image of yourself and your organization. See also **audience**.

Audience and Writing Style

Effective correspondence uses an appropriate conversational style. To achieve that style, imagine your reader sitting across from you and write to the reader as if you were talking face to face. Take into account your reader's needs and feelings. Ask yourself, "How might I feel if I received this letter or e-mail?" and then tailor your message accordingly. Remember, an impersonal and unfriendly message to a customer or client can tarnish the image of you and your business, but a thoughtful and sincere one can enhance it.

Whether you use a formal or an informal writing style depends entirely on your reader and your **purpose**. You might use an informal (or a casual) style, for example, with a colleague you know well and a formal (or restrained) style with a client you do not know.

CASUAL It worked! The new process is better than we had dreamed.

RESTRAINED You will be pleased to know that the new process is more effective than we expected.

You will probably find yourself using the restrained style more frequently than the casual style. Remember that an overdone attempt to sound casual or friendly can sound insincere. However, do not adopt so formal a style that your writing reads like a legal contract. **Affectation** not only will irritate and baffle readers but also can waste time and produce costly errors.

AFFECTED Per yesterday's discussion, we no longer possess an original copy of the brochure requested. Please be advised that a PDF copy is attached herewith to this e-mail.

IMPROVED We are out of printed copies of the brochure we discussed yesterday, so I am attaching a PDF copy to this e-mail.

The improved version is not only clearer and less stuffy but also more concise. See also **conciseness**.

Openings and Closings

The opening of any correspondence should identify the subject and often the main point of the message.

▸ Attached is the final installation report, which I hope you can review by Monday, December 14. You will notice that the report includes . . .

When your reader is not familiar with the subject or with the background of a problem, you may provide an introductory paragraph before stating the main point of the message. Doing so is especially important in correspondence that will serve as a record of crucial information. Generally, longer or complex subjects benefit most from more thorough **introductions**. However, even when you are writing a short message about a familiar subject, remind readers of the **context**. In the following example, words that provide context are shown in *italics*.

▶ *As Maria recommended*, I reviewed the office reorganization plan. I like most of the features; however, the location of the receptionist and assistant . . .

Do not state the main point first when (1) readers are likely to be highly skeptical or (2) key readers, such as managers or clients, may disagree with your position. In those cases, a more persuasive tactic is to state the problem or issue first, and then present the specific points supporting your final recommendation, as discussed later under the heading "indirect pattern" (page 110). See also **persuasion**.

Your closing can accomplish many important tasks, such as building positive relationships with readers, encouraging colleagues and employees, letting recipients know what you will do or what you expect of them, and stating any assignment deadlines.

▶ I will discuss the problem with the marketing consultant and let you know by Wednesday (August 5) what we are able to change.

Routine statements are sometimes unavoidable. ("If you have further questions, please let me know.") However, try to make your closing work for you by providing specific prompts to which the reader can respond. See also **conclusions**.

▶ Thanks again for the report, and let me know if you want me to send you a copy of the test results.

Goodwill and the "You" Viewpoint

Write concisely, but do not be so blunt that you risk losing the reader's goodwill. Responding to a vague written request with "Your request was unclear" or "I don't understand" could offend your reader. Instead, establish goodwill to encourage your reader to provide the information you need.

▶ I will be glad to help, but I need additional information to locate the report you requested. Specifically, can you give me the report's title, release date, or number?

Although this version is a bit longer, it is more tactful and will elicit a helpful response. See also **telegraphic style**.

You can also build goodwill by emphasizing the reader's needs or benefits. Suppose you received a refund request from a customer who forgot to include the receipt with the request. In a response to that customer, you might write the following:

WEAK We must receive the sales receipt before we can process a refund.
[The writer's needs are emphasized: "*We* must."]

If you consider how to keep the customer's goodwill, you could word the request this way:

IMPROVED Please send the sales receipt so that we can process your refund.
[Although polite, the sentence still focuses on the writer's needs: "so that *we* can process."]

You can put the reader's needs and interests foremost by writing from the reader's perspective. Often, doing so means using the words *you* and *your* rather than *we*, *our*, *I*, and *mine*—a technique called the **"you" viewpoint**. Consider the following revision:

EFFECTIVE So that you can receive your refund promptly, please mail or fax the sales receipt.
[The reader's needs are emphasized with *you* and *your*.]

This revision stresses the reader's benefit and interest. By emphasizing the reader's needs, the writer will be more likely to accomplish the purpose: to get the reader to act. See also **positive writing**.

If overdone, however, goodwill and the "you" viewpoint can produce writing that is fawning and insincere. Messages that are full of excessive praise and inflated language may be ignored—or even resented—by the reader.

EXCESSIVE PRAISE You are just the kind of astute client that deserves the finest service that we can offer—and you deserve our best deal. Understanding how carefully you make decisions, I know you'll think about the advantages of using our consulting service.

REASONABLE From our earlier correspondence, I understand your need for reliable service. We strive to give all our priority clients our full attention, and after you have reviewed our proposal I am confident you will appreciate our "five-star" consulting option.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Tone to Build Goodwill

Use the following guidelines to achieve a **tone** that builds goodwill with your recipients.

✔ Be respectful, not demanding.

DEMANDING Submit your answer in one week.

RESPECTFUL I would appreciate your answer within one week.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Tone to Build Goodwill** (*continued*)

✔ Be modest, not arrogant.

ARROGANT	My attached report is thorough, and I'm sure that you won't be able to continue without it.
MODEST	The attached report contains details of the refinancing options that I hope you will find useful.

✔ Be polite, not sarcastic.

SARCASTIC	I just now received the shipment we ordered six months ago. I'm sending it back—we can't use it now. Thanks a lot!
POLITE	I am returning the shipment we ordered on March 12. Unfortunately, it arrived too late for us to be able to use it.

✔ Be positive and tactful, not negative and condescending.

NEGATIVE	Your complaint about our prices is way off target. Our prices are definitely not any higher than those of our competitors.
TACTFUL	Thank you for your suggestion concerning our prices. We believe, however, that our prices are comparable to those of our competitors.

Direct and Indirect Patterns

Direct Pattern. The direct pattern is effective in workplace correspondence because readers appreciate messages that get to the main point quickly. The direct pattern shown here also accomplishes the goals described on pages 106–7.

1. Main point of message
2. Explanation of details or facts
3. Goodwill closing

The direct pattern is especially appropriate for presenting good news, as shown in Figure C–9. This message presents the good news in the opening (the main point), follows with an explanation of the facts, and closes by looking toward the future (goodwill). The direct pattern may also be appropriate for negative messages in situations where little is at

C

Good news

Explanation

Goodwill

Dear Ms. Mauer:

We are pleased to offer you the position of Records Administrator at Southtown Dental Center at the salary of $54,300. Your qualifications fit our needs precisely, and we hope you will accept our offer.

If the terms we discussed in the interview are acceptable to you, please come to the main office at 9:30 a.m. on November 17, At the time, we will ask you to complete our benefits form, in addition to . . .

Our entire office looks forwad to working with you. Everyone was favorably impressed with you during your interview.

Sincerely,

FIGURE C–9. A Direct-Pattern Message

stake for the writer or reader and the reasons for the negative message are relatively unimportant.

▶ Dear Mr. Coleman:

We do not have the part you requested currently in stock, but we hope to have it within the next month. Our supplier, who has been reliable in the past, assures us that the manufacturer that produces those parts will be able . . . [Continues with details and goodwill closing.]

Indirect Pattern. The indirect pattern may be effective when you need to present especially sensitive or negative messages in correspondence. Research has shown that people form their impressions and attitudes very early when reading correspondence. For this reason, presenting bad news, refusals, or sensitive messages *indirectly* is often more effective than presenting negative information directly, especially if the stakes are high.* See also **refusals**.

As with any type of writing, imagine how your audience will react to your message. Consider the thoughtlessness in the job rejection that follows:

*Gerald J. Alred, "'We Regret to Inform You': Toward a New Theory of Negative Messages," in *Studies in Technical Communication*, ed. Brenda R. Sims (Denton: University of North Texas and NCTE, 1993), 17–36.

► Dear Ms. Mauer:

Your application for the position of Records Administrator at Southtown Dental Center has been rejected. We found someone more qualified than you.

Sincerely,

Although the letter is concise and uses the pronouns *you* and *your*, the writer has not considered how the recipient will feel as she reads the letter. The letter is, in short, rude. The pattern of this letter is (1) bad news, (2) curt explanation, (3) close.

The indirect pattern for such bad-news correspondence allows the explanation or details to lead logically and tactfully to the negative message, as in the following pattern:

1. Context of message
2. Explanation or details
3. Bad news or negative message
4. Goodwill closing

The opening (traditionally called a "buffer") should provide a context for the subject and establish a professional tone. However, it must not mislead the reader to believe that good news may follow and it must not contain irrelevant information.*

The body should provide an explanation by reviewing the details or facts that lead to a negative decision or refusal. Give the negative message simply, based on the facts; do not belabor the bad news or provide an inappropriate apology. Neither the details nor an overdone apology can turn bad news into something positive. Your goal should be to establish for the reader that the writer or organization has been *reasonable* given the circumstances. To accomplish this goal, you need to organize the explanation carefully and logically.

The closing should establish or reestablish a positive relationship through goodwill or helpful information. Consider, for example, the revised bad-news letter, shown in Figure C–10 on page 112. This letter carries the same disappointing news as the letter in the example above, but the writer of this letter begins by not only introducing the subject but also thanking the reader for her time and effort. Then the writer explains why Ms. Mauer was not accepted for the job and offers her encouragement by looking toward a potential future opportunity. Bad news is never pleasant; however, information that either puts the bad news in perspective or makes the bad news reasonable maintains respect

*Kitty O. Locker, "Factors in Reader Responses to Negative Letters: Experimental Evidence for Changing What We Teach," *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 13, no. 1 (January 1999): 29.

C

	Dear Ms. Mauer:
Context (or "buffer")	Thank you for your time and effort in applying for the position of Records Administrator at Southtown Dental Center
Explanation leading to bad news	Because we need someone who can assume the duties here with a minimum of training, we have selected an applicant with several years of experience.
Goodwill	Your college record is excellent, and I encourage you to apply for another position with us in the future.
	Sincerely,

FIGURE C–10. A Courteous Indirect-Pattern Message

between the writer and the reader. The goodwill closing reestablishes an amicable professional relationship.

The indirect pattern can also be used in relatively short e-mail messages and memos. Consider the unintended secondary message a manager conveys in the following notice:

WEAK It has been decided that the office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.

"It has been decided" not only sounds impersonal but also communicates an authoritarian, management-versus-employee tone. The passive voice also suggests that the decision maker does not want to say "I have decided" and thus accept responsibility for the decision. One solution is to remove the first part of the sentence.

IMPROVED The office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.

The best solution, however, would be to suggest both that there is a good reason for the decision and that employees are privy to (if not a part of) the decision-making process.

EFFECTIVE Because we must meet the December 15 deadline for submitting the Bradley Foundation proposal, the office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.

By describing the context of the bad news first (the need to meet the deadline), the writer focuses on the reasoning behind the decision to work. Employees may not necessarily like the message, but they will at least understand that the decision is not arbitrary and is tied to an important deadline.

C

Clarity and Emphasis

A clear message is one that is adequately developed and emphasizes your main points. The following example illustrates how adequate development is crucial to the **clarity** of your message.

VAGUE Be more careful on the loading dock.

DEVELOPED To prevent accidents on the loading dock, follow these procedures:

1. Check to make sure . . .
2. Load only items that are rated . . .
3. Replace any defective parts . . .

Although the first version is concise, it is not as clear and specific as the "developed" revision. Do not assume your readers will know what you mean: Vague messages are easily misinterpreted.

Lists. Vertically stacked words, phrases, and other items with numbers or bullets can effectively highlight such information as steps in sequence, materials or parts needed, key or concluding points, and recommendations. As described in **lists**, provide context and be careful not to overuse lists. A message that consists almost entirely of lists is difficult to understand because it forces readers to connect separate and disjointed items. Further, lists lose their impact when they are overused.

Headings. **Headings** are particularly useful because they call attention to main topics, divide material into manageable segments, and signal a shift in subject. Readers can scan the headings and read only the section or sections appropriate to their needs.

Subject Lines. Subject lines for e-mails, memos, and some letters announce the topic and focus of the correspondence. Because they also aid filing and later retrieval, they must be specific and accurate.

VAGUE Subject: Tuition Reimbursement

VAGUE Subject: Time-Management Seminar

SPECIFIC Subject: Tuition Reimbursement for Time-Management Seminar

Capitalize all major words in a subject line except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions with fewer than five letters (unless they are the first or last words). Remember that the subject line should not substitute for an opening that provides context for the message. See also **titles**.

C

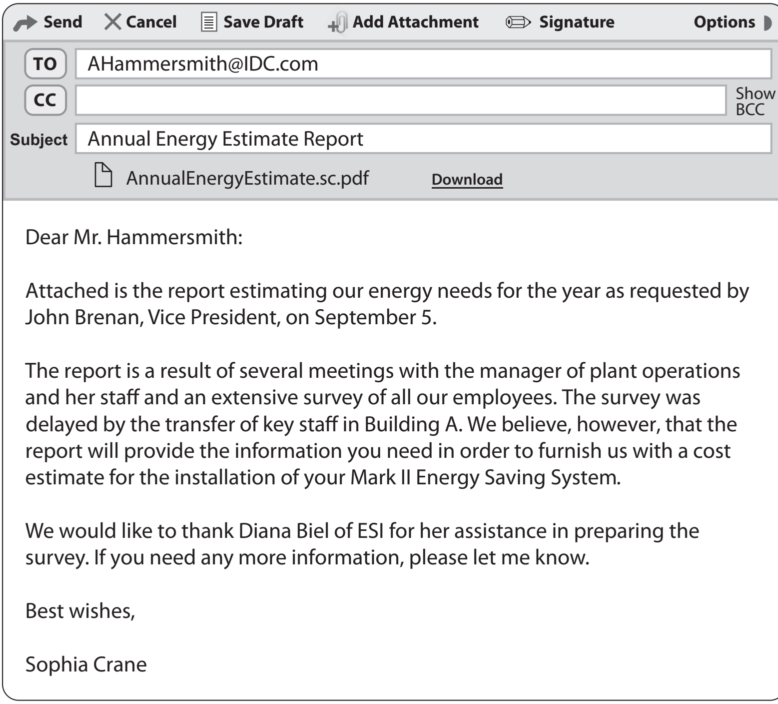
WRITER'S CHECKLIST Correspondence and Accuracy

- ✔ Begin by establishing your purpose, analyzing your reader's needs, determining your **scope**, and considering the context.
- ✔ Prepare an outline, even if it is only a list of points to be covered in the order you want to cover them. (See **outlining**.)
- ✔ Write the first draft. (See **writing a draft**.)
- ✔ Allow for a cooling-off period prior to **revision** or seek a colleague's advice, especially for correspondence that addresses a problem.
- ✔ Revise the draft, checking for key problems in clarity and **coherence**.
- ✔ Use the appropriate or standard format; for example, as in letters and memos.
- ✔ Check for accuracy: Make sure that all facts, figures, and dates are correct.
- ✔ Use effective **proofreading** techniques to check your **punctuation**, **grammar**, **spelling**, and appropriate **usage**.
- ✔ Consider who should receive a copy of the message and in what order the names or e-mail addresses should be listed (alphabetize if rank does not apply).
- ✔ Remember that when you sign a letter or send a message, you are accepting responsibility for it.

cover letters (or transmittals)

A cover **letter**, **memo**, or **e-mail** accompanies a document (such as a **proposal**), an electronic file, or other material. It identifies an item that is being sent, the person to whom it is being sent, the reason that it is being sent, and any content that should be highlighted for **readers**. (See **purpose**.) A cover letter (or transmittal) provides a permanent record for both the writer and the reader. For cover letters to **résumés**, see **application cover letters**.

The cover message shown in Figure C–11 is concise, but it also includes details such as how the information for the **report** was gathered.



Send Cancel Save Draft Add Attachment Signature Options

TO AHammersmith@IDC.com

CC Show BCC

Subject Annual Energy Estimate Report

AnnualEnergyEstimate.sc.pdf Download

Dear Mr. Hammersmith:

Attached is the report estimating our energy needs for the year as requested by John Brenan, Vice President, on September 5.

The report is a result of several meetings with the manager of plant operations and her staff and an extensive survey of all our employees. The survey was delayed by the transfer of key staff in Building A. We believe, however, that the report will provide the information you need in order to furnish us with a cost estimate for the installation of your Mark II Energy Saving System.

We would like to thank Diana Biel of ESI for her assistance in preparing the survey. If you need any more information, please let me know.

Best wishes,

Sophia Crane

FIGURE C–11. Cover Message

credible / creditable

Something is *credible* if it is believable. ("The statistics in this report are *credible*.") Something is *creditable* if it is worthy of praise or credit. ("The lead engineer did a *creditable* job.")

criteria / criterion

Criterion is a singular **noun** meaning "an established standard for judging or testing." *Criteria* and *criterions* are both acceptable plural forms of *criterion*, but *criteria* is generally preferred.

C

critique

A *critique* is a written or an oral evaluation of something. Avoid using *critique* as a **verb** meaning “criticize.”

prepare a *of*

► Please critique his job description.

D

dangling modifiers

Phrases that do not clearly and logically refer to the correct **noun** or **pronoun** are called *dangling modifiers*. Dangling modifiers usually appear at the beginning of a sentence as an introductory **phrase**.

DANGLING *While eating lunch*, the computer malfunctioned.
[*Who* was eating lunch?]

CORRECT While *I* was eating lunch, the computer malfunctioned.

Dangling modifiers can appear at the end of the sentence as well.

DANGLING The program gains efficiency *by eliminating the superfluous coding*.
[*Who* eliminates the superfluous coding?]

CORRECT The program gains efficiency *when you* eliminate the superfluous coding.

To correct a dangling modifier, add the appropriate subject to either the dangling modifier or the main **clause**.

DANGLING After finishing the research, the proposal was easy to write.
[The appropriate subject is *I*, but it is not stated in either the dangling phrase or the main clause.]

CORRECT After I finished the research, the proposal was easy to write.
[The pronoun *I* is now the subject of an introductory clause.]

CORRECT After finishing the research, *I* found the proposal easy to write.
[The pronoun *I* is now the subject of the main clause.]

For a discussion of misplaced modifiers, see **modifiers**.

D

dashes

The dash (—) can perform all the punctuation duties of linking, separating, and enclosing. The dash, sometimes indicated by two consecutive **hyphens**, can also indicate the omission of letters. ("Mr. A— admitted his error.")

Use the dash cautiously to indicate more **emphasis**, informality, or abruptness than the other punctuation marks would show. A dash can emphasize a sharp turn in thought.

► The project will end May 13—unless we receive additional funding.

A dash can indicate an emphatic pause.

► The project will begin—after we are under contract.

Sometimes, to emphasize contrast, a dash is used with *but*.

► We completed the survey quickly—*but* the results were not accurate.

A dash can be used before a final summarizing statement or before repetition that has the effect of an afterthought.

► It was hot near the heat-treating ovens—steaming hot.

Such a statement may also complete the meaning of the **clause** preceding the dash.

► We try to write as we speak—or so we believe.

Dashes set off parenthetical elements more sharply and emphatically than **commas**. Unlike dashes, **parentheses** tend to deemphasize what they enclose. Compare the following sentences:

► Only one person—the president—can authorize such activity.

► Only one person, the president, can authorize such activity.

► Only one person (the president) can authorize such activity.

Dashes can be used to set off parenthetical elements that contain commas.

► Three of the applicants—John Evans, Rosalita Fontiana, and Kyong-Shik Choi—seem well qualified for the job.

The first word after a dash is capitalized only if it is a proper **noun**.

data

In formal and scholarly writing, *data* is generally used as a plural, with *datum* as the singular form. In much informal writing, however, *data* is considered a collective singular **noun**. Base your **usage** on whether your readers should consider the data as a single collection or as a group of individual facts. Whatever you use, be sure that your **pronouns** and **verbs** agree in number with the selected usage.

- These *data are* persuasive. *They indicate* a need for additional research questions. [formal]
- The attached *data is* confidential. *It is* the result of a survey of employee records. [less formal]

See also **agreement** and **English, varieties of**.

dates

In the United States, full dates are generally written in the month-day-year format, with a comma preceding and following the year.

- November 30, 2025, is the payoff date.

Do not use **commas** in the day-month-year format, which is used in many parts of the world and by the U.S. military.

- Note that 30 November 2025 is the payoff date.

No commas are used when showing only the month-year or month-day in a date.

- The target date of May 2017 is optimistic, so I would like to meet on March 4 to discuss our options.

When writing days of the month without the year, use the cardinal number ("March 4") rather than the ordinal number ("March 4th"). Of course, in speech or **presentations**, use the ordinal number ("March fourth").

Avoid the strictly numerical form for dates (11/6/17) because the date is not always immediately clear, especially in **international correspondence**. In many countries, 11/6/17 means June 11, 2017, rather than November 6, 2017. Writing out the name of the month makes the entire date immediately clear to all readers.

Centuries often cause confusion with **numbers** because their spelled-out forms, which are not capitalized, do not correspond to their numeral designations. The twentieth century, for example, is the 1900s: 1900–1999.

When the century is written as a **noun**, do not use a **hyphen**.

- ▶ During the twentieth century, technology transformed business practices.

When the centuries are written as **adjectives**, however, use hyphens.

- ▶ Twenty-first-century technology relies on dependable power sources.

defective / deficient

If something is *defective*, it is faulty. ("The wiring was *defective*.") If something is *deficient*, it is lacking or is incomplete in an essential component. ("The patient's diet was *deficient* in calcium.")

defining terms

Defining key terms and concepts is often essential for **clarity**. Terms can be defined either formally or informally, depending on your **purpose**, your **audience**, and the **context**.

A *formal definition* is a form of classification. You define a term by placing it in a category and then identifying the features that distinguish it from other members of the same category.

TERM	CATEGORY	DISTINGUISHING FEATURES
An *annual* is	a plant	that completes its life cycle, from seed to natural death, in one growing season.

An *informal definition* explains a term by giving a more familiar word or phrase as a **synonym**.

- ▶ Plants have a *symbiotic*, or *mutually beneficial*, relationship with certain kinds of bacteria.

State definitions positively; focus on what the term *is* rather than on what it is not.

NEGATIVE In a legal transaction, *real property* is not personal property.

POSITIVE *Real property* is legal terminology for the right or interest a person has in land and the permanent structures on that land.

D

For a discussion of when negative definitions are appropriate, see **definition method of development**.

Avoid circular definitions, which merely restate the term to be defined.

CIRCULAR *Spontaneous combustion* is fire that begins spontaneously.

REVISED *Spontaneous combustion* is the self-ignition of a flammable material through a chemical reaction.

In addition, avoid "is when" and "is where" definitions. Such definitions fail to include the category and are too indirect.

a medical procedure in which

▶ A *biopsy* is ~~when~~ a tissue sample is removed for testing.

In technical writing, as illustrated in this example, definitions often contain the purpose ("testing") of what is defined ("*biopsy*").

definite / definitive

Definite and *definitive* both apply to what is precisely defined, but *definitive* more often refers to what is complete and authoritative. ("Once we receive a *definite* proposal, our attorney can provide a *definitive* legal opinion.")

definition method of development

Definition is often essential to **clarity** and accuracy. Although **defining terms** may be sufficient, sometimes definitions need to be expanded through (1) extended definition, (2) definition by analogy, (3) definition by cause, (4) definition by components, (5) definition by exploration of origin, and (6) negative definition. See also **methods of development**.

D

Extended Definition

When you need more than a simple definition to explain an idea, use an extended definition, which explores a number of qualities of the item being defined. How an extended definition is developed depends on your **audience** and on the complexity of the subject. Readers familiar with a topic might be able to handle a long, fairly complex definition, whereas readers less familiar with a topic might require simpler language and more basic information.

The easiest way to give an extended definition is with specific examples. Examples give readers easy-to-picture details that help them see and thus understand the term being defined.

> ▸ Form, which is the shape of landscape features, can best be represented both by small-scale features, such as *trees* and *shrubs*, and by large-scale elements, such as *mountains* and *mountain ranges*.

Definition by Analogy

Another useful way to define a difficult concept, especially when you are writing for nonspecialists, is to use an analogy. An analogy can help the reader understand an unfamiliar term by showing its similarities with a more familiar term. In the following description of radio waves in terms of their length (long) and frequency (low), notice how the writer develops an analogy to show why a low frequency is advantageous.

> ▸ The low frequency makes it relatively easy to produce a sound wave having virtually all its power concentrated at one frequency. Think, for example, of a group of people lost in a forest. If they hear sounds of a search party in the distance, they all will begin to shout for help in different directions. Not a very efficient process, is it? But suppose all the energy that went into the production of this noise could be concentrated into a single shout or whistle. Clearly the chances that the group will be found would be much greater.

Definition by Cause

Some terms are best defined by an explanation of their causes. In the following example from a professional journal, a nurse describes an apparatus used to monitor blood pressure in severely ill patients. Called an *indwelling catheter*, the device displays blood-pressure readings on an oscilloscope and on a numbered scale. Users of the device, the writer explains, must understand what a *dampened waveform* is.

- The dampened waveform, the smoothing out or flattening of the pressure waveform on the oscilloscope, is usually caused by an obstruction that prevents blood pressure from being freely transmitted to the monitor. The obstruction may be a small clot or bit of fibrin at the catheter tip. More likely, the catheter tip has become positioned against the artery wall and is preventing the blood from flowing freely.

Definition by Components

Sometimes a formal definition of a concept can be made simpler by breaking the concept into its component parts. In the following example, the formal definition of *fire* is given in the first paragraph, and the component parts are given in the second.

FORMAL DEFINITION Fire is the visible heat energy released from the rapid oxidation of a fuel. A substance is "on fire" when the release of heat energy from the oxidation process reaches visible light levels.

COMPONENT PARTS The classic fire triangle illustrates the elements necessary to create fire: *oxygen*, *heat*, and *burnable material* (*fuel*). Air provides sufficient oxygen for combustion; the intensity of the heat needed to start a fire depends on the characteristics of the burnable material. A burnable substance is one that will sustain combustion after an initial application of heat to start the combustion.

Definition by Exploration of Origin

Under certain circumstances, the meaning of a term can be clarified and made easier to remember by an exploration of its origin. Medical terms, because of their sometimes unfamiliar Greek and Latin roots, benefit especially from an explanation of this type. Tracing the derivation of a word also can be useful when you want to explain why a word has favorable or unfavorable associations, particularly if your goal is to influence your reader's attitude toward an idea or activity. See also **persuasion**.

- Efforts to influence legislation generally fall under the head of *lobbying*, a term that once referred to people who prowled the lobbies of houses of government, buttonholing lawmakers and trying to get them to take certain positions. Lobbying today is all of this, and much more, too. It is a respected—and necessary—activity.

> It tells the legislator which way the winds of public opinion are blowing, and it helps inform [legislators] of the implications of certain bills, debates, and resolutions [that they must face].
>
> —Bill Vogt, *How to Build a Better Outdoors*

Negative Definition

In some cases, it is useful to point out what something is *not* in order to clarify what it is. A negative definition is effective only when the reader is familiar with the item with which the defined item is contrasted. If you say "*x* is not *y*," your readers must understand the meaning of *y* for the explanation to make sense. In a crane operator's manual, for instance, a negative definition is used to show that, for safety reasons, a hydraulic crane cannot be operated in the same manner as a lattice boom crane.

▶ A hydraulic crane is *not* like a lattice boom crane [a friction machine] in one very important way. In most cases, the safe lifting capacity of a lattice boom crane is based on the *weight needed to tip the machine*. Therefore, operators of friction machines sometimes depend on signs that the machine might tip to warn them of impending danger. This practice is very dangerous with a hydraulic crane.

—*Operator's Manual* (Model W-180), Harnischfeger Corporation

description

The key to effective description is the accurate presentation of details, whether for simple or complex descriptions. In Figure D–1, notice that the simple description contained in the purchase order includes five specific details (in addition to the part number) structured logically.

Complex descriptions, of course, involve more details. In describing a mechanical device, for example, describe the whole device and its function before giving a detailed description of how each part works. The description should conclude with an explanation of how each part contributes to the functioning of the whole.

In descriptions intended for an **audience** unfamiliar with the topic, details are crucial. Details help readers visualize the specifics of the new image, object, or idea that the writer wants to convey. In the following description of a company's headquarters, notice the detailed discussion

Shopping Cart			Continue shopping	Print shopping cart
Part No.	**Description**	**Quantity**	**Item Price**	**Total**
IW 8421	Infectious-waste bags, 12 × 14 , heavy-gauge polyethylene, red double closures with self-sealing adhesive strips	5 boxes containing 200 bags per box	$32.98	$164.90
			Subtotal	$164.90
			Shipping charges	$7.99
			Total	$172.89
				Submit order

FIGURE D–1. Simple Description

of colors, shapes, and features. The writer assumes that the reader knows such terms as *colonial design* and *haiku fountain*.

▶ Their company's headquarters, which reminded me of a rural college campus, are located north of the city in a 90-acre lush green wooded area. The complex consists of five three-story buildings of red-brick colonial design. The buildings are spaced about 50 feet apart and are built in a U-shape surrounding a reflection pool that frames a striking haiku fountain.

You can also use analogy, as described in **figures of speech**, to explain unfamiliar concepts in terms of familiar ones, such as "U-shape" in the previous example or "armlike block" in Figure D–2.

Visuals can be powerful aids in descriptive writing, especially when they show details too intricate to explain completely in words. The example in Figure D–2 uses an illustration to help describe a mechanical assembly for an assembler or repairperson. Note that the description concentrates on the number of pieces—their sizes, shapes, and dimensions—and on their relationship to one another to perform their function. It also specifies the materials of which the hardware is made. Because the description is illustrated (with identifying labels) and is intended for technicians who have been trained on the equipment, it does not require the use of bridging devices to explain the unfamiliar in relation to the familiar. Even so, an important term ("chad") is defined, and crucial alignment dimensions (± .003″) are specified. The illustration is labeled appropriately and integrated with text of the description.

D

Number of features and relative size differences noted

The *die block assembly* shown in Figure 1 consists of two machined block sections, eight code punch pins, and a feed punch pin. The larger section, called the die block, is fashioned of a hard noncorrosive beryllium-copper alloy. It houses the eight code punch pins and the smaller feed punch pin in nine finely machined guide holes.

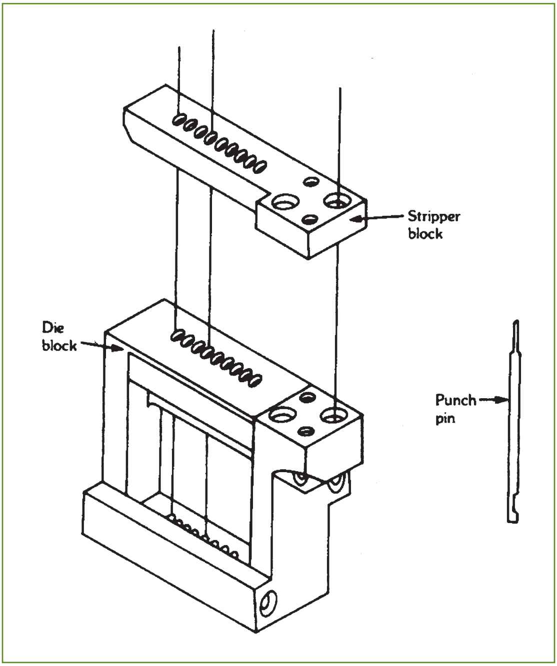


Figure 1. Die Block Assembly

Figure of speech

Definition

The guide holes in the upper part of the die block are made smaller to conform to the thinner tips of the feed punch pins. Extending over the top of the die block and secured to it at one end is a smaller, armlike block called the *stripper block*. The stripper block is made from hardened tool steel, and it also has been drilled through with nine finely machined guide holes. It is carefully fitted to the die block at the factory so that its holes will be precisely above those in the die block and so that the space left between the blocks will measure .015″ (± .003″). The residue from the punching operation, called chad, is pushed out through the top of the stripper block and guided out of the assembly by means of a plastic *residue chad collector* and *chad collector extender*.

FIGURE D–2. Complex Description

design (*see* layout and design)

despite / in spite of

D

Although there is no literal difference between *despite* and *in spite of*, *despite* suggests an effort to avoid blame.

- *Despite* our best efforts, the plan failed.
  [We are not to blame for the failure.]
- *In spite of* our best efforts, the plan failed.
  [We did everything possible, but failure overcame us.]

Despite and *in spite of* (both meaning "notwithstanding") should not be blended into *despite of*.

In spite of

- ~~Despite of~~ our best efforts, the plan failed.

diagnosis / prognosis

Because they sound somewhat alike, these words are often confused with each other. *Diagnosis* means "an analysis of the nature of something" or "the conclusions reached by such analysis." ("The meteorological *diagnosis* was that the pollution resulted from natural contaminants.") *Prognosis* means "a forecast or prediction." ("The meteorologist's *prognosis* is that contaminant levels will increase over the next ten years.")

dictionaries

Dictionaries give more than just information about the meanings of words. They often provide words' etymologies (origins and history), forms, pronunciations, **spellings**, uses as **idioms**, and functions as **parts of speech**. For certain words, a dictionary lists **synonyms** and may also provide illustrations, if appropriate, such as tables, maps, photographs, and drawings.

Abridged Dictionaries

Abridged or desk dictionaries contain words commonly used in schools and offices. Choose the most recent edition with upward of 200,000 entries. One such reputable dictionary is *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 5th ed., with downloadable versions, 2011.

Unabridged Dictionaries

Unabridged dictionaries provide complete and authoritative linguistic information. Because of size and cost, libraries make such dictionaries available to their patrons.

> *The Oxford English Dictionary* is the standard historical dictionary of the English language. It is available for purchase or as a monthly or an annual subscription online at www.oed.com.
>
> Merriam Webster offers monthly and annual access to its unabridged dictionary at www.merriam-webster.com.

ESL Dictionaries

English-as-a-second-language (ESL) dictionaries are more helpful to nonnative speakers than are regular English or bilingual dictionaries. The pronunciation symbols in ESL dictionaries are based on the international phonetic alphabet rather than on English phonetic systems, and useful grammatical information is included in both the entries and special grammar sections. The definitions in ESL dictionaries are usually easier to understand and more thorough than those in regular or bilingual dictionaries. The following are helpful ESL dictionaries:

> *Longman English Dictionaries* at www.pearsonlongman.com/dictionaries
>
> *Oxford Wordpower Dictionary* at http:elt.oup.com

Subject and Specialized Dictionaries

Subject and specialized dictionaries contain detailed definitions of terms used in a particular field or subject area, such as medicine, geography, architecture, or consumer affairs. One well-known example is *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* (Lippincott Williams & Wilkins). Other dictionaries focus on special uses of language, such as abbreviations used online in texting and various forms of **social media**. One such source is NetLingo at www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php.

differ from / differ with

Differ from suggests that two things are not alike. ("Our earlier proposal *differs from* the current one.") *Differ with* indicates disagreement between persons. ("The architect *differed with* the contractor on the proposed site.")

D

different from / different than

In formal writing, the preposition *from* is used with *different*. ("The product I received is *different from* the one I ordered.") *Different than* is used when it is followed by a clause. ("The actual cost was *different than* we estimated in our proposal.")

direct address

Direct address refers to a sentence or phrase in which the person being spoken or written to is explicitly named. It is often used in **presentations** and in **e-mail** messages. Notice that the person's name in a direct address is set off by **commas**.

- *John*, call me as soon as you arrive at the airport.
- Call me, *John*, as soon as you arrive at the airport.

discreet / discrete

Discreet means "having or showing prudent or careful behavior." ("Because the matter was personal, he asked Bob to be *discreet*.") *Discrete* means something is "separate, distinct, or individual." ("The court ordered tests on three *discrete* samples.")

disinterested / uninterested

Disinterested means "impartial, objective, unbiased."

- Like good judges, researchers should be passionately interested in the problems they tackle but completely *disinterested* when they seek to solve those problems.

Uninterested means simply "not interested."

- Despite Asha's enthusiasm, her manager remained *uninterested* in the project.

division-and-classification method of development

D

An effective **method of development** for a complex subject is either to divide it into manageable parts and then discuss each part separately (division) or to classify (or group) individual parts into appropriate categories and discuss each category separately (classification). See also **instructions** and **process explanation**.

Division

You might use division to describe a physical object, such as the parts of a copy machine; to examine an organization, such as a company; or to explain the components of a system, such as the Internet. The emphasis in division as a method of development is on breaking down a complex whole into a number of like units—it is easier to consider smaller units and to examine the relationship of each to the other than to attempt to discuss the whole. The basis for division depends, of course, on your subject and your **purpose**.

If you were a financial planner describing the types of mutual funds available to your investors, you could divide the variety available into three broad categories: money-market funds, bond funds, and stock funds. Such division would be accurate, but it would be only a first-level grouping of a complex whole. The three broad categories could, in turn, be subdivided into additional groups based on investment strategy, as follows:

MONEY-MARKET FUNDS

- Taxable money market
- Tax-exempt money market

BOND FUNDS

- Taxable bonds
- Tax-exempt bonds
- Balanced (mix of stocks and bonds)

STOCK FUNDS

- Balanced
- Equity income
- Domestic growth
- Growth and income
- International growth
- Small capitalization
- Aggressive growth
- Specialized

Specialized stock funds could be further subdivided as follows:

SPECIALIZED FUNDS

- Communications
- Energy
- Environmental services
- Financial services
- Gold
- Health services
- Technology
- Utilities
- Worldwide capital goods

Classification

The process of classification is the grouping of a number of units (such as people, objects, or ideas) into related categories. Consider the following list:

triangular file	steel tape ruler	needle-nose pliers
vise	pipe wrench	keyhole saw
mallet	tin snips	C-clamps
rasp	hacksaw	plane
glass cutter	ball-peen hammer	steel square
spring clamp	claw hammer	utility knife
crescent wrench	folding extension ruler	slip-joint pliers
crosscut saw	tack hammer	utility scissors

To group the items in the list, you would first determine what they have in common. The most obvious characteristic they share is that they all belong in a carpenter's tool chest. With that observation as a starting point, you can begin to group the tools into related categories. Pipe wrenches belong with slip-joint pliers because both tools grip objects. The rasp and the plane belong with the triangular file because all three tools smooth rough surfaces. By applying this kind of thinking to all the items in the list, you can group (classify) the tools according to function (Figure D–3).

To classify a subject, you must first sort the individual items into the largest number of comparable groups. For explaining the functions of carpentry tools, the classifications (or groups) in Figure D–3 (smoothing, hammering, measuring, gripping, and cutting) are excellent. For recommending which tools a new homeowner should buy first, however, those classifications are not helpful—each group contains tools that a new homeowner might want to purchase right away. To give homeowners advice on purchasing tools, you probably would classify the types of repairs they most likely will have to do (plumbing, painting, and so on). That classification could serve as a guide to tool purchase.

Once you have established the basis for the classification, apply it consistently, putting each item in only one category. For example, it might seem logical to classify needle-nose pliers as both a tool that cuts and a tool that grips because most needle-nose pliers have a small section for cutting wires. However, the primary function of needle-nose pliers is to grip. So listing them only under "tools that grip" would be consistent with the basis used for listing the other tools.

D

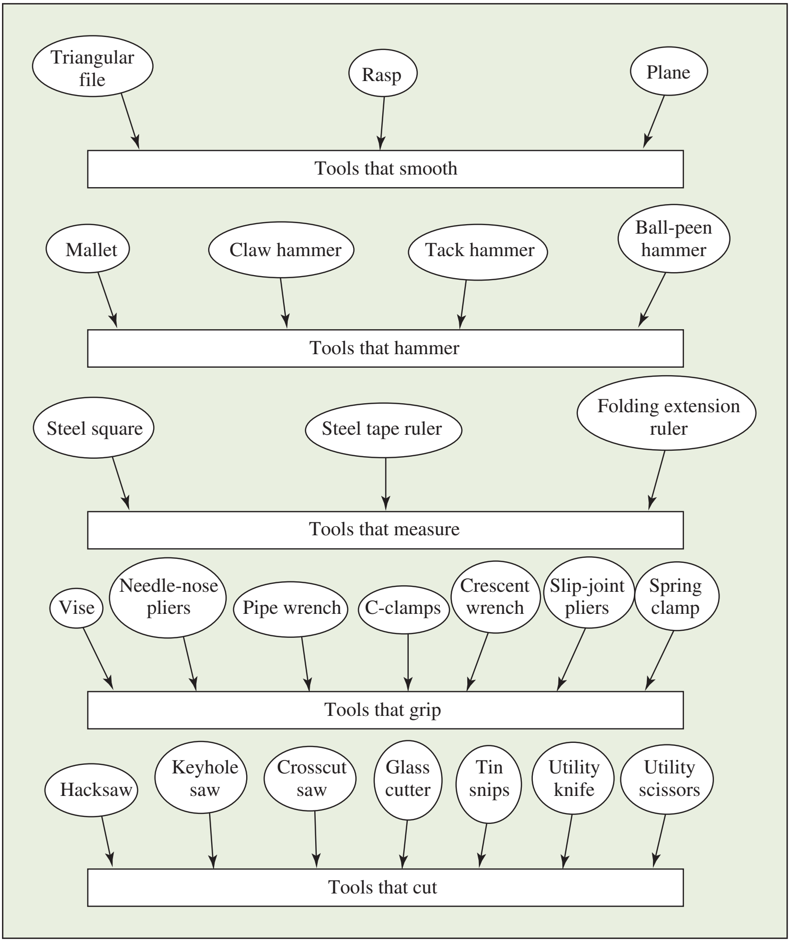


FIGURE D–3. Classification (Tools Placed into Categories)

document management

Document management refers to processes and programs that allow for the organized storage and quick retrieval of digital documents. By conforming to an established document-management procedure, organizations can keep track of a document's changes, versions, and contributors, and have the ability to quickly locate a single document within a larger document archive. Unlike content-management systems designed to allow for the easy creation, modification, and display of data within a final document or Web site, document-management systems are designed to keep track of the full life cycle of a single document. See **content management**.

Document-Management Systems

Although various technologies exist to help larger organizations manage their documents, most document-management systems begin with a reliance on established document-naming guidelines. Consistency in a file's name and placement within a folder hierarchy or document group allow members of an organization to quickly locate the latest version of a given document. Specialized document-management software programs often provide the following additional functionality to aid in the management, use, and revision of company documents:

- *Check-out procedures.* While working on a document, a writer can "check out" the document, preventing others from working with that document at the same time. This prevents conflicting information (or multiple "current" drafts) from reducing the usefulness of a document.
- *Access and security protocols.* Organizations can manage and record access to sensitive documents or files, restricting who can access, read, or edit a given document. Most document-management programs can provide high degrees of differentiation, preventing access or allowing reading or editing abilities, depending on an employee's needs or credentials.
- *Workflow management.* Most document-management programs keep track of document versions across other applications, such as e-mail programs, sales or legal databases, or grant-proposal programs. Document-management programs can simplify the workflow necessary to move a draft to publication by tracking documents as they are edited and passed from employee to employee.
- *Metadata tools.* "Metadata" refers to extra information that a writer includes with a document that is useful to others in searching for that document. For example, a writer may add a short description or a series of keywords to a document. By managing this information, a document-management system allows for documents to be quickly found even if the document title or exact contents are not known.
- *Document capture.* Document-management systems can also house large collections of documents and related items—not just those created by employees. For example, product photographs, competitor sales sheets, topical e-mails, and scanned magazine or

journal articles can be housed under a single directory or document group with the document generated from that information.

Regardless of the tools or programs available within your organization, consistency and ease of use are key to successful document management. Take time to carefully learn and follow your organization's best practices. See also **adapting to new technologies**.

D

Document-Naming Conventions

When setting your document's filename and location, consider where it will appear in an existing list of documents. Follow the recommendations and practices of your organization, but if none exist, construct filenames beginning with the most general detail and moving to the most specific detail. If your document is part of a larger category, consider beginning with the category and follow that with the specific section and date ("AnnualReport-Introduction-2015_Mar13.pdf"). At the same time, work to achieve balance between providing enough detail to make finding the file as easy as possible while avoiding providing so much detail that the filename becomes excessively and unworkably long. End with the version of the document, such as "V2" to indicate a second revision or "FinalDraft" to indicate the final contribution.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Naming Files

- ✔ *Alphabetize documents or folders lists*. Most document-management systems default to alphabetical order while easily allowing for other sorting or searching methods.
- ✔ *Order by using names and year*. Names should begin with the surname followed by the first initial or name ("JohnsonS") and use the year, month, day order ("2015_Oct23").
- ✔ *Construct filenames beginning with the most general and moving to specific detail*. However, keep in mind any naming conventions enforced by a document-management program.
- ✔ *Use capital letters, hyphens, underscore, and periods to divide sections within a filename*. Avoid spaces or other punctuation that could make your document inaccessible.
- ✔ *Strive for consistency when adding documents to a new folder or system*. Be aware of how existing files are saved and mimic the existing structure.

documenting sources

DIRECTORY

APA Documentation 137
- APA In-Text Citations 137
- APA Documentation Models 138
- APA Sample Pages 142

IEEE Documentation 144
- IEEE In-Text Citations 144
- IEEE Documentation Models 144
- IEEE Sample Pages 148

MLA Documentation 150
- MLA In-Text Citations 150
- MLA Documentation Models 150
- MLA Sample Pages 154

Documenting sources achieves three important purposes:

- It allows readers to locate and consult the sources used and to find further information on the subject.
- It enables writers to support their assertions and arguments in such documents as **proposals**, **reports**, and **trade journal articles**.
- It helps writers to give proper credit to others and thus avoid **plagiarism** by identifying the sources of facts, ideas, **visuals**, **quotations**, and paraphrases. See also **paraphrasing**.

This entry shows citation models and sample pages for three principal documentation systems: American Psychological Association (APA), IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), and Modern Language Association (MLA). The following examples compare these three styles for citing a book by one author: *Leading Change* by John P. Kotter, which was published in 2012 by Harvard Business Review Press in Boston, Massachusetts.

- The APA system of citation is often used in the social sciences. It is referred to as an author-date method of documentation because parenthetical in-text citations and a reference list (at the end of the paper) in APA style emphasize the author(s) and date of publication so that the currency of the research is clear.

APA IN-TEXT CITATION

(Author's Last Name, Year)

(Kotter, 2012)

D
APA

APA REFERENCES ENTRY

Author's Last Name, Initials. (Year). *Title in italics*. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Kotter, J. P. (2012). *Leading change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

- The system set forth in the *IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.) Standards Style Manual* is often used for the production of technical documents and standards in areas ranging from computer engineering, biomedical technology, and telecommunications to electric power, aerospace, and consumer electronics. The IEEE system is referred to as a number-style method of documentation because bibliographical reference numbers and a numbered bibliography identify the sources of information.

IEEE IN-TEXT CITATION

[Bibliographical reference number corresponding to a bibliography entry]

IEEE BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY

[Bibliographical reference number] Author's Last Name, First and Middle Initial (or Full First Name), *Title in Italics*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication, Pages.

[1] Lampton, C., *Unified Field Theory: For the Engineer and the Applied Scientist*. Weinheim, Germany: Wiley-VCH, 2009, pp. 270-284.

- The MLA system is used in literature and the humanities. MLA style uses parenthetical in-text citations and a list of works cited and places greater importance on the pages on which cited information can be found than on the publication date.

MLA IN-TEXT CITATION

(Author's Last Name Page Number)

(Kotter 141)

MLA WORKS-CITED ENTRY

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title Italicized*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication. Medium of Publication.

Kotter, John P. *Leading Change*. Boston: Harvard Business Rev. P, 2012. Print.

These systems are described in full detail in the following style manuals:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: APA, 2010. See also www.apastyle.org.

IEEE Standards Style Manual. 2009 ed. New York: IEEE, 2009. See also http://standards.ieee.org/about/get/index.htm.

Modern Language Association. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: MLA, 2009. See also www.mla.org/style.

For additional bibliographic advice and documentation models for types of sources not included in this entry, consult these style manuals.

APA Documentation

APA In-Text Citations. Within the text of a paper, APA parenthetical documentation gives a brief citation—in parentheses—of the author, year of publication, and a relevant page number if it helps locate a passage in a lengthy document.

- ▸ Technology that once remedied loneliness may now lead to feelings of seclusion and sadness (Slade, 2012).
- ▸ According to Slade (2012), "We look to machines to perform human functions: They provide communications, calculations, care, and company" (p. 9).

When APA parenthetical citations are needed midsentence, place them after the closing quotation marks and continue with the rest of the sentence.

- ▸ In short, these "prosthetic substitutes" (Slade, 2012, p. 13) replace the flesh-and-blood friends in our lives.

If the APA parenthetical citation follows a block quotation, place it after the final punctuation mark.

- ▸ . . . a close collaboration with the marketing staff and the development group is essential. (Thompson, 2010)

When a work has two authors, cite both names joined by an ampersand: (Bartlett & Steele, 2012). For the first citation of a work with three, four, or five authors, include all names. For subsequent citations and for works with more than five authors, include only the last name of the first author followed by "et al." (not italicized and with a period after "al."). When two or more works by different authors are cited in the same parentheses, list the citations alphabetically and use semicolons to separate them: (Bartlett & Steele, 2012; Dauch, 2012).

APA Documentation Models. In reference lists, APA requires that the first word of book and article titles be capitalized and all subsequent words be lowercased. Exceptions include the first word after a colon or dash and proper nouns.

PRINTED BOOKS

Single Author

Wheeler, A. (2012). *Designing brand identity: An essential guide for the whole branding team*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Multiple Authors

Kaye, B., & Giulioni, J. W. (2012). *Help them grow or watch them go: Career conversations employees want*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Corporate Author

Standard and Poor's. (2012). *Standard and Poor's 500 guide*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Edition Other Than First

Mongan, J., Giguere, E., & Kindler, N. (2013). *Programming interviews exposed: Secrets to landing your next job* (3rd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: Wiley.

Multivolume Work

Kozlowski, S. W. J. (Ed.). (2012). *The Oxford handbook of organizational psychology* (Vols. 1–2). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Work in an Edited Collection

Snider, L. (2013). The technological advantages of stock market traders. In S. Will, S. Handelman, & D. C. Brotherton (Eds.), *How they got away with it: White collar criminals and the financial meltdown* (pp. 151–170). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entry

Wah, B. W. (Ed.). (2009). Agent technology. In *Wiley encyclopedia of computer science and engineering*. Boston, MA: Wiley.

ARTICLES IN PRINTED PERIODICALS

Magazine Article

Paul, I. (2012, September). Spotify takes on Pandora. *Macworld*, *29*(9), 71.

Journal Article

Moriarty, J. (2010). Participation in the workplace: Are employees special? *Journal of Business Ethics, 92*(3), 373–384.

D

APA

Newspaper Article

Jones, R. (2012, December 4). Nations meet to discuss web rules. *Wall Street Journal*, p. B7.

Article with an Unknown Author

What sold, for how much, and why? (2009, Fall). *Modern*, *1*(2), 22.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The APA recommends that, at minimum, references to online sources should provide an author (whenever possible), the date of publication or update (use "(n.d.)" if no date is available), the title of the article, and retrieval information, such as an address (URL or DOI*) that links directly to the document or section. Include the retrieval date only if the content could change. (The retrieval date is not necessary for content with a fixed publication date, such as a journal article.) On the rare occasion that you need to cite multiple pages of a Web site (or the entire site), provide a URL that links to the site's homepage. No periods follow URLs.

Entire Web Site

Association for Business Communication. (2014). Retrieved from http://www.businesscommunication.org

Online Book

Use this form for books made available online or for e-books.

Sowell, T. (2010). *Basic economics: A common sense guide to the economy* (4th ed.). Retrieved from http://books.google.com/books

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Author

Marshall, R. (2009, August 18). *IBM bolsters green sensor portfolio*. Retrieved from http://www.businessgreen.com/business-green/news/2248007/ibm-bolsters-smart-grid

Short Work from a Web Site, with a Corporate or an Organizational Author

General Motors. (2009). *Company profile*. Retrieved from http://www.gm.com/corporate/about/company.jsp

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Unknown Author

Women owned businesses. (2009, July 20). Retrieved from http://www.business.gov/start/woman-owned/

*A digital object identifier (DOI) is the character string used to identify an electronic file.

D APA

Article or Other Work from a Database

Boiral, O., Henri, J.-F., & Talbot, D. (2012). Modeling the impacts of corporate commitment on climate change. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, *21*(8), 495–516. doi:10.1002/bse.723

Article in an Online Periodical

Kapadia, R. (2009, August 17). Put your cash to work. *SmartMoney*. Retrieved from http://www.smartmoney.com/investing/economy/put-your-cash-to-work/

Article Posted on a Wiki

Labor theory of value. (2012, November 28). Retrieved December 2, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labor_theory_of_value

E-mail Message

E-mail messages are not cited in an APA reference list. They can be cited in the text as follows: "According to A. Kalil (personal communication, January 12, 2014), Web pages need to reflect . . ."

Online Posting (Lists, Forums, Discussion Boards)

Electronic discussion sources, including postings to electronic mailing lists, online forums, or discussion groups, are seldom cited in formal publications because they are difficult to retrieve and not considered scholarly material. If you do include one of these sources, provide the real name of an author if given; otherwise, provide the screen name. Follow the name with the date of the posting, the subject line of the message, and any identifiers for the message in brackets after the title.

Senior scholar. (2009, March 15). Re: Surviving the job search [Online forum comment]. Retrieved from http://chronicle.com/forums/index.php/topic,40486.msg1221730.html#msg1221730

Blog Entry

Chang, J. (2009, August 17). Sharing with Google groups [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2009/08/sharing-with-google-groups.html

Publication on CD-ROM

Duhigg, C. (2012). *The power of habit: Why we do what we do in life and business* [CD-ROM]. New York, NY: Random House.

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES (Electronic and Print)

Film or Video

Chiu, K. (2012, November 15). Trends in mobile gaming [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPD1ZyrilNw

D

APA

Radio or Television Program

Winkler, A. (Producer). (2009, February 11). Battle brewing over electronic books [Radio program]. In *All things considered*. Retrieved from http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100584020

Bettag, T. (Producer). (2009, February 28). The fast lane [Television series episode]. In *Koppel: People's republic of capitalism*. Washington, DC: Discovery Channel.

Podcast

Hirsch, P. (2009, February 10). Write-downs [Audio podcast]. In *APM: Marketplace whiteboard*. Retrieved from http://marketplace.publicradio.org/RSS/

OTHER SOURCES

Published Interview

Barro, R. (2009, February 5). Interview with Robert Barro (C. Clarke, Interviewer). Retrieved from http://www.theatlantic.com

Personal Communications

Personal communications such as lectures, letters, interviews, and e-mail messages are generally not cited in an APA reference list. They can be cited in the text as follows: "According to Elizabeth Andersen (personal communication, October 2, 2014), Web pages need to reflect . . ."

Brochure or Pamphlet

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. (2012). *Historic preservation tax incentives* [Brochure]. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Government Document

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). *Highlights of women's earnings in 2008*. Washington, DC: Department of Labor.

Report

World Bank. (2012). *Global financial development report 2013: Rethinking the role of the state in finance*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

APA Sample Pages

Shortened title and page number.

One-inch margins. Text double-spaced.

Long quote indented one-half inch, double-spaced, without quotation marks.

In-text citation gives name, date, and page number.

ETHICS CASES 14

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2014. The purpose of such reports is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program (Davis, Marks, & Tegge, 2004). According to Matthias Jonas (2004), recommendations are given for consideration "in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program" (p. 152).

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout CGF, was given the responsibility for the following objectives, as described by Rossouw (2000):

> Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's Program to employees. Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns. Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness and recognition. Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance is the immediate goal of the Office of Business Conduct in its first year. (p. 1543)

The purpose of the Ethics Program, established by the Committee, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" (Jonas, 2006, p. 89). To accomplish this purpose, any ethics policy must ensure confidentiality and anonymity for employees who raise genuine ethics concerns. The procedure developed at CGF guarantees that employees can . . .

FIGURE D–4. APA Sample Page (from a Report)

D
APA

ETHICS CASES 21

Heading centered.

First word of title capitalized and subsequent words lowercased.

List alphabetized by authors' last names and double-spaced.

Hanging-indent style used for entries.

References

Davis, W. C., Marks, R., & Tegge, D. (2004). *Working in the system: Five new management principles*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

International Business Ethics Institute. (2008). Retrieved from http://business-ethics.org

Jonas, M. (2004). The Internet and ethical communication: Toward a new paradigm. *Journal of Ethics and Communication*, *32*, 147–177.

Jonas, M. (2006). Ethics in organizational communication: A review of the literature. *Journal of Ethics and Communication*, *29*, 79–99.

National Science Foundation. (2007). *Conflicts of interest and standards of ethical conduct.* Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation.

Rossouw, G. J. (2000). Business ethics in South Africa. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *16*, 1539–1547.

Schipper, F. (2007). Transparency and integrity: Contrary concepts? In K. Homann, P. Koslowski, & C. Luetge (Eds.), *Globalisation and business ethics* (pp. 101–118). Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Smith, T. (Reporter), & Lehrer, J. (Host). (2006). *NewsHour business ethics anthology* [DVD]. Encino, CA: Business Training Media.

FIGURE D–5. APA Sample List of References

D

IEEE

IEEE Documentation

IEEE In-Text Citations. IEEE bracketed bibliographical reference numbers within the text of a paper provide sequential numbers that correspond to the full citation in the bibliography: [A1], [A2], and so on. The letter within the brackets specifies the annex, or appendix, where the bibliography is located (Annex A, Annex B, and so on). In IEEE style, the bibliography is always placed in an annex. Note that "Annex A" is usually reserved for standards (or *normative references*); "Annex B" is reserved for typical in-text (or *informative*) citations.

- As Peterson writes, preparing a videotape of measurement methods is cost effective and can expedite training [B1].
- The results of these studies have led even the most conservative managers to adopt technologies that will "catapult the industry forward" [B2].

The first bibliographic reference cited in the document should be marked with a footnote that reads as follows:

- [1]The numbers in brackets correspond to those of the bibliography in Annex B.

IEEE Documentation Models

PRINTED BOOKS

Single Author

[B1] Wheeler, A., *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2012, pp. 165–189.

Multiple Authors

[B2] Kaye, B., and J. W. Giulioni, *Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go: Career Conversations Employees Want*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2012, pp. 72–97.

Corporate Author

[B3] Standard and Poor's, *Standard and Poor's 500 Guide*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012, pp. 29–44.

Edition Other Than First

[B4] Mongan, J., E. Giguere, and N. Kindler, *Programming Interviews Exposed: Secrets to Landing Your Next Job*, 3rd ed. Indianapolis, IN: Wiley, 2013, pp. 221–247.

Multivolume Work

[B5] Knuth, D. E., *The Art of Computer Programming*, vol. 4. Boston: Addison-Wesley, 2009, pp. 35–51.

Work in an Edited Collection

[B6] Snider, L., "The Technological Advantages of Stock Market Traders," in *How They Got Away with It: White Collar Criminals and the Financial Meltdown*, S. Will, S. Brotherton, and D. C. Brotherton, Eds. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, pp. 151–170.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entry

[B7] *Wiley Encyclopedia of Computer Science and Engineering*, 2009 ed., s.v. "agent technology."

ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS (*See also* Electronic Sources)

Magazine Article

[B8] Paul, I., "Spotify Takes on Pandora," *Macworld*, p. 71, Sept. 2012.

Journal Article

[B9] Moriarty, J., "Participation in the Workplace: Are Employees Special?" *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 92, no. 3, pp. 373–384, 2010.

Article with an Unknown Author

[B10] "What Sold, for How Much, and Why?" *Modern*, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 22, Fall 2009.

Newspaper Article

[B11] Jones, R., "Nations Meet to Discuss Web Rules," *Wall Street Journal*, Sec. B, Dec. 4, 2012.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The *IEEE Standards Style Manual*, 2014 ed., includes general information when citing information found on the Internet: If a document listed in a bibliography is accessed from the Internet, the *Style Manual* recommends that you list the author, date, document title, publication title, medium, and other pertinent publication information, followed by "Available:" and the Internet location. "The URL should be the most stable location whenever possible to avoid inadvertent or intentional changes that would affect the site name," so you should use the index to the page rather than the page itself.

The editors of the *Style Manual* note that their guidelines for citing electronic information are a modified version of the International Standards Organization (ISO) documentation system and APA style.

Entire Web Site

[B12] Society for Technical Communication. (2009–2010). *Society for Technical Communication* [Online]. Available: http://www.stc.org

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Author

[B13] Calore, M. (2010, Oct. 7). "Personalize Your Map with a Custom Map Marker." *Webmonkey* [Online]. Available: http://www.webmonkey.com

Short Work from a Web Site, with a Corporate Author

[B14] General Motors. (2010). "Company Profile." *General Motors* [Online]. Available: http://www.gm.com

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Unknown Author

[B15] "Women-Owned Businesses."(2009 Jul. 20) [Online]. Available: http://www.business.gov/start/woman-owned/

Article or Other Work from a Database

[B16] Borial, O., J. F. Henry, and D. Talbot. (2012). "Modeling the Impact of Corporate Commitment on Climate Change." *Business Strategy and the Environment* [Online]. 21, 495–516. Available: doi:1002/bse.723

Article in an Online Periodical

[B17] Kapadia, R. (2009, Aug. 17). "Put Your Cash to Work." *Smart Money* [Online]. Available: http://www.smartmoney.com/investing/economy/put-your-cash-to-work/

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES (Print and Electronic)

Map or Chart

[B18] *Middle East*. Map. Chicago: Rand, 2014.

Film or Video

[B19] "Trends in Mobile Gaming." China 2.0, Ken Chio. Stanford, CA, 2012.

Television Interview

[B20] Schultz, H., Interview by Charlie Rose. *The Charlie Rose Show*. Public Broadcasting System, Apr. 10, 2014.

OTHER SOURCES

E-mail Messages

The *IEEE Standards Style Manual* does not provide advice for citing personal communications such as conversations, letters, and e-mail; the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition, recommends that personal communications are usually cited in the text rather than listed in a bibliography.

Published Interview

[B21] Barro, R., "Interview with Robert Barro," Interview. *The Atlantic*. [Online]. Feb. 2009.

Personal Interview

[B22] Sariolghalam, M., Interview by author. Berkeley, CA, Jan. 29, 2010.

Personal Letter

Personal communications such as letters, e-mail, and messages from discussion groups and electronic bulletin boards are not cited in an IEEE bibliography.

Brochure or Pamphlet

[B23] Library of Congress, U.S. Copyright Office, *Copyright Basics*. Washington, DC: GPO, 2010, pp. 1–3.

Government Document

[B24] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2012*. Washington, DC: GPO, 2013.

Report

[B25] World Bank, *Global Financial Development Report 2013: Rethinking the Role of the State in Finance*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012.

D

IEEE

IEEE Sample Pages

Shortened title and date.

Standards in Business, June 2014

One-inch margins, single-spaced.

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2014. The purpose of such reports is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program. According to Matthias Jonas, recommendations are given for consideration "in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program" [B1].[1]

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was given the responsibility for the following objectives, as described by Rossouw:

Long quote indented, set in smaller font size, without quotation marks.

> Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's program to employees. Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns. Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness and recognition. Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance is the immediate goal of the Office of Business Conduct in its first year [B2].

The purpose of the Ethics Program, according to Jonas, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" [B3].

Block paragraphs.

Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct. Examples of major ethics cases included cover-up of defective workmanship or use of defective parts in products; discrimination in hiring and promotion; involvement in monetary or other kickbacks; sexual harassment; disclosure of proprietary or company information; theft; and use of corporate Internet resources for inappropriate purposes, such as conducting personal business, gambling, or access to pornography.

The effectiveness of CGF's Ethics Program during the first year of implementation is most evidenced by (1) the active participation of employees in the program and the 3,458 contacts employees made regarding ethics concerns through the various channels available to them, and (2) the action taken in the cases reported by employees,

Footnote explains first in-text citation.

[1]The numbers in brackets correspond to those of the bibliography in Annex B.

14

Page number at bottom right of page, one space below last line.

FIGURE D–6. IEEE Sample Page (from a Report)

D

IEEE

Standards in Business, June 2014

Annex B

(informative)

Bibliography

Bibliography labeled "informative" in 14-point type within parentheses.

Title in bold; 16-point type.

List in order of appearance in document.

Single-spaced block entries

[B1] Jonas, M., "The Internet and ethical communication: Toward a new paradigm," *Journal of Ethics and Communication*, vol. 32, pp. 147–177, Fall 2008.

[B2] Rossouw, G. J., "Business ethics in South Africa," *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 16, no. 14, pp. 1539–1547, 2001.

[B3] Jonas, M., "Ethics in organizational communication: A review of the literature," *Journal of Ethics and Communication*, vol. 29, pp. 77–99, Summer 2010.

[B4] Davis, W. C., R. Marks, and D. Tegge, *Working in the System: Five New Management Principles*. New York: St. Martin's, 2008, pp. 18–42.

[B5] Schipper, F., "Transparency and integrity: Contrary concepts?" in *Globalisation and Business Ethics*, Karl Homann, Peter Koslowski, and Christoph Luetge, Eds. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011, pp. 101–118.

[B6] Sariolghalam, M., Interview by author. Tape recording. Berkeley, CA, Jan. 29, 2012.

[B7] United States. National Science Foundation, *Conflicts of Interest and Standards of Ethical Conduct*. Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation, 2011, pp. 1–10.

[B8] International Business Ethics Institute. (1994–2008). *International Business Institute* [Online]. 1994–2008. Available: www.business-ethics.org

[B9] *NewsHour Business Ethics Anthology*. DVD. Hosted by Jim Lehrer. Business Training Media, Encino, CA, 2010.

20

FIGURE D–7. IEEE Sample Bibliography

D
MLA

MLA Documentation

MLA In-Text Citations. The MLA parenthetical citation within the text of a paper gives a brief citation—in parentheses—of the author and relevant page number(s), separated only by a space. If the author is cited in the text, include only the page number(s) in parentheses. When citing Web sites where no author or page reference is available, provide a short title of the work in parentheses.

- Achieving results is one thing while maintaining results is another because "like marathon runners, companies hit a performance wall" (Studer 3).
- As Studer writes, the poor performance of a few employees will ultimately affect the performance—and the morale—of all of the employees (8).
- In 1810, Peter Durand invented the can, which was later used to provide soldiers and explorers canned rations and ultimately "saved legions from sure starvation" ("Forgotten Inventors").

If the parenthetical citation refers to a long, indented quotation, place it outside the punctuation of the last sentence.

- . . . a close collaboration with the marketing staff and the development group is essential. (Thompson 37)

If no author is named or if you are using more than one work by the same author, give a shortened version of the title in the parenthetical citation, unless you name the title in the text (a "signal phrase"). A citation for Quint Studer's book *Results That Last: Hardwiring Behaviors That Will Take Your Company to the Top* would appear as (Studer, *Results* 93).

MLA Documentation Models

PRINTED BOOKS

Single Author

Wheeler, Alina. *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team.* Hoboken: Wiley, 2012. Print.

Multiple Authors

Kaye, Beverly, and Julie Winkle Giulioni. *Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go: Career Conversations Employees Want.* San Francisco: Berrett, 2012. Print.

Corporate Author

Standard and Poor's. *Standard and Poor's 500 Guide*. New York: McGraw, 2012. Print.

Edition Other Than First

Mongan, John, Eric Giguere, and Noah Kindler. *Programming Interviews Exposed: Secrets to Landing Your Next Job.* 3rd ed. Indianapolis: Wiley, 2013. Print.

Multivolume Work

Kozlowski, Steve W. J., ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Psychology.* 2 vols. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.

Work in an Edited Collection

Snider, Laureen. "The Technological Advantages of Stock Market Traders." *How They Got Away with It: White Collar Criminals and the Financial Meltdown.* Ed. Susan Will, Stephen Handelman, and David C. Brotherton. New York: Columbia UP, 2013. 151–70. Print.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entry

Wah, B. W., ed. "Agent Technology." *Wiley Encyclopedia of Computer Science and Engineering*. Boston: Wiley, 2009. Print.

ARTICLES IN PRINTED PERIODICALS

Magazine Article

Paul, Ian. "Spotify Takes on Pandora." *Macworld* Sept. 2012: 71. Print.

Journal Article

Moriarty, Jeffrey. "Participation in the Workplace: Are Employees Special?" *Journal of Business Ethics* 92.3 (2010): 373–84. Print.

Newspaper Article

Jones, Rory. "Nations Meet to Discuss Web Rules." *Wall Street Journal* 4 Dec. 2012: B7. Print.

Article with an Unknown Author

"What Sold, for How Much, and Why?" *Modern* 1.2 (2009): 22. Print.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The MLA recommends that, at minimum, references to online sources provide the author's name (whenever possible), a title for the article (in quotation marks), the title of the Web site (italicized), the name of the publisher or sponsor of the Web site, the publication date (posted or updated), the medium (Web), and the date of access.

Entire Web Site

Society for Technical Communication. Soc. for Technical Communication, 2014. Web. 18 Mar. 2014.

Online Book

Sowell, Thomas. *Basic Economics: A Common Sense Guide to the Economy*. 4th ed. New York: Basic, 2010. *Google Book Search*. Web. 12 Oct. 2014.

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Author

Marshall, Rosalie. "IBM Bolsters Green Sensor Portfolio." *BusinessGreen .com*. Incisive Media, 18 Aug. 2009. Web. 23 Aug. 2013.

Short Work from a Web Site, with a Corporate or an Organizational Author

General Motors. "Company Profile." *General Motors*. General Motors, 2009. Web. 18 Aug. 2014.

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Unknown Author

"Women-Owned Businesses." *Business.gov*. US Government, 20 July 2009. Web. 18 Aug. 2014.

Article or Other Work from a Database

Boiral, Olivier, Jean-François Henri, and David Talbot. "Modeling the Impacts of Corporate Commitment on Climate Change." *Business Strategy and the Environment* 21.8 (2012): 495–516. GreenFILE. Web. 2 Dec. 2014.

Article in an Online Periodical

Kapadia, Reshma. "Put Your Cash to Work." *SmartMoney.com*. SmartMoney, 17 Aug. 2009. Web. 19 Aug. 2014.

Article Posted on a Wiki

"Labor Theory of Value." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 28 Nov. 2012. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.

E-mail Message

Kalil, Ari. "Customer Satisfaction Survey." Message to the author. 12 Jan. 2014. E-mail.

Online Posting (Lists, Forums, Discussion Boards)

senior scholar. "Surviving the Job Search." *Chronicle Forums*. N.p., 15 Mar. 2009. Web. 19 Aug. 2013.

Blog Entry

Chang, Jeffrey. "Sharing with Google Groups." *Google Blog*. Google, 17 Aug. 2009. Web. 19 Aug. 2014.

Publication on CD-ROM

Duhigg, Charles. *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*. New York: Random, 2012. CD-ROM.

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES (Electronic and Print)

Film or Video

Chiu, Ken. "Trends in Mobile Gaming." *YouTube*. YouTube, 15 Nov. 2012. Web. 5 Dec. 2013.

Radio or Television Program

"Battle Brewing over Electronic Books." *All Things Considered*. Narr. Lynn Neary. NPR.org. Natl. Public Radio. 11 Feb. 2009. Web. 16 Feb. 2014.

Koppel, Ted, narr. "Koppel: People's Republic of Capitalism." *The Fast Lane*. Discovery Channel. 28 Feb. 2009. Television.

Podcast

Hirsch, Paddy. "Write-Downs." *APM: Marketplace Whiteboard*. Amer. Public Media, 10 Feb. 2009. MP3 file.

OTHER SOURCES

Published Interview

Barro, Robert. "An Interview with Robert Barro." *Atlantic*. Atlantic Monthly Group, 5 Feb. 2009. Web. 16 Feb. 2013.

Personal Interview

Andersen, Elizabeth. Personal interview. 29 Nov. 2014.

Brochure or Pamphlet

United States. Dept. of the Interior. Natl. Park Service. *Historic Preservation Tax Incentives*. Washington: GPO, 2012. Print.

Government Document

United States. Dept. of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Highlights of Women's Earnings in 2008*. Rept. 1000. Washington: US Dept. of Labor, 2009. Print.

Report

World Bank. *Global Financial Development Report 2013: Rethinking the Role of the State in Finance*. Washington: World Bank, 2012. Print.

D
MLA

MLA Sample Pages

Litzinger 14

Author's last name and page number.

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2014. The purpose of such reports is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program (Davis, Marks, and Tegge 142). According to Matthias Jonas, recommendations are given for consideration "in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program" ("Internet" 152).

One-inch margins. Text double-spaced.

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout CGF, was given the responsibility for the following objectives, as described by Rossouw:

> Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's Program to employees. Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns. Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness and recognition. Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance is the immediate goal of the Office of Business Conduct in its first year. (1543)

Long quote indented one inch, double-spaced, without quotation marks.

The purpose of the Ethics Program, according to Jonas, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" ("Ethics" 89). To accomplish this purpose, any ethics policy must ensure confidentiality for anyone . . .

In-text citations give author name and page number. Title used when multiple works by same author cited.

FIGURE D–8. MLA Sample Page (from a Report)

Heading centered.

List alphabetized by authors' last names or title and double-spaced.

Hanging-indent style used for entries.

Litzinger 14

Works Cited

Davis, W. C., Roland Marks, and Diane Tegge. *Working in the System: Five New Management Principles*. New York: St. Martin's, 2004. Print.

International Business Ethics Institute. Inter. Business Ethics Inst., 14 Jan. 2008. Web. 19 June 2014.

Jonas, Matthias. "Ethics in Organizational Communication: A Review of the Literature." *Journal of Ethics and Communication* 29.2 (2006): 79–99. Print.

---. "The Internet and Ethical Communication: Toward a New Paradigm." *Journal of Ethics and Communication* 32.1 (2004): 147–77. Print.

Rossouw, George J. "Business Ethics in South Africa." *Journal of Business Ethics* 16.14 (2000): 1539–47. Print.

Sariolghalam, Mahmood. Personal interview. 29 Jan. 2008.

Schipper, Fritz. "Transparency and Integrity: Contrary Concepts?" *Globalisation and Business Ethics*. Ed. Karl Homann, Peter Koslowski, and Christoph Luetge. Burlington: Ashgate, 2007. 101–18. Print.

Smith, Terrence. "Legislating Ethics." *NewsHour Business Ethics Anthology*. Host Jim Lehrer. Encino: Business Training Media, 2006. DVD.

United States. Natl. Science Foundation. *Conflicts of Interest and Standards of Ethical Conduct*. NSF Manual No. 15. Arlington: Natl. Science Foundation, 2007. Print.

FIGURE D–9. MLA Sample List of Works Cited

D

double negatives

A double negative is the use of an additional negative word to reinforce an expression that is already negative. In writing and speech, avoid such constructions.

UNCLEAR We don't have none.
[This sentence literally means that we have some.]

CLEAR We have none.

Barely, *hardly*, and *scarcely* cause problems because writers sometimes do not recognize that those words are already negative.

s

▸ The corporate policy ~~doesn't~~ hardly cover the problem.

Not unfriendly, *not without*, and similar constructions are not double negatives because in such constructions two negatives are meant to suggest the gray area between negative and positive meanings. Be careful how you use such constructions; they can be confusing to the reader and should be used only if they serve a purpose.

▸ He is *not unfriendly*.
[He is neither hostile nor friendly.]

▸ It is *not without* regret that I offer my resignation.
[I have mixed feelings rather than only regret.]

The correlative **conjunctions** *neither* and *nor* may appear together in a clause without creating a double negative, so long as the writer does not attempt to use the word *not* in the same clause.

neither,

▸ It was ~~not,~~ as a matter of fact, ~~neither~~ his duty nor his desire to dismiss the employee.

either or

▸ It was not, as a matter of fact, ~~neither~~ his duty ~~nor~~ his desire to dismiss the employee.

cared noticed

▸ She ~~did not~~ neither ~~care~~ about nor ~~notice~~ the error.

Negative forms are full of traps that often entice writers into **logic errors**, as illustrated in the following example:

ILLOGICAL The book reveals *nothing* that has *not* already been published in some form, but some of it is, I believe, relatively unknown.

In this sentence, "some of it" logically can refer only to "*nothing* that has *not* already been published." The sentence can be corrected by stating the idea in more **positive writing**.

LOGICAL Everything in the book has been published in some form, but some of it is, I believe, relatively unknown.

D

drawings

A drawing can depict an object's appearance and illustrate the steps in procedures or **instructions**. It can emphasize the significant parts or functions of a device or product, omit what is not significant, and focus on details or relationships that a **photograph** cannot reveal. Think about your need for drawings during your **preparation** and **research**. Include the drawings in your outline, indicating approximately where each should be placed ("drawing of . . ." enclosed in brackets). For advice on integrating drawings into your text, see **outlining** and **visuals**.

The types of drawings discussed in this entry are conventional line drawings, exploded-view drawings, cutaway drawings, schematic diagrams, and clip-art images.

A conventional line drawing is appropriate if your **audience** needs an overview of a series of steps or an understanding of an object's appearance or construction, as in Figure D–10.

An exploded-view drawing, like that in Figure D–11, can be useful when you need to show the proper sequence in which parts fit together or to show the details of individual parts. Figure D–11 shows owners of a Xerox WorkCentre copier how to safely unpack the machine and its key parts.

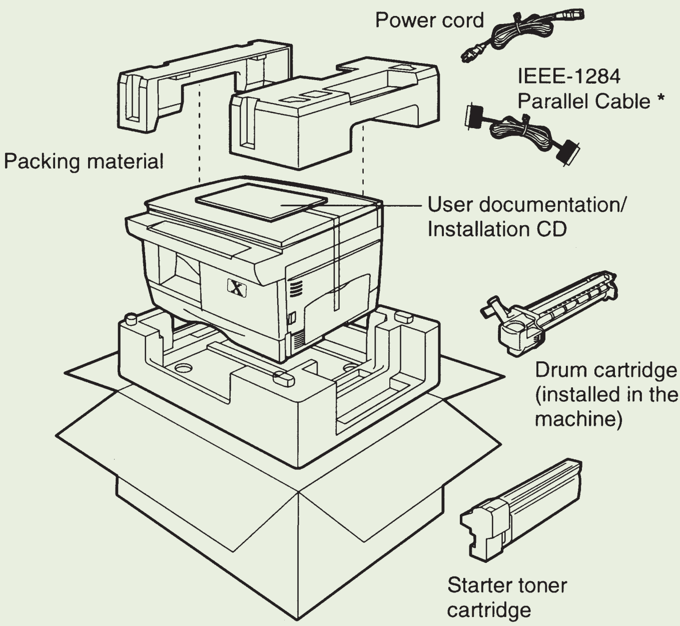
FIGURE D–10. Conventional Line Drawing Illustrating Instructions

D

Installation

As you unpack the WorkCentre, familiarize yourself with its contents. After the WorkCentre is installed, and the Ready Indicator is lit, the WorkCentre is ready to make copies.

IMPORTANT: Save the carton and packing materials. They should be used to repack the WorkCentre if it has to be shipped for servicing or in case you move.



* **Note:** To ensure reliability of the WorkCentre, use the IEEE-1284 compliant parallel cable that is supplied with the machine. Only cables labeled "IEEE-1284" can be used with your WorkCentre.

FIGURE D–11. Exploded-View Drawing

A cutaway drawing, like the one in Figure D–12, can be useful when you need to show the internal parts of a device or structure and illustrate their relationship to the whole.

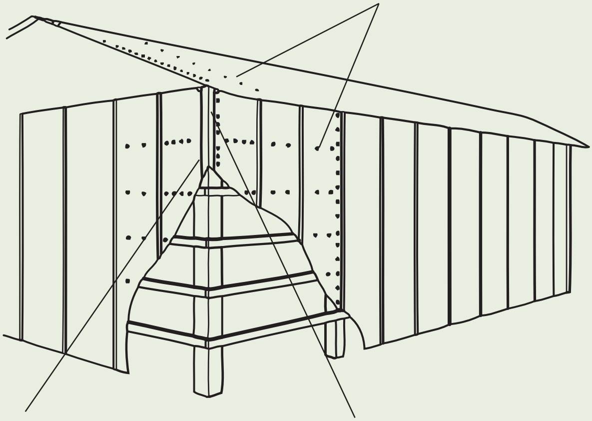


FIGURE D–12. Cutaway Drawing

Schematic diagrams (or schematics) are drawings that portray the operation of electrical and mechanical systems, using lines and symbols rather than physical likenesses. Schematics are useful in instructions or descriptions—for example, when you need to emphasize the relationships among parts without giving their precise proportions.

The schematic diagram in Figure D–13 depicts the process of trapping particulates from coal-fired power plants. Note that the particulate filter is depicted both symbolically and as an enlarged drawing to show relevant structural details. Schematic symbols generally represent equipment, gauges, and electrical or electronic components.

If you need only general-interest images to illustrate **newsletters** and **brochures** or to create **presentation** slides, consider using free noncopyrighted clip-art drawings from online specialty sources, as shown in Figure D–14. You may also consider purchasing images from online stock-image companies.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Do not use drawings from the Web or other copyrighted sources without proper documentation; if you intend to publish your work, seek permission from the copyright holder. See also **copyrights, patents, and trademarks**, **documenting sources**, and **plagiarism**. ❖

D

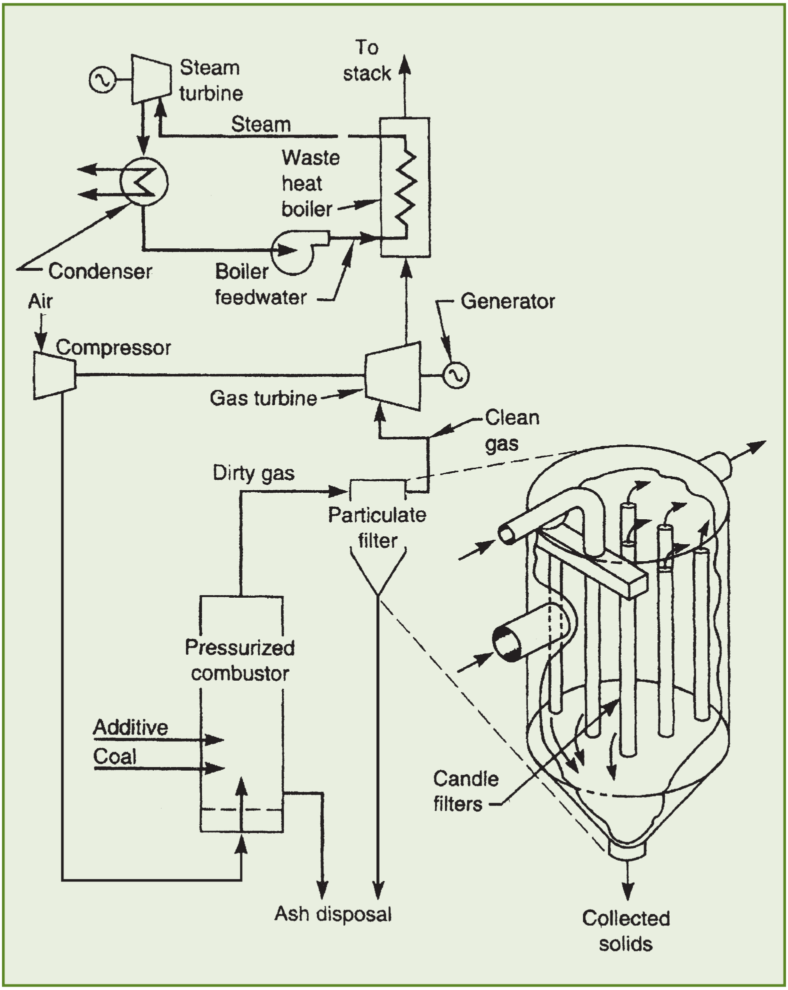


FIGURE D–13. Schematic Diagram of Particulate-Removal Process

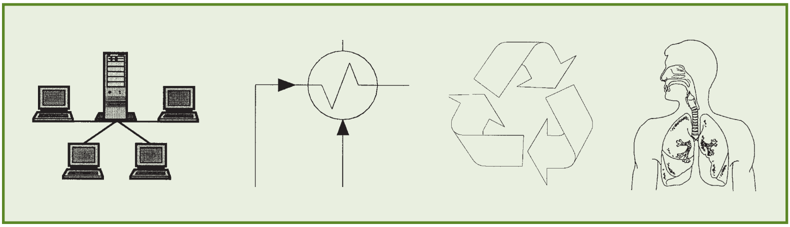


FIGURE D–14. Specialty Clip-Art Images

Consider your medium, as well as your **purpose** and audience, when choosing the type of drawing to include. For example, publishing to an online digital format—such as a Web page—could allow you to include a line drawing that can be enlarged, automatically breaking into labeled cutaway parts. See also **infographics** and **selecting the medium**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Using Drawings**

- ✔ Seek the help of graphics specialists for drawings that require a high degree of accuracy and precision.
- ✔ Show equipment and other objects from the point of view of the person who will use them.
- ✔ When illustrating a subsystem, show its relationship to the larger system of which it is a part.
- ✔ Draw the parts of an object in proportion to one another and identify any parts that are enlarged or reduced.
- ✔ When a sequence of drawings is used to illustrate a process, arrange them from left to right or from top to bottom on the page.
- ✔ Label parts in the drawing so that the text references to them are clear and consistent.
- ✔ Depending on the complexity of what is shown, label the parts themselves, as in Figure D–11, or use a key, as in Figure G–11 on page 243.

due to / because of

Due to (meaning "caused by") is acceptable following a linking **verb**.

- ▸ His absence was *due to* a work-related injury.

Due to is not acceptable, however, when it is used with a nonlinking verb to replace *because of*.

- ▸ He left work *because of* ~~due to~~ illness.

E

each

When *each* is used as a subject, it takes a singular **verb** or **pronoun**. ("*Each* of the reports *is* to be submitted ten weeks after *it* is assigned.") When *each* refers to a plural subject, it takes a plural verb or pronoun. ("The reports *each have* company logos on *their* title pages.") See also **agreement** and **conciseness**.

economic / economical

Economic refers to the production, development, and management of material wealth. ("Technology infrastructure has an *economic* impact on communities.") *Economical* simply means "not wasteful or extravagant." ("Employees should be as *economical* as possible in their equipment purchases.")

editing (*see* revision *and* proofreading)

e.g. / i.e.

The abbreviation *e.g.* stands for the Latin *exempli gratia*, meaning "for example"; *i.e.* stands for the Latin *id est*, meaning "that is." Because the English expressions (*for example* and *that is*) are clear to all **readers**, avoid the Latin *e.g.* and *i.e.* **abbreviations** except to save space in notes and **visuals**. If you must use *i.e.* or *e.g.*, do not italicize either and punctuate them as follows. If *i.e.* or *e.g.* connects two independent clauses, a **semicolon** should precede the abbreviation and a **comma** should follow it.

- ▶ The conference reflected international viewpoints; e.g., speakers included Germans, Italians, Japanese, Chinese, and Americans.

If *i.e.* or *e.g.* connects a **noun** and an **appositive**, a comma should precede it and follow it.

- The conference included speakers from five countries, i.e., Germany, Italy, Japan, China, and the United States.

ellipses

An ellipsis is the omission of words from quoted material; it is indicated by three spaced **periods** called *ellipsis points* (. . .). When you use ellipsis points, omit original punctuation marks, unless they are necessary for **clarity** or the omitted material comes at the end of a quoted sentence.

ORIGINAL TEXT "Promotional material sometimes carries a fee, particularly in high-volume distribution to schools, although prices for these publications are much lower than the development costs when all factors are considered."

WITH OMISSION AND ELLIPSIS POINTS "Promotional material sometimes carries a fee . . . although prices for these publications are much lower than the development costs. . . ."

Notice in the preceding example that the final period is retained and what remains of the quotation is grammatically complete. When the omitted part of the quotation is preceded by a period, retain the period and add the three ellipsis points after it, as in the following example.

ORIGINAL TEXT "Of the 172 major ethics cases reported, 57 percent were found to involve unsubstantiated concerns. Misinformation was the cause of unfounded concerns of misconduct in 72 cases. Forty-four cases, or 26 percent of the total cases reported, involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct."

WITH OMISSION AND ELLIPSIS POINTS "Of the 172 major ethics cases reported, 57 percent were found to involve unsubstantiated concerns. . . . Forty-four cases, or 26 percent of the total cases reported, involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct."

Do not use ellipsis points when the beginning of a quoted sentence is omitted. Notice in the following example that the comma is dropped to prevent a grammatical error. See also **quotations**.

- The ethics report states that "26 percent of the total cases reported involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct."

e-mail

DIRECTORY

Review and Confidentiality 164
Writer's Checklist: Maintaining Professionalism 164
Writing and Design 165
Writer's Checklist: Managing Your E-mail and Reducing Overload 167

E

E-mail (or *email*) functions in the workplace as a primary medium to exchange information and share electronic files with colleagues, clients, and customers. E-mail messages range from short, informal notes to longer, more formal communications with clients and professionals. You may also attach **memos**, **letters**, and other files to e-mails. For general writing strategy and appropriate professional style, see **correspondence**. See also **selecting the medium**.

Review and Confidentiality

Avoid the temptation to send the first draft of a message without rereading it for clarity and appropriateness. As with all correspondence, your message should include all crucial details and be free of grammatical and factual errors, ambiguities, and unintended implications. See **proofreading** and **spelling**.

Keep in mind that e-mails are easily forwarded and are never truly deleted. Most companies back up and save all their e-mail messages and are legally entitled to monitor e-mail use. Companies can be compelled, depending on circumstances, to provide e-mail and digital messaging logs in response to legal requests. Consider the content of all your messages in light of these possibilities, and carefully review your message before you click "Send."

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Be especially careful when sending messages to superiors in your organization or to people outside the organization. Spending extra time reviewing your e-mail can save you the embarrassment caused by a carelessly written message. One helpful strategy is to write the draft and revise your e-mail before filling in the "To" line with the address of your recipient.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Maintaining Professionalism

- ✔ Review your organization's policy regarding the appropriate use of e-mail.
- ✔ Do not forward jokes or *spam*, discuss office gossip, or use **biased language**.

(continued)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Maintaining Professionalism** *(continued)*

- ✔ Do not send *flames* (e-mails that contain abusive, obscene, or derogatory language) to attack someone. See also **blogs and forums**.
- ✔ Avoid abbreviations (BTW for *by the way*, for example) and emoticons used in personal e-mail, discussion forums, **text messaging**, and **instant messaging**.
- ✔ Do not write in all lowercase letters or in ALL UPPERCASE LETTERS.
- ✔ Base your e-mail username on your personal name (msmith@domain .com), if possible, and avoid clever or hobby-related names (sushilover @domain.com).
- ✔ Write a cover message when including attachments ("Attached is a copy of . . ."), and double check that it is indeed attached. See **cover letters**.
- ✔ Always sign the e-mail or use a signature block (see Figure E-1 on page 167) or both; doing so is not only polite but also avoids possible confusion.
- ✔ Send a "courtesy response" informing the sender when you need additional time to reply or when you need to confirm that you have received a message or an attachment.

DIGITAL TIP

Sharing Electronic Files

When you need to send large attachments or a collection of several attachments, consider an alternative: Use one of the many free online services designed for archiving and sharing files. After uploading a file to a specialized Web site, you will be given a URL that you can share via e-mail, allowing your recipients to download the file at their convenience. Although these tools shouldn't be used for sensitive documents, they work well in most situations. To see a list of tools to help you share large files, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Sharing Electronic Files."

Writing and Design

Make the main point early and use short paragraphs to avoid dense blocks of text. For longer and more detailed messages, provide a brief paragraph overview at the beginning. Adapt forwarded messages by revising the subject line to reflect the current content and cut irrelevant previous text or highlight key text, based on your **purpose** and **context**.

Provide a specific subject line, as described on pages 113–14, after composing the message so that your topic is precise and clear to the reader. An empty subject line is unprofessional and may be interpreted as spam, thus routed to junk mail.

Most e-mail programs allow you to provide **emphasis** with typographical features, such as various fonts and bullets. For systems that do not, consider using a "plain text" setting with alternative highlighting devices, such as asterisks for emphasis, or attaching a highly formatted document to an e-mail. Place your response to someone else's message at the beginning (or top) of the e-mail window so that recipients can see your response immediately.

Adapt your salutation and complimentary closing to your **audience** and the context.

- When e-mail functions as a traditional business letter, consider the standard salutation (*Dear Ms. Tucker:* or *Dear Docuform Customer:*) and closing (*Sincerely,* or *Best wishes,*).
- When you send e-mail to individuals or small groups inside an organization, you may wish to adopt a more personal greeting (*Dear Andy,* or *Dear Project Colleagues,*) and closing (*Regards*, or *Good luck*).
- When e-mail functions as a personal note to a friend or close colleague, you can use an informal greeting or only a first name (*Hi Mike,* or *Hello Jenny,* or *Bill,*) and a closing (*Take care,* or *Best,*).

Be aware that in some cultures, professionals do not refer to recipients or colleagues by their first names. See **international correspondence**.

Many companies and professionals include signature blocks (also called *signatures*) at the bottom of their messages. Signatures, which are set to appear at the end of every e-mail, supply information traditionally provided on company letterhead. Many organizations provide graphic signature forms or formatting standards. If yours does not, consider the following guidelines for formatting text-based signatures:

- Keep line length to 60 characters or fewer to avoid unpredictable line wraps.
- Test your signature block in plain-text e-mail systems to verify your format.
- Avoid using quotations, aphorisms, proverbs, or other sayings from popular culture, religion, or poetry in professional signatures.

The pattern shown in Figure E–1 is typical.

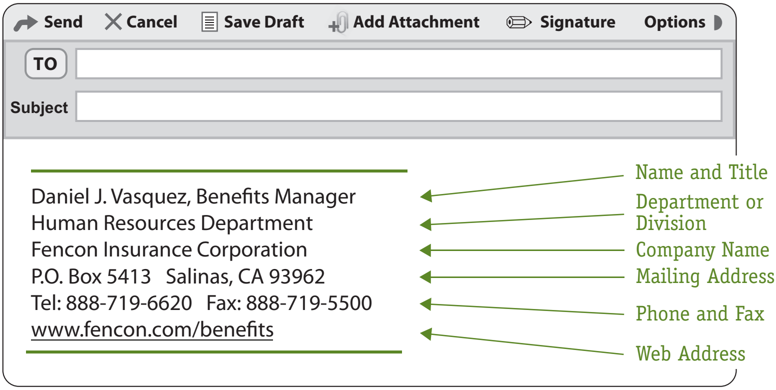


FIGURE E–1. E-mail Signature Block

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Managing Your E-mail and Reducing Overload*

- ✔ Avoid becoming involved in an e-mail exchange if a phone call or meeting would be more efficient.
- ✔ Consider whether an e-mail message could prompt an unnecessary response from the recipient, and make clear to the recipient whether you expect a response.
- ✔ Send a copy ("cc:") of an e-mail only when the person copied needs or wants the information.
- ✔ Review all messages on a subject before responding to avoid dealing with issues that are no longer relevant.
- ✔ Set priorities for reading e-mail by skimming sender names and subject lines as well as where you appear in a "cc:" address line.
- ✔ Check the e-mail address before sending an e-mail to make sure it is correct.
- ✔ Create e-mail folders using key topics and personal names to file messages.
- ✔ Check your in-box regularly and try to clear it or label and file all messages by the end of each day.
- ✔ Use the search command to find particular subjects and personal names.

*For understanding the causes of e-mail overload, see Gail Fann Thomas and Cynthia L. King, "Reconceptualizing E-mail Overload," *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 20, no. 3 (July 2006): 252–87.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** The blind-copy (*bcc:*) function allows writers to send copies of a message to someone without the primary receiver's knowledge. Use the bcc: notation with great care. Sending sensitive or confidential information to a third party as a blind copy without the original recipient's knowledge is unethical when used to play office politics. The blind-copy function is both ethical and useful, however, when used to protect the privacy of the e-mail addresses of a large group of recipients. ❖

emphasis

Emphasis in writing means highlighting the facts and ideas you consider important and subordinating those of secondary importance. You can achieve emphasis through one or more of the following techniques: position, climactic order, sentence length, sentence type, active **voice**, **repetition**, **intensifiers**, direct statements, long **dashes**, and typographical devices.

Achieving Emphasis

Position. Place the idea in a conspicuous position. The first and last words of a sentence, **paragraph**, or document stand out in readers' minds.

▸ Moon craters are important to understanding the earth's history because they reflect geological history.

The term *moon craters* is emphasized because it appears at the beginning of the sentence and *geological history* because it appears at the end of the sentence. See also **subordination**.

Climactic Order. List the ideas or facts within a sentence in sequence from least to most important, as in the following example. See also **lists**.

▸ Discontinuation of the HGX212 line of circuit boards would cause some technicians to be relocated to other cities, some to be reclassified to a lower grade, and some to lose their jobs.

Sentence Length. Vary sentence length strategically. A short sentence that follows a long sentence or a series of long sentences stands out in the reader's mind, as in the short sentence ("We must cut costs.") that ends the following paragraph. See **sentence construction**.

▸ We have already reviewed the problem our manufacturing division has experienced during the past year. We could continue to examine the causes of our problems and point an accusing finger at all the culprits beyond our control, but in the end it all leads to one simple conclusion. We must cut costs.

Sentence Type. Vary sentences by the strategic use of a compound sentence, a complex sentence, or a simple sentence. See **sentence variety**.

▸ The report submitted by the committee was carefully illustrated, and it covered five pages of single-spaced copy.
[This compound sentence carries no special emphasis; it contains two coordinate independent clauses.]

▸ The committee's report, which was carefully illustrated, covered five pages of single-spaced copy.
[This complex sentence emphasizes the size of the report.]

▸ The carefully illustrated report submitted by the committee covered five pages of single-spaced copy.
[This simple sentence emphasizes that the report was carefully illustrated.]

Active Voice. Use the active voice to emphasize the performer of an action: Make the performer the subject of the **verb**.

▸ Our department designed the new system.
[This sentence emphasizes *our department*, which is the performer and the subject of the verb, *designed*.]

Repetition. Repeat key terms, as in the use of the word *remains* and the phrase *come and go* in the following sentence.

▸ Similarly, atoms *come and go* in a molecule, but the molecule *remains*; molecules *come and go* in a cell, but the cell *remains*; cells *come and go* in a body, but the body *remains*; persons *come and go* in an organization, but the organization *remains*.
—Kenneth Boulding, *Beyond Economics*

Intensifiers. Although you can use intensifiers (*most*, *much*, *very*) for emphasis, this technique is so easily abused that it should be used with caution.

▸ The final proposal is *much* more persuasive than the first one.
[The intensifier *much* emphasizes the contrast.]

Direct Statements. Use direct statements, such as "most important," "foremost," or someone's name in a **direct address**.

- Most important, keep in mind that everything you do affects the company's bottom line.
- John, I believe we should rethink our plans.

Long Dashes. Use a dash to call attention to a particular word or statement.

- The job will be done—after we are under contract.

Typographical Devices. Use *italics*, **bold type**, underlining, color, and CAPITAL LETTERS—but use them sparingly because overuse can create visual clutter and cause readers to ignore truly important information. See also **capitalization**, **italics**, and **layout and design**.

English as a second language

DIRECTORY

Count and Mass Nouns 170
Articles and Modifiers 171
Gerunds and Infinitives 172
Adjective Clauses 172
Present Perfect Verb Tense 173
Present Progressive Verb Tense 173
ESL Entries 173

Learning to write well in a second language takes a great deal of effort and practice. The most effective way to improve your command of written English is to read widely beyond the reports and professional articles your job requires, such as magazines, newspapers, articles, novels, biographies, and any other writing that interests you. In addition, listen carefully to native speakers on television, on radio, on podcasts, and in person. Do not hesitate to consult a native speaker of English, especially for important writing tasks, such as **e-mails**, **memos**, and **reports**. Focus on those particular areas of English that give you trouble. This entry covers several areas often confusing to nonnative speakers and writers of English. See also **global communication**.

Count and Mass Nouns

Count nouns refer to things that can be counted (*tables*, *pencils*, *projects*, *employees*). *Mass nouns* (also called *noncount nouns*) identify things that cannot be counted (*electricity*, *air*, *loyalty*, *information*). This distinction can be confusing with words like *electricity* and *water*. Although we can count kilowatt-hours of electricity and bottles of water, counting becomes inappropriate when we use the words *electricity* and *water* in a general sense, as in "*Water* is an essential resource." Following is a list of typical mass **nouns**.

advice	education	money	technology
biology	equipment	news	transportation
business	furniture	oil	waste
clothing	health	precision	weather
coffee	honesty	research	work

The distinction between something that can and something that cannot be counted determines the form of the noun to use (singular or plural), the kind of **article** that precedes it (*a*, *an*, *the*, or no article), and the kind of limiting **adjective** it requires (such as *fewer* or *less* and *much* or *many*). (See also **fewer / less**.) Notice that count and mass nouns are always common nouns, not proper nouns, such as the names of people.

Articles and Modifiers

Every singular count noun must be preceded by an article (*a*, *an*, *the*), a demonstrative adjective (*this*, *that*, *these*, *those*), a possessive adjective (*my*, *your*, *her*, *his*, *its*, *their*), or some expression of quantity (such as *one*, *two*, *several*, *many*, *a few*, *a lot of*, *some*, *no*). The article, adjective, or expression of quantity appears either directly in front of the noun or in front of the whole noun phrase.

- ▸ Beth read *a* report last week. [article]
- ▸ *Those* reports Beth read were long. [demonstrative adjective]
- ▸ *Their* report was long. [possessive adjective]
- ▸ *Some* reports Beth read were long. [indefinite adjective]

The articles *a* and *an* are used with count nouns that refer to one item of the whole class of like items.

- ▸ Matthew has *a* pen.
  [Matthew could have any pen.]

The article *the* is used with nouns that refer to a specific item that both the reader and the writer can identify.

- ▸ Matthew has *the* pen.
  [Matthew has a specific pen that is known to both the reader and the writer.]

When making generalizations with count nouns, writers can either use *a* or *an* with a singular count noun or use no article with a plural count noun. Consider the following generalization using an article.

- *An* egg is a good source of protein. [any egg, all eggs, eggs in general]

However, the following generalization uses a plural count noun with no article.

- *Eggs* are good sources of protein. [any egg, all eggs, eggs in general]

When you are making a generalization with a mass noun, do not use an article in front of the mass noun.

- *Sugar* is bad for your teeth.

Gerunds and Infinitives

Nonnative writers of English are often puzzled whether to use a gerund or an infinitive as a direct object of a **verb** (see **verbals**) because no structural rule exists for distinguishing which form to use. Any specific verb may take an infinitive as its object, others may take a gerund, and yet others take either an infinitive or a gerund. At times, even the base form of the verb is used.

- He enjoys *working*. [gerund as a complement]
- She promised *to fulfill* her part of the contract. [infinitive as a complement]
- The president had the manager *assign* her staff to another project. [basic verb form as a complement]

To make such distinctions accurately, rely on what you hear native speakers use or what you read. You might also consult a reference book for ESL students.

Adjective Clauses

Because of the variety of ways adjective clauses are constructed in different languages, they can be particularly troublesome. The following guidelines will help you form adjective clauses correctly.

Place an adjective clause directly after the noun it modifies.

who is standing acroos the room .

- The tall woman ^ is a vice president of the company ^ ~~who is standing across the room.~~

The adjective clause *who is standing across the room* modifies *woman*, not *company*, and thus comes directly after *woman*.

Avoid using a relative pronoun with another pronoun in an adjective clause.

▸ The man who ~~he~~ sits at that desk is my boss.

Present Perfect Verb Tense

In general, use the present perfect **tense** to refer to events completed in the past that have some implication for the present.

PRESENT PERFECT	She *has performed* the experiment three times. [She might perform it again.]

When a specific time is mentioned, however, use the simple past.

SIMPLE PAST	I *wrote* the letter yesterday morning. [The action, *wrote*, does not affect the present.]

Use the present perfect with a *since* or *for* phrase to describe actions that began in the past and continue in the present.

▸ This company *has been* in business *for* fifteen years.

▸ This company *has been* in business *since* 2000.

Present Progressive Verb Tense

The present progressive tense is especially difficult for those whose native language does not use this tense. The present progressive tense is used to describe some action or condition that is ongoing (or in progress) in the present and may continue into the future.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	I *am searching* for an error in the document. [The search is occurring now and may continue.]

In contrast, the simple present tense more often relates to routine actions.

SIMPLE PRESENT	I *search* for errors in my documents. [I regularly search for errors, but I am not necessarily searching now.]

See ESL Tip for Using the Progressive Form in the entry **tense** (page 543).

ESL Entries

Most entries in this handbook may interest writers of English as a second language; however, the entries listed in the Contents by Topic under ESL Tips address issues that often cause problems (inside front cover).

English, varieties of

E

Written English includes two broad categories: standard and nonstandard. Standard English is used in business, industry, government, education, and all professions. It has rigorous and precise criteria for capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage. Nonstandard English does not conform to such criteria; it is often regional in origin, or it reflects the special usages of a particular ethnic or social group. As a result, although nonstandard English may be vigorous and colorful, its usefulness as a means of communication is limited to certain contexts and to people already familiar and comfortable with it in those contexts. It rarely appears in printed material except for special effect. Nonstandard English is characterized by inexact or inconsistent **capitalization**, **punctuation**, **spelling**, diction, and **usage** choices.

Colloquial English

Colloquial English is spoken English or writing that uses words and expressions common to casual conversation. ("We need to get him up to speed.") Colloquial English is appropriate to some kinds of writing (personal letters, notes, some **e-mail**) but not to most workplace writing.

Dialectal English

Dialectal English is a social or regional variety of the language that is comprehensible to people of that social group or region but may be incomprehensible to outsiders. Dialect, which is usually nonstandard English, involves distinct **word choice**, grammatical forms, and pronunciations. For example, residents of southern Louisiana who descended from French colonists speak a dialect often referred to as Cajun.

Localisms

A localism is a regional wording or phrasing. For example, a large sandwich on a long split roll is known in various regions of the United States as a *sub*, *hero*, *hoagie*, *grinder*, *poor boy*, and *torpedo*. Localisms normally should be avoided in workplace writing, unless the writer is confident that all readers will be familiar with a term.

Slang

Slang is an informal vocabulary composed of **figures of speech** and colorful words used in humorous or extravagant ways. There is no objective test for slang, and many standard words are given slang applications. For instance, slang may be a familiar word used in a new way (*chill* meaning "relax") or it may be a new word (*selfie* meaning "an informal photograph taken of oneself").

Most slang is short-lived and has meaning only for a narrow **audience**. Sometimes, however, slang becomes standard because the word fills a legitimate need. *Skyscraper* and *date* (as in "go on a date"), for example, were once considered slang expressions. Nevertheless, although slang may be valid in informal and personal writing or fiction, it generally should be avoided in workplace writing. See also **jargon** and **technical writing style**.

environmental impact statements

Environmental impact statements (EISs) are documents that describe the anticipated environmental effects of large-scale construction projects, such as bridges, dams, roads, wind farms, power plants, and waste-disposal sites, before work begins. They report on both the types (such as ecological, economic, historic, and cultural) and magnitudes of the expected impacts. In addition to highlighting these probable effects, EISs are required to describe alternatives to the proposed project, such as whether to locate a structure or site elsewhere or to take no action. See also **proposals**.

Background and Scope

Environmental impact statements are required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which mandates that federal agencies evaluate the probable environmental effects of projects under their control. The NEPA established the Council on Environmental Quality, a board that set guidelines for EISs to assess the following:

- Direct and indirect environmental impact of the proposed project
- Interference with other activities (such as access or traffic)
- Energy and resource requirements
- Conservation and reparation potential
- Preservation of urban, historic, and cultural quality
- Ways to minimize damages

In addressing these topics, EISs are often multivolume documents that may cover such diverse topics as economics, geology, health physics, avian and wetland resources, protected species, noise and transportation impacts, air pollution, cultural and recreational resources, and many more, depending on the size and location of the proposed project.* Many U.S. cities and states also require EISs for planned projects under their jurisdiction that have probable environmental effects.

Audiences

Draft EISs must be available for public comment for a specified period (usually 60 days) before the final EIS is prepared and issued. During the comment period, many individuals and groups evaluate the draft and submit comments. These **audiences** include federal, state, and local officials; local populations near the proposed site of the project; legal experts; industry representatives; labor unions; Native American tribes (when affected); local and national environmental groups; and others. Each group will include economic, legal, engineering, and biology experts, as well as members of the general public. The final EIS responds to comments made on the draft.

Writing Guidelines

Environmental impact statements are aimed at multiple readers because of the scope of material they address. They are organized into sections by the areas evaluated (such as air, water, soil, socioeconomics, and transportation), with each broad area further subdivided. Socioeconomics, for example, encompasses demography, the local economic base, local government finances, land use, community services, recreation, and more. Experts and other interested readers will focus on the areas of concern to them. To reach general readers, however, EISs also include an **executive summary** that provides an overview of the scope of the project, areas evaluated, areas of controversy, and issues to be resolved.

Given the diverse fields and backgrounds of EIS readers, writing the document in **plain language** is essential and is required by federal regulations. If you write a portion of an EIS as a subject expert, you cannot avoid the specialized terms and concepts used in your field. However, strive to communicate in language that is clear and accurate. When you finish your draft, ask yourself if a friend or relative unfamiliar with your material could read and understand it. If you don't think so, revise it with that reader in mind. When you use essential technical terminology, either define it in the text or include it in a **glossary** of technical terms. And use consistent terminology, **abbreviations**, and units of measurement. If you use both metric and English units of measurement, ensure that they appear together consistently throughout: *5 kilometers (3 miles)*.

*For example, an Army Corps of Engineers Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a proposed wind farm off the coast of Massachusetts ran to 4,000 pages in four volumes. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Press Release No. MA-2004-105, Nov. 8, 2004.)

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Members of the public have a vital interest in proposed activities that may affect their health and safety. They also have the right through the EIS process to comment on these activities before they are under way. The public cannot participate in this process, however, unless they can understand the EISs designed to inform them of potential effects. To promote public understanding, the federal government and many states have created plain-language laws, requiring that EISs and other documents be written in clear, understandable language. Keep these aims in mind as you draft material for EISs. ❖

Collaborative Guidelines

Given the size, scope, and areas of expertise necessary to develop EISs, collaboration among technical and legal specialists is essential. To bring order to a project of such magnitude, someone on the writing team must review all drafts to ensure that the correct version is being circulated to the team for comment and to impose overall editorial uniformity and consistency. Otherwise, the wrong draft of one or more sections may be inadvertently released to the public, or data in one section may not be expressed consistently with data in another section. See **collaborative writing**.

Resources and Examples

All EISs issued by federal agencies since 2004 are listed at www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/eisdata.html. For a listing of EISs issued by federal agencies since 1969, go to www.library.northwestern.edu/transportation/searcheis.html. The EISs for counties and municipalities are often available at their Web sites under "environmental affairs" or "environmental protection."

equal / unique / perfect

Logically, *equal* (meaning "having the same quantity or value as another"), *unique* (meaning "one of a kind"), and *perfect* (meaning "a state of highest excellence") are words with absolute meanings and therefore should not be compared. However, colloquial usage of *more* and *most* as **modifiers** of *equal*, *unique*, and *perfect* is so common that an absolute prohibition on such use is impossible.

- ▶ Our system is more unique [*or* more perfect] than theirs.

Some writers try to overcome the problem by using *more nearly* (*more nearly equal*, *more nearly unique*, *more nearly perfect*). When clarity and preciseness are critical, the use of comparative degrees with *equal*, *unique*, and *perfect* can be vague. It is best to avoid using comparative degrees with absolute terms. See also **comparison**.

VAGUE Ours is a *more equal* percentage split than theirs.

PRECISE Our percentage split is 51–49; theirs is 54–46.

etc.

Etc. is an abbreviation for the Latin *et cetera*, meaning "and others" or "and so on." Therefore, do not use the redundant phrase *and etc.* Likewise, do not use *etc.* at the end of a series introduced by the phrases *such as* and *for example*—those phrases already indicate unnamed items of the same category. Use *etc.* with a logical progression (1, 2, 3, etc.) and when at least two items are named. Do not italicize *etc.*

► The sorting machine processes coins (~~for example~~ pennies, nickels, ~~and~~ etc.), and then packages them for redistribution.

Otherwise, avoid *etc.* because the reader may not be able to infer what other items a list might include.

VAGUE He will bring notepads, paper clips, etc., to the trade show.

CLEAR He will bring notepads, paper clips, and other office supplies to the trade show.

ethics in writing

Ethics refers to the choices we make that affect others for good or ill. Ethical issues are inherent in writing and speaking because what we write and say can influence others. Further, how we express ideas affects our audience's perceptions of us and our organization's ethical stance. See also **audience**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** No book can describe how to act ethically in every situation, but this entry describes some typical ethical lapses to watch for during **revision**.* In other entries throughout this book, ethical issues are highlighted using the symbols surrounding this paragraph. ❖

*Adapted from Brenda R. Sims, "Linking Ethics and Language in the Technical Communication Classroom," *Technical Communication Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 285–99.

Avoid language that attempts to evade responsibility. Some writers use the passive **voice** because they hope to avoid responsibility or to obscure an issue: "It has been decided" (*Who* has decided?) or "Several mistakes were made" (*Who* made them?).

Avoid deceptive language. Do not use words with more than one meaning to circumvent the truth. Consider the company document that stated, "A nominal charge will be assessed for using our facilities." When clients objected that the charge was actually very high, the writer pointed out that the word *nominal* means "the named amount" as well as "very small." In that situation, clients had a strong case in charging that the company was attempting to be deceptive. The use of various **abstract words**, technical and legal **jargon**, and **euphemisms** is unethical when those words and phrases are used to mislead readers or to hide a serious or dangerous situation, even though technical or legal experts could interpret those words and terms as accurate. See also **word choice**.

Do not deemphasize or suppress important information. Not including information that a reader would want to have, such as potential safety hazards or hidden costs for which a customer might be responsible, is unethical and possibly illegal. Likewise, do not hide information in dense paragraphs of **gobbledygook** with small type and little white space, as is common in credit-card contracts. Use **layout and design** features such as legible type sizes, bulleted or numbered **lists**, and footnotes to highlight information that is important to readers.

Do not mislead with partial or self-serving information. For example, avoid the temptation to highlight a feature or service that readers would find attractive but that is available only with some product models or at extra cost. (See also **logic errors** and **positive writing**.) Readers could justifiably object that you have given them a false impression to sell them a product or service, especially if you also deemphasize the extra cost or other special conditions.

In general, treat others—individuals, companies, groups—with fairness and with respect. Avoid language that is biased, racist, or sexist or that perpetuates stereotypes. See also **biased language**.

In technical writing, guard against reporting false, fabricated, or plagiarized research and test results. As an author, a technical reviewer, or an editor, you have an ethical obligation to correct or point out any misrepresentations of fact before publication, whether the publication is a **trade journal article**, **test report**, or product handbook. (See also **laboratory reports**.) The stakes of such ethical oversights are high because of the potential risk to the health and safety of others. Those at risk can include unwary consumers and workers injured because of faulty products or unprotected exposure to toxic materials.

Finally, be aware that both **plagiarism** and violations of **copyright** not only are unethical but also can have serious professional and legal consequences for you in the classroom and on the job.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Writing Ethically

Ask yourself the following questions:

- ✔ *Am I willing to take responsibility, publicly and privately, for what I have written?* Make sure you can stand behind what you have written.
- ✔ *Is the document or message honest and truthful?* Scrutinize findings and conclusions carefully. Make sure that the data support them.
- ✔ *Am I acting in my employer's, my client's, the public's, or my own best long-term interest?* Have an impartial and appropriate outsider review and comment on what you have written.
- ✔ *Does the document or message violate anyone's rights?* If information is confidential and you have serious concerns, consider a review by the company's legal staff or an attorney.
- ✔ *Am I ethically consistent in my writing?* Consistently apply the principles outlined here and those you have assimilated throughout your life.
- ✔ *How will your reader interpret your message?* If you were the intended reader, consider whether the message would be acceptable and respectful.

If the answers to these questions do not come easily, consider asking a trusted colleague to review and comment on what you have written.

E

euphemisms

A euphemism is an inoffensive substitute for a word or phrase that could be distasteful, offensive, or too blunt: *passed away* for *died*; *previously owned* or *preowned* for *used*; *lay off* or *downsize* for *fire* or *terminate* employees. Used judiciously, euphemisms can help you avoid embarrassing or offending someone.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Euphemisms can also hide the facts of a situation (*incident* or *event* for *accident*) or be a form of **affectation** if used carelessly. Avoid them especially in **international correspondence** and other forms of **global communication** where their meanings could be not only confusing but also misleading. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

everybody / everyone

Both *everybody* and *everyone* are usually considered singular and take singular **verbs** and **pronouns**.

- *Everyone* here *leaves* at 4:30 p.m.
- *Everybody* at the meeting presented *his or her* individual assessment.

However, the meaning can be obviously plural.

- *Everyone* thought the plan should be rejected, and I really couldn't blame *them*.

Although normally written as one word, write it as two words if you wish to emphasize each individual in a group. ("*Every one* of the team members contributed to this discovery.") See also **agreement**.

everyday / every day

Everyday (one word) is an **adjective** that means "commonplace," "normal," or "ordinary." *Every day* (two words) means "each day."

- We now purchase *everyday* office supplies from MCL Products.
- I need to travel to the construction site *every day* this week.

If you have trouble with the distinction, try replacing *every day* with "each day."

exclamation marks

The exclamation mark (!) indicates strong feeling, urgency, elation, or surprise ("Hurry!" "Great!" "Wow!"). (See also **interjections**.) However, it cannot make an argument more convincing, lend force to a weak statement, or call attention to an intended irony.

An exclamation mark can be used after a whole sentence or an element of a sentence.

- This meeting—please note it well!—concerns our budget deficit.

When used with **quotation marks**, the exclamation mark goes outside, unless what is quoted is an exclamation.

- The paramedic shouted, "Don't touch the victim!" The bystander then, according to a witness, "jumped like a kangaroo"!

In **instructions** and **manuals**, the exclamation mark is often used in text and **visuals** for cautions and warnings ("Danger!" ). See also **emphasis**.

E

executive summaries

An executive summary consolidates the principal points of a **formal report** or other long document. Executive summaries differ from **abstracts** in that **readers** scan abstracts to decide whether to read the work in full. However, an executive summary may be the only section of a longer work read by many readers, so it must accurately and concisely represent the original document. It should restate the document's **purpose**, **scope**, methods, findings, **conclusions**, and recommendations, as well as summarize how results were obtained or the reasons for the recommendations. Executive summaries tend to be about 10 percent of the length and generally follow the same sequence of the documents they summarize.

Write the executive summary so that it can be read independently of the report or proposal it summarizes. Executive summaries may occasionally include a figure, table, or footnote—if that information is essential to the summary. However, do not refer by number to figures, tables, or references contained elsewhere in the document. See the sample executive summary in Figure F–5 (pages 206–7).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Writing Executive Summaries

- ✔ Write the executive summary after you have completed the original document.
- ✔ Avoid or define terminology that may not be familiar to your intended **audience**.
- ✔ Spell out all uncommon symbols and **abbreviations**.
- ✔ Make the summary concise, but do not omit transitional words and phrases (*however*, *moreover*, *therefore*, *for example*, *next*).
- ✔ Include only information discussed in the original document.
- ✔ Place the executive summary at the beginning of the body of the report, as described in **formal reports**.

expletives

An expletive is a word that fills the position of another word, phrase, or clause. *It* and *there* are common expletives.

► *It* is certain that this fuel pump will fail at high pressures.

In the example, the expletive *it* occupies the position of subject in place of the real subject, *that this fuel pump will fail at high pressures*. Expletives are sometimes necessary to avoid **awkwardness**, but they are commonly overused, and most sentences can be better stated without them.

▸ *Many* ~~There were many~~ files *were* lost when we converted to the new server.

In addition to its grammatical use, the word *expletive* means a profane exclamation or oath.

E

explicit / implicit

An *explicit* statement is one expressed directly, with precision and clarity.

▸ He gave us *explicit* directions to the Wausau facility.

An *implicit* meaning is one that is not directly expressed.

▸ Although the CEO did not mention the lawsuit directly, the company's commitment to ethical practices was *implicit* in her speech.

exposition

Exposition, or *expository writing*, refers to writing intended primarily to inform **readers** by presenting facts and ideas in direct and concise language; it usually relies less on colorful or figurative language than writing meant to be expressive or persuasive. It is aimed at readers' understanding rather than at their imagination or emotions. For this reason, exposition is widely used in **reports**, **memos**, and other types of technical and workplace writing. Expository writing aims to provide accurate, complete information and to analyze it for the readers. As with all workplace writing, include only enough information to meet your reader's needs and your **purpose**. See also **audience** and **technical writing style**.

F

F

fact

Expressions containing the word *fact* ("due to the *fact* that," "except for the *fact* that," "as a matter of *fact*," or "because of the *fact* that") are often wordy substitutes for more accurate terms.

Because

► ~~Due to the fact that~~ the technical staff has a high turnover rate, our training program has suffered.

Do not use the word *fact* to refer to matters of judgment or opinion.

In my opinion,

► ~~It is a fact that~~ our research has improved because we now have a capable technical staff.

The word *fact* is, of course, valid when facts are what is meant.

► Our study uncovered numerous facts to support your conclusion.

See also **conciseness** and **logic errors**.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

An FAQ is a **list** of questions, paired with their answers, that readers will likely ask about products, services, or other information presented on a Web site or in customer-oriented documents. By presenting commonly sought information in one place, FAQs save readers from searching through an entire Web site or document to find what they need.

A well-planned FAQ list can help create a positive impression with customers or clients because the writer acknowledges that the reader's time is valuable. An FAQ list also helps a company spend less time answering phone calls and responding to questions on **e-mail**. However, an FAQ list is not a substitute for solving problems with a product or service.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** If customers are experiencing numerous problems because of a product design or programming flaw, you need to work with your company's product developers to correct the problem rather than attempting to avoid the issue by burying it within an FAQ. ❖

Questions to Include

Develop the list of questions and their answers by brainstorming with colleagues who regularly are in contact with customers. If customers frequently ask about company stock information and request annual **reports**, for example, your FAQ list could include the question "How do I obtain a copy of your latest annual report?" This question can be followed with a brief answer that includes the Web address from which the annual report can be downloaded or the name, phone number, and e-mail address of the person who distributes the annual reports. See also **writing for the Web**.

Organization

Organize the list so that readers can find the information they need quickly and easily. List your questions in decreasing **order of importance** for your readers so that they can obtain the most important information first. If you have a number of questions that are related to a specific topic, such as investor relations, product returns, or completing forms, group them into categories and identify each category with a heading, such as "Investor Relations," "Shipping," and "Forms." You may also want to create a **table of contents** at the top of the FAQ page so that readers can quickly find the topics relevant to their interests.

Study other FAQ lists for products or services similar to yours. Analyze them for their approach and organization: Can you find answers quickly, or do you need to scroll through many pages to find them? Are the questions with their answers separated into logical categories or listed in random order? Is it easy to differentiate the question from the answer? Do the answers provide too little or too much information? Does the FAQ list offer specialized search tools to help readers find information for longer FAQs?*

Placement

The location of your FAQ list should enable readers to find answers quickly. On Web sites, an FAQ page is usually linked from the homepage. In small printed documents, such as **brochures**, FAQs are usually highlighted and placed after the body of the document.

*For examples of FAQs, search with QueryCAT at www.querycat.com, which offers the "largest database of frequently asked questions."

F

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Developing FAQs**

- ✔ *Focus on your reader.* Write your questions and answers from a **"you" viewpoint** and with a positive, conversational **tone**.
- ✔ *Separate long FAQ lists into groups.* Group related questions under topic **headings**. For long online FAQ lists, consider listing only questions and include links to separate pages, each containing an individual question and answer.
- ✔ *Distinguish questions from answers.* Use boldface for questions and use white space to separate questions from answers. Use sparingly multiple colors, **italics**, or other formatting styles that can make the list difficult to read.
- ✔ *Keep questions and answers concise.* If a question has a long answer, add a link to a separate Web page or refer to an appropriate page number in a printed document.
- ✔ *Keep the list updated.* Review and update FAQs at least monthly — or more frequently if your content changes often.
- ✔ *Give readers the opportunity to respond*. Provide an e-mail link for existing and possible customers to submit questions they would like to see added to the FAQ list.
- ✔ *Consider available tools for automating the process.* Many **content management** systems, for example, have built-in FAQ-writing software.

feasibility reports

When organizations consider a new project — developing a new product or service, expanding a customer base, purchasing equipment, or moving operations — they first try to determine the project's chances for success. A feasibility report presents evidence about the practicality of a proposed project based on specific criteria. It answers such questions as the following: Is new construction or development necessary? Is sufficient staff available? What are the costs? Is funding available? What are the legal or regulatory ramifications? Based on the findings of this analysis, the report offers logical conclusions and recommends whether the project should be carried out. When feasibility reports stress specific steps that should be taken as a result of a study of a problem or an issue, they are often referred to as *recommendation reports*. In the condensed feasibility report shown in Figure F–1, a consultant conducts a study to determine how to upgrade a company's computer system and Internet capability.

Before beginning to write a feasibility report, analyze the needs of the **audience** as well as the **context** and **purpose** of the study. Then write a purpose statement, such as "The purpose of this study is to determine the feasibility of expanding our Pacific Rim operations," to guide you or a collaborative team. See also **brainstorming** and **collaborative writing**.

Introduction
The purpose of this report is to determine which of two proposed options would best enable Darnell Business Forms Corporation to upgrade its file servers and its Internet capacity to meet its increasing data and communication needs. . . .

Background. In October 2014, the Information Development Group put the MACRON System into operation. Since then, the volume of processing transactions has increased fivefold (from 1,000 to 5,000 updates per day). This increase has severely impaired system response time; in fact, average response time has increased from 10 seconds to 120 seconds. Further, our new Web-based client-services system has increased exponentially the demand for processing speed and access capacity.

Scope. We have investigated two alternative solutions to provide increased processing capacity: (1) purchase of an additional Aurora processor to supplement the one in operation and (2) purchase of an Icardo 60 with expandable peripherals to replace the Aurora processor currently in operation. The two alternatives are evaluated here, according to both cost and expanded capacity for future operations.

Additional Aurora Processor
Purchasing a second Aurora processor would require increased annual maintenance costs, salary for a second computer specialist, increased energy costs, and a one-time construction cost for necessary remodeling and installing Internet connections.

Annual maintenance costs	$35,000
Annual costs for computer specialist	75,000
Annual increased energy costs	7,500
Total annual operating costs	$117,500
Construction cost (one-time)	50,000
Total first-year costs	$167,500

The installation and operation of another Aurora processor are expected to produce savings in system reliability and readiness.

FIGURE F–1. Feasibility Report (*continued*)

System Reliability. An additional Aurora would reduce current downtime periods from four to two per week. Downtime recovery averages 30 minutes and affects 40 users. Assuming that 50 percent of users require system access at a given time, we determined that the following reliability savings would result:

2 downtimes × 0.5 hours × 40 users × 50% × $50/hour overtime × 52 weeks = $52,000 annual savings.

[*The feasibility report would also discuss the second option—purchase of the Icardo 60 and its long-term savings.*]

Conclusion
A comparison of costs for both systems indicates that the Icardo 60 would cost $2,200 more in first-year costs.

	Aurora	Icardo 60
Net additional operating costs	$56,300	$84,000
One-time construction costs	50,000	24,500
First-year total	$106,300	$108,500

Installation of an additional Aurora processor would permit the present information-processing systems to operate relatively smoothly and efficiently. It would not, however, provide the expanded processing capacity that the Icardo 60 processor would for implementing new subsystems required to increase processing speed and Internet access.

Recommendation
The Icardo 60 processor should be purchased because of the long-term savings and because its additional capacity and flexibility will allow for greater expansion in the future.

3

FIGURE F–1. Feasibility Report (*continued*)

Report Sections

Every feasibility report should contain an **introduction**, a body, a **conclusion**, and a recommendation. See also **proposals** and **formal reports**.

Introduction. The introduction states the purpose of the report, describes the circumstances that led to the report, and includes any pertinent background information. It may also discuss the **scope** of the report, any procedures or methods used in the analysis of alternatives, and any limitations of the study.

Body. The body of the report presents a detailed review of the alternatives for achieving the goals of the project. Examine each option according to specific criteria, such as cost and financing, availability of staff, and other relevant requirements, identifying the subsections with **headings** to guide readers.

Conclusion. The conclusion interprets the available options and leads to one option as the best, or most feasible.

Recommendation. The recommendation section clearly presents the writer's (or team's) opinion on which alternative best meets the criteria as summarized in the conclusion.

F

female / male

The terms *female* and *male* are usually restricted to scientific, legal, and medical contexts (a *female* suspect, a *male* patient). Keep in mind that the terms sound cold and impersonal. *Girl*, *woman*, and *lady* or *boy*, *man*, and *gentleman* may be acceptable substitutes in other **contexts**, but be sensitive to their connotations involving age, dignity, and social position. See also **biased language** and **connotation / denotation**.

few / a few

In certain contexts, *few* carries more negative overtones than does the phrase *a few*.

NEGATIVE The report offers *few* helpful ideas.

POSITIVE The report offers *a few* helpful ideas.

fewer / less

Fewer refers to items that can be counted (count **nouns**). ("*Fewer* employees retired than we expected.") *Less* refers to mass quantities or amounts (mass nouns). ("We had *less* rain this year than forecasts predicted.") See also **English as a second language**.

figuratively / literally

Literally means "actually" and is often confused with *figuratively*, which means "metaphorically." To say that someone "*literally* turned green with envy" would mean that the person actually changed color.

- ▶ In the winner's circle the jockey was, *figuratively* speaking, ten feet tall.
- ▶ When he said, "Let's bury our competitors," he did not mean it *literally*.

Avoid the use of *literally* to reinforce the importance of something.

- ▶ She was ~~literally~~ the best of the applicants.

See also **intensifiers**.

figures of speech

A figure of speech is an imaginative expression that often compares two things that are basically not alike but have at least one thing in common. For example, if a device is cone-shaped and has an opening at the narrow end, you might say that it looks like a volcano.

Figures of speech can clarify the unfamiliar by relating a new concept to one with which readers are familiar. In that respect, they help establish understanding between the specialist and the nonspecialist. (See **audience**.) Figures of speech can help translate the abstract into the concrete; in the process of doing so, they can also make writing more colorful and graphic. (See also **abstract / concrete words**.) A figure of speech must make sense, however, to achieve the desired effect.

ILLOGICAL Without the fuel of tax incentives, our economic engine would operate less efficiently.
[An engine would not operate at all without fuel.]

Figures of speech also must be consistent to be effective.

- ▶ We must get our sales program *back on course*, and we are
  steer the effort.
  counting on you to ~~carry the ball.~~

A figure of speech should not overshadow the point the writer is trying to make. It is better to use no figure of speech at all than to use a trite one. A surprise that comes "like a bolt out of the blue" seems stale and not much of a surprise. See also **clichés** and **idioms**.

Types of Figures of Speech

Analogies are comparisons that show the ways in which two objects or concepts are similar and are often used to make one of them easier to understand. The following example explains a computer search technique by comparing it to the use of keywords in a dictionary.

- ▶ The search technique used in *indexed sequential processing* is similar to a search technique you might use to find the page on which a particular word is located in a dictionary. You might scan the keywords located at the top of each dictionary page that identify the first and last words on each page until you find the keywords that encompass the word you seek. Indexed sequential processing works the same way with computer files.

Hyperboles are gross exaggerations used to achieve an effect or **emphasis**.

- ▶ We were dead after working all night on the grant proposal.

Litotes are understatements, for emphasis or effect, achieved by denying the opposite of the point you are making.

- ▶ Over 1,600 pages is no small size for a book.

Metaphors are figures of speech that point out similarities between two things by treating them as though they were the same thing.

- ▶ The astronaut's *umbilical cord* carries life-sustaining oxygen for spacewalking.

Metonyms are figures of speech that use one aspect of a thing to represent it, such as *the blue* for the sky and *wheels* for a car.

- ▶ The economist predicted a decrease in *hard-hat* jobs.

Personification is a figure of speech that attributes human characteristics to nonhuman things or abstract ideas. We might refer, for example, to the *birth* of a planet or apply emotions to machines.

- ▶ She said that she was frustrated with the *stubborn* security system.

Similes are direct comparisons of two essentially unlike things, linking them with the word *like* or *as*.

- ▶ Reconstructing the plane's fuselage following the accident was *like piecing together a jigsaw puzzle*.

Avoid figures of speech in **global communication** and **international correspondence** because people in other cultures may translate figures of speech literally and be confused by their meanings.

fine

When used in expressions such as "I feel *fine*" or "a *fine* day," *fine* is colloquial and, like the word *nice*, is often too vague for technical writing. Use the word *fine* to mean "refined," "delicate," or "pure."

- ▸ A *fine* film of oil covered the surface of the water.
- ▸ *Fine* crystal is made in Austria.
- ▸ The Court made a *fine* distinction between the two statutes.

first / firstly

First and *firstly* are both adverbs. Avoid *firstly* in favor of *first*, which sounds less stiff than *firstly*. The same is true of other ordinal **numbers**, such as *second*, *third*, and so on.

flammable / inflammable / nonflammable

Both *flammable* and *inflammable* mean "capable of being set on fire." Because the *in-* **prefix** usually causes the base word to take its opposite meaning (*incapable*, *incompetent*), use *flammable* instead of *inflammable* to avoid possible misunderstanding. ("The cargo of gasoline is *flammable*.") *Nonflammable* is the opposite, meaning "not capable of being set on fire." ("The asbestos suit was *nonflammable*.")

flowcharts

A flowchart is a diagram using symbols, words, or pictures to show the stages of a process in sequence from beginning to end. A flowchart provides an overview of a process and allows the **reader** to identify its essential steps quickly and easily. Flowcharts can take several forms. The steps might be represented by labeled blocks, as shown in Figure F–2; pictorial symbols, as shown in Figure F–3; or ISO (International Organization for Standardization) symbols, as shown in Figure F–4. Useful tools for constructing flowcharts include Microsoft Powerpoint, Visio, SmartDraw, and LucidChart.

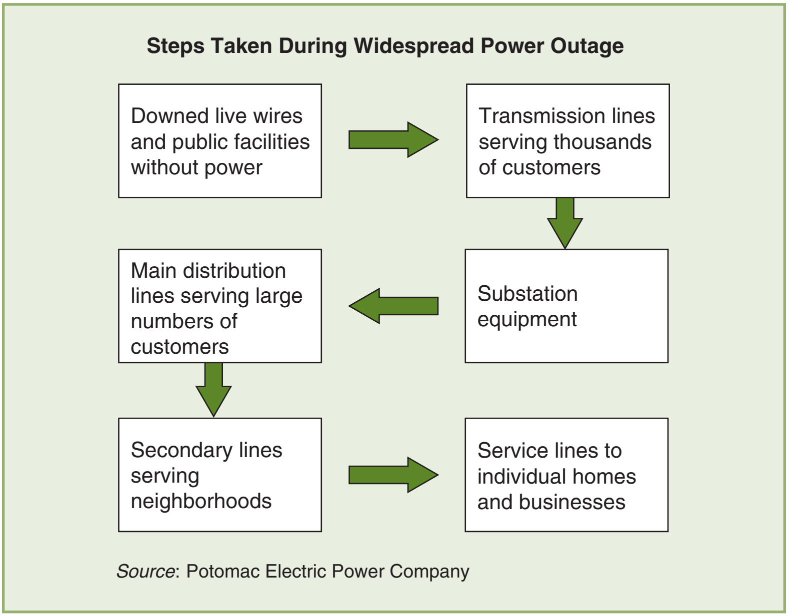


FIGURE F–2. Flowchart Using Labeled Blocks (Depicting Electric Utility Power Restoration Process)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Flowcharts**

- ✔ Label each step in the process or identify each step with labeled blocks, pictorial representations, or standardized symbols.
- ✔ Follow the standard flow directions: left to right and top to bottom. Indicate any nonstandard flow directions with arrows.
- ✔ Include a key (or call-outs) to define symbols your **audience** may not understand.
- ✔ Use standardized symbols for flowcharts that document computer programs and other information-processing procedures, as detailed in *Information Processing—Documentation Symbols and Conventions for Data, Program and System Flowcharts, Program Network Charts, and System Resources Charts*, ISO 5807-1985 (E). (Publication available at www.iso.org.)

For advice on integrating flowcharts into your text, see **visuals**. See also **global graphics** and **infographics**.

F

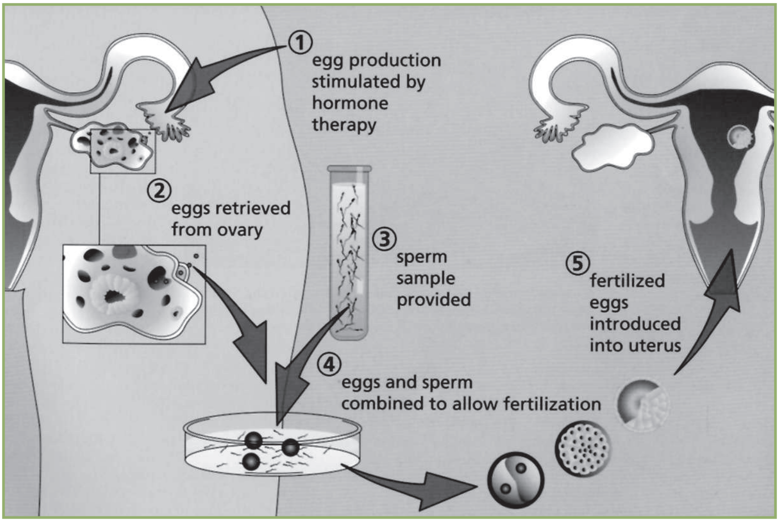


FIGURE F–3. Flowchart Using Pictorial Symbols
Source: FDA Consumer, Nov.–Dec. 2004. U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

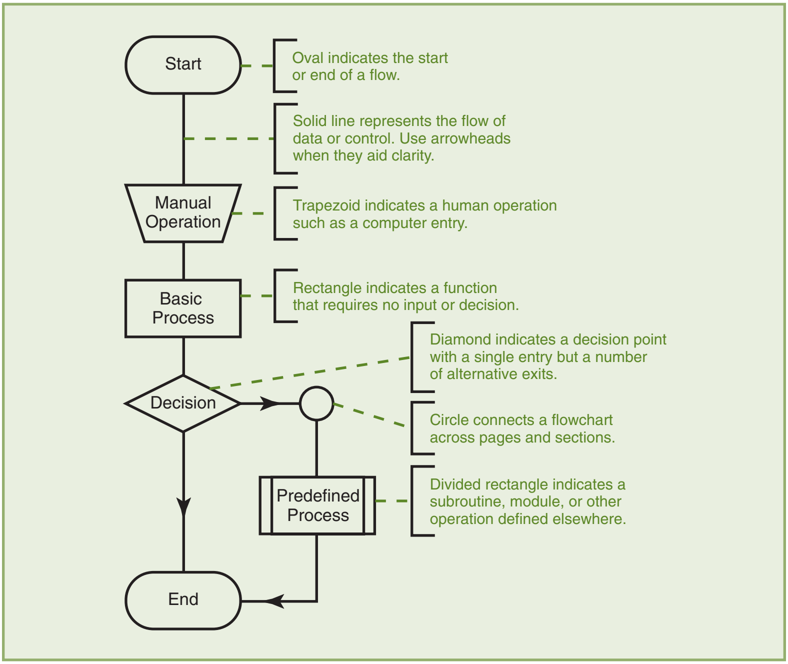


FIGURE F–4. Common ISO Flowchart Symbols (with Annotations)

footnotes (*see* documenting sources)

forceful / forcible

Although *forceful* and *forcible* are both **adjectives** meaning "characterized by or full of force," *forceful* is usually limited to persuasive ability and *forcible* to physical force.

- John made a *forceful* presentation at the committee meeting.
- Firefighters must often make *forcible* entries into buildings.

foreign words in English

The English language has a long history of borrowing words from other languages. Most borrowing occurred so long ago that we seldom recognize the borrowed terms (also called *loan words*) as being of foreign origin (*kindergarten* from German, *animal* from Latin, *church* from Greek).

Words not fully assimilated into the English language are set in **italics** and use appropriate diacritical marks (*sine qua non*, *in camera*, *piñata*, *coup de grâce*). Even when they have been fully assimilated, some retain their diacritical marks for clarity (*résumé* versus *resume*), while others are either optional (*café* or *cafe*) or dropped (*facade*, *apropos*). As foreign words are absorbed into English, their plural forms give way to English plurals (*agenda* becomes *agendas* and *formulae* becomes *formulas*). Most dictionaries offer guidance, although you should also be guided by the **context**.

Generally, foreign expressions should be used only if they serve a real need. (See also **e.g. / i.e.** and **etc.**) The overuse of foreign words in an attempt to impress your reader or achieve elegance is **affectation**. Effective communication can be accomplished only if your readers understand what you write. So choose foreign expressions only when they make an idea clearer or when there is no English substitute (*tsunami* for "an unusually large sea wave caused by an undersea quake or volcanic eruption").

foreword / forward

Although the pronunciation is the same, the spellings and meanings of these two words are quite different. The word *foreword* is a **noun** meaning "introductory statement at the beginning of a book or other work."

- The director wrote a *foreword* for the report.

The word *forward* is an **adjective** or **adverb** meaning "at or toward the front."

- Sliding the throttle to the *forward* position [adjective] will cause the boat to move *forward*. [adverb]

formal reports

Formal reports are usually written accounts of major projects that require substantial **research**, and they often involve more than one writer. See also **collaborative writing**.

Most formal reports are divided into three primary parts—front matter, body, and back matter—each of which contains a number of elements. The number and arrangement of the elements vary depending on the subject, the length of the report, and the kinds of material covered. Many organizations have a preferred style for formal reports and furnish guidelines for report writers. If you are not required to follow a specific style, use the **format** recommended in this entry. The following list includes most of the elements a formal report might contain, in the order they typically appear. (The items shown with page numbers appear in the sample formal report on pages 203–18.) Often, a **cover letter** or **memo** precedes the front matter and identifies the report by title, the person or persons to whom it is sent, the reason it was written, the **scope**, and any information that the **audience** considers important, as shown on page 202.

FRONT MATTER

Title Page (203)
Abstract (204)
Table of Contents (205)
List of Figures
List of Tables
Foreword
Preface
List of Abbreviations and Symbols

BODY

Executive Summary (206)
Introduction (208)
Text (including headings) (211)
Conclusions (216)

Recommendations (216)
Explanatory Notes
References (or Works Cited) (218)

BACK MATTER

Appendixes
Bibliography
Glossary
Index

F

DIGITAL TIP

Digitally Enhancing Formal Reports

Many organizations publish formal reports as PDF files or Web documents. Digital versions of formal reports can offer tables of contents that link directly to the individual sections within a report. You can add hyperlinks or mouseover elements that provide definitions of specialized terms or links to supplemental information. To view advice on incorporating digital enhancements, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Digitally Enhancing Formal Reports."

Front Matter

The front matter serves several functions: It explains the writer's **purpose**, describes the scope and type of information in the report, and lists where specific information is covered in the report. Not all formal reports include every element of front matter described here. A title page and table of contents are usually mandatory. But the scope of the report and its **context** as well as the intended audience determine whether the other elements are included.

Title Page. Although the formats of title pages may vary, they often include the following:

- *The full title of the report*. The title describes the topic, scope, and purpose of the report, as discussed in **titles**.
- *The name of the writer(s), principal investigator(s), or compiler(s)*. Sometimes contributors identify themselves by their job title or role on the project (*Olivia Jones, Principal Investigator*).

- *The date(s) of the report*. For one-time reports, use the date the report is distributed. For reports issued periodically (monthly, quarterly, or yearly), the subtitle shows the period that the report covers and the distribution date is shown elsewhere on the title page, as shown in Figure F–5 on page 203.
- *The name of the organization for which the writer(s) works*.
- *The name of the organization to which the report is being submitted*. Include this information if the report is written for a customer or client.

F

Front-matter pages are numbered with Roman numerals. The title page should not be numbered, as in the example on page 203, but it is considered page i for subsequent pagination. The back of the title page, which is left blank and unnumbered, is considered page ii, so the abstract falls on page iii. The body of the report begins with Arabic number 1, and a new chapter or large section typically begins on a new right-hand (odd-numbered) page. Reports with printing on only one side of each sheet can be numbered consecutively regardless of where new sections begin. Center page numbers at the bottom of each page throughout the report.

Abstract. An **abstract**, which normally follows the title page, highlights the major points of the report, as shown on page 204, enabling readers to decide whether to read the report.

Table of Contents. A **table of contents** lists all the major sections or **headings** of the report in their order of appearance, as shown on page 205, along with their page numbers.

List of Figures. All **visuals** contained in the report—**drawings**, **photographs**, **maps**, charts, and **graphs**—are labeled as figures. When a report contains more than five figures, list them, along with their page numbers, in a separate section, beginning on a new page immediately following the table of contents. Number figures consecutively with Arabic numbers.

List of Tables. When a report contains more than five **tables**, list them, along with their titles and page numbers, in a separate section immediately following the list of figures (if there is one). Number tables consecutively with Arabic numbers.

Foreword. A foreword is an optional introductory statement about a formal report or publication that is written by someone other than the author(s). The foreword author is usually an authority in the field or an executive of the organization sponsoring the report. That author's name and affiliation appear at the end of the foreword, along with the date it was written. The foreword generally provides background information about the publication's significance and places it in the context of other works in the field. The foreword precedes the preface when a work has both.

Preface. The preface, another type of optional introductory statement, is written by the author(s) of the formal report. It may announce the work's purpose, scope, and context (including any special circumstances leading to the work). A preface may also specify the audience for a work, those who helped in its preparation, and permissions obtained for the use of copyrighted works. See also **copyrights, patents, and trademarks**.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols. When the report uses numerous **abbreviations** and symbols that readers may not be able to interpret, the front matter may include a section that lists symbols and abbreviations with their meanings.

Body

The body is the section of the report that provides context for the report, describes in detail the methods and procedures used to generate the report, demonstrates how results were obtained, describes the results, draws conclusions, and, if appropriate, makes recommendations.

Executive Summary. The body of the report begins with the **executive summary**, which provides a more complete overview of the report than an abstract does. See an example on pages 206–7 and review the entry cross-referenced above.

Introduction. The **introduction** gives readers any general information—such as the report's purpose, scope, and context—necessary to understand the detailed information in the rest of the report (see pages 208–10).

Text. The text of the body presents, as appropriate, the details of how the topic was investigated, how a problem was solved, what alternatives were explored, and how the best choice among them was selected. This information is enhanced by the use of visuals, tables, headings, and references that both clarify the text and persuade the reader. See also **persuasion**.

Conclusions. The **conclusions** section pulls together the results of the research and interprets the findings of the report, as shown on pages 216–17.

Recommendations. Recommendations, which are sometimes combined with the conclusions, state what course of action should be taken based on the earlier arguments and conclusions of the study, as are shown on page 217.

Explanatory Notes. Occasionally, reports contain notes that amplify terms or points that might otherwise interrupt the text of the report. Such notes may be included as footnotes on the page where the term or point appears or they may appear in a "Notes" section at the end of the report.

References (or Works Cited). A list of references or works cited appears in a separate section if the report refers to or quotes directly from research sources. If your employer has a preferred reference style, follow it; otherwise, use one of the guidelines provided in the entry **documenting sources**. For a relatively short report, place a reference or works-cited section at the end of the body of the report, as shown on page 218. For a report with a number of sections or chapters, place a reference or works-cited section at the end of each major section or chapter. In either case, begin the reference or works-cited section on a new page. If a particular reference appears in more than one section or chapter, repeat it in full in each appropriate reference section.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Always identify the sources of any facts, ideas, **quotations**, and paraphrases you include in a report. Even if unintentional, **plagiarism** is unethical and may result in formal academic misconduct charges in a college course. On the job, it can result in legal action or even dismissal. Repurposed in-house material ("boilerplate") may not require a citation—see **copyrights, patents, and trademarks** and **repurposing**. ❖

Back Matter

The back matter of a formal report contains supplementary material, such as where to find additional information about the topic (bibliography), and expands on certain subjects (appendixes). Other back-matter elements define special terms (glossary) and provide information on how to easily locate information in the report (index). For very large formal reports, back-matter sections may be individually numbered or labeled (Appendix A, Appendix B).

Appendixes. An **appendix** clarifies or supplements the report with information that is too detailed or lengthy for the primary audience but is relevant to secondary audiences.

Bibliography. A **bibliography** lists alphabetically all the sources that were consulted to prepare the report—not just those cited in the report—and suggests additional resources that readers might want to consult.

Glossary. A **glossary** is an alphabetical list of specialized terms used in the report and their definitions.

Index. An index is an alphabetical list of all the major topics and subtopics discussed in the report. It cites the page numbers where discussion of each topic can be found and allows readers to find information on topics quickly and easily. The index is always the final section of a report. See also **indexing**.

DIGITAL TIP

Creating an Index

Most word-processing programs can save you time by creating an index automatically based on keywords that you mark while composing the report. To view step-by-step instructions for creating an index, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e***, and select *Digital Tip*, "Creating an Index."

Sample Formal Report

Figure F–5 shows the typical sections of a formal report. Keep in mind that the number and arrangement of the elements vary, depending on the context, especially the requirements of an organization or a client.

DIGITAL TIP

Creating Styles and Templates

You can use a word-processing program to create time-saving templates that automate the design of text elements such as headings, paragraphs, lists, and visuals throughout an individual report or multiple reports. To view step-by-step instructions on using a template, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e***, and select *Digital Tip*, "Creating Styles and Templates."

F

CGF Aircraft Corporation

MEMO

To: Members of the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee
From: Susan Litzinger, Director of Ethics and Business Conduct
Date: March 5, 2015
Subject: Reported Ethics Cases, 2014

SL

Enclosed is "Reported Ethics Cases: Annual Report, 2014." This report, required by CGF Policy CGF-EP-01, contains a review of the ethics cases handled by CGF ethics officers and managers during 2014, the first year of our Ethics Program.

Identifies topic

The ethics cases reported are analyzed according to two categories: (1) major ethics cases, or those potentially involving serious violations of company policy or illegal conduct, and (2) minor ethics cases, or those that do not involve serious policy violations or illegal conduct. The report also examines the mode of contact in all of the reported cases and the disposition of the substantiated major ethics cases.

Briefly summarizes content

I hope that this report will provide the Committee with the information needed to assess the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program and to plan for the coming year. Please let me know if you have any questions about this report or if you need any further information. I may be reached at (555) 211-2121 and at sl@cgf.com.

Offers contact information

Enc.

Enclosure notation

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (Cover Memo)

Full title

REPORTED ETHICS CASES
Annual Report, 2014

Author's name and job title

Prepared by Susan Litzinger
Director of Ethics and Business Conduct

Report Distributed March 5, 2015

Company name

Prepared for
The Ethics and Business Conduct Committee
CGF Aircraft Corporation

No page number

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Title Page)

Adapted from MLA style to fit context

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

ABSTRACT

This report examines the nature and disposition of 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF Aircraft Corporation's ethics officers and managers during 2014. The purpose of this annual report is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the Ethics Program's first year of operation. Records maintained by ethics officers and managers of all contacts were compiled and categorized into two main types: (1) major ethics cases, or cases involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct, and (2) minor ethics cases, or cases not involving serious policy violations or illegal conduct. This report provides examples of the types of cases handled in each category and analyzes the disposition of 30 substantiated major ethics cases. Recommendations for planning for the second year of the Ethics Program are (1) continuing the channels of communication now available in the Ethics Program, (2) increasing financial and technical support for the Ethics Hotline, (3) disseminating the annual ethics report in some form to employees to ensure employee awareness of the company's commitment to uphold its Ethics Policies and Procedures, and (4) implementing some measure of recognition for ethical behavior to promote and reward ethical conduct.

Summarizes purpose

Methods and scope

Conclusions and recommendations

Lowercase Roman numerals used for front-matter pages

iii

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Abstract)

Uniform heading styles

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT......iii

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY...... 1

INTRODUCTION...... 3

Ethics and Business Conduct Policies and Procedures...... 3
Confidentiality Issues...... 4
Documentation of Ethics Cases...... 4
Major/Minor Category Definition and Examples...... 5

ANALYSIS OF REPORTED ETHICS CASES...... 6

Reported Ethics Cases by Major/Minor Category...... 6
Major Ethics Cases...... 6
Minor Ethics Cases...... 8
Mode of Contact...... 9

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS...... 11

WORKS CITED...... 13

Indented subheads

Page number for each entry

iv

F

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Table of Contents)

F

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled by the CGF Aircraft Corporation's ethics officers and managers during 2014. The purpose of this report is to provide CGF's Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of the company's Ethics Program.

States purpose

Effective January 1, 2014, the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee (the Committee) implemented a policy and procedures for the administration of CGF's new Ethics Program. The purpose of the Ethics Program, established by the Committee, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards." The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout the corporation, was given the responsibility for the following objectives:

Provides background information

- Communicate the values and standards for CGF's Ethics Program to employees.
- Inform employees about company policies regarding ethical business conduct.
- Establish companywide channels for employees to obtain information and guidance in resolving ethics concerns.
- Implement companywide ethics-awareness and education programs.

Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance was available through managers, ethics officers, and an ethics hotline.

Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct. Examples of major ethics cases included cover-up of defective workmanship or use of defective parts in products; discrimination in hiring and promotion; involvement in monetary or other kickbacks; sexual harassment; disclosure of proprietary or company information; theft; and use of corporate Internet resources for inappropriate purposes, such as conducting personal business, gambling, or access to pornography.

Describes scope

1

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Executive Summary)

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

Minor ethics cases were defined as including all reported concerns not classified as major ethics cases. Minor ethics cases were classified as informational queries from employees, situations involving coworkers, and situations involving management.

Summarizes conclusions

The effectiveness of CGF's Ethics Program during the first year of implementation is most evidenced by (1) the active participation of employees in the program and the 3,458 contacts employees made regarding ethics concerns through the various channels available to them and (2) the action taken in the cases reported by employees, particularly the disposition of the 30 substantiated major ethics cases. Disseminating information about the disposition of ethics cases, particularly information about the severe disciplinary actions taken in major ethics violations, sends a message to employees that unethical or illegal conduct will not be tolerated.

Includes recommendations

Based on these conclusions, recommendations for planning the second year of the Ethics Program are (1) continuing the channels of communication now available in the Ethics Program, (2) increasing financial and technical support for the Ethics Hotline, the most highly used mode of contact in the ethics cases reported in 2014, (3) disseminating this report in some form to employees to ensure their awareness of CGF's commitment to uphold its Ethics Policies and Procedures, and (4) implementing some measure of recognition for ethical behavior, such as an "Ethics Employee of the Month" award to promote and reward ethical conduct.

Executive summary is about 10 percent of report length

2

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Executive Summary)

F

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

INTRODUCTION

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2014. The purpose of this report is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program. Recommendations are given for the Committee's consideration in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program.

Opening states purpose

Ethics and Business Conduct Policies and Procedures
Effective January 1, 2014, the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee (the Committee) implemented Policy CGF-EP-01 and Procedure CGF-EP-02 for the administration of CGF's new Ethics Program. The purpose of the Ethics Program, established by the Committee, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" (CGF, "Ethics and Conduct").

Subheads signal shifts in topic

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout CGF, was given the responsibility for the following objectives:

- Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's Ethics Program to employees.
- Inform employees about company ethics policies.
- Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns.
- Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness, education, and recognition.
- Ensure confidentiality in all ethics matters.

List identifies key points

Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance became the immediate and key goal of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct in its first year of operation. The following channels for contact were set in motion during 2014:

3

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Introduction)

F

Reported Ethics Cases — 2014

- Managers throughout CGF received intensive ethics training; in all ethics situations, employees were encouraged to go to their managers as the first point of contact.
- Ethics officers were available directly to employees through face-to-face or telephone contact, to managers, to callers using the Ethics Hotline, and by e-mail.
- The Ethics Hotline was available to all employees, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to anonymously report ethics concerns.

Confidentiality Issues
CGF's Ethics Policy ensures confidentiality and anonymity for employees who raise genuine ethics concerns. Procedure CGF-EP-02 guarantees appropriate discipline, up to and including dismissal, for retaliation or retribution against any employee who properly reports any genuine ethics concern.

Documentation of Ethics Cases
The following requirements were established by the director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct as uniform guidelines for the documentation by managers and ethics officers of all reported ethics cases:

Includes detailed methods

- Name, position, and department of individual initiating contact, if available
- Date and time of contact
- Name, position, and department of contact person
- Category of ethics case
- Mode of contact
- Resolution

Managers and ethics officers entered the required information in each reported ethics case into an ACCESS database file, enabling efficient retrieval and analysis of the data.

4

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Introduction)

F

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

Major/Minor Category Definition and Examples
Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct. Procedure CGF-EP-02 requires notification of the Internal Audit and the Law departments in serious ethics cases. The staffs of the Internal Audit and the Law departments assume primary responsibility for managing major ethics cases and for working with the employees, ethics officers, and managers involved in each case.

Examples of situations categorized as major ethics cases:

- Cover-up of defective workmanship or use of defective parts in products
- Discrimination in hiring and promotion
- Involvement in monetary or other kickbacks from customers for preferred orders
- Sexual harassment
- Disclosure of proprietary customer or company information
- Theft
- Use of corporate Internet resources for inappropriate purposes, such as conducting private business, gambling, or gaining access to pornography

Organized by decreasing order of importance

Minor ethics cases were defined as including all reported concerns not classified as major ethics cases. Minor ethics cases were classified as follows:

- Informational queries from employees
- Situations involving coworkers
- Situations involving management

5

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Introduction)

F

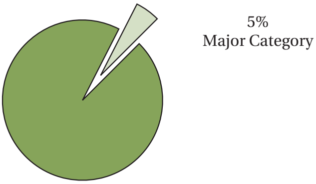
Reported Ethics Cases—2014

ANALYSIS OF REPORTED ETHICS CASES

Reported Ethics Cases by Major/Minor Category
CGF ethics officers and managers companywide handled a total of 3,458 ethics situations during 2014. Of these cases, only 172, or 5 percent, involved reported concerns of a serious enough nature to be classified as major ethics cases (see Fig. 1). Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policy or illegal conduct.

Text introduces figure

Number of Cases	
Major	172
Minor	3,286
Total	3,458



Source: CGF Office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

Fig. 1. Reported ethics cases by major/minor category in 2014.

Number and title identify figure

Major Ethics Cases
Of the 172 major ethics cases reported during 2014, 57 percent, upon investigation, were found to involve unsubstantiated concerns. Incomplete information or misinformation most frequently was discovered to be the cause of the unfounded concerns of misconduct in 98 cases. Forty-four cases, or 26 percent of the total cases reported, involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct;

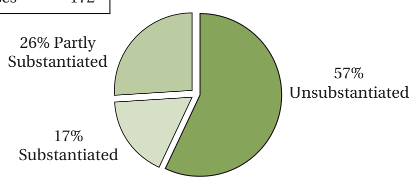
6

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body Text)

however, these cases were discovered to also involve inaccurate information or unfounded issues of misconduct.

Only 17 percent of the total number of major ethics cases, or 30 cases, were substantiated as major ethics situations involving serious ethical misconduct or illegal conduct (CGF, "2014 Ethics Hotline Results") (see Fig. 2).

Unsubstantiated Cases	98
Partly Substantiated Cases	44
Substantiated Cases	30
Total Major Cases	172



Source: CGF Office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

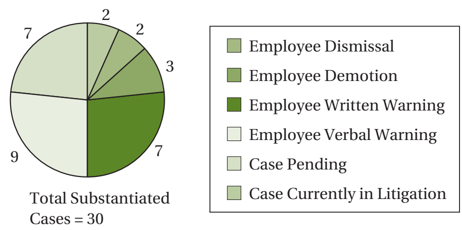
Identifies source of information

Fig. 2. Major ethics cases in 2014.

Of the 30 substantiated major ethics cases, seven remain under investigation at this time, and two cases are currently in litigation. Disposition of the remainder of the 30 substantiated reported ethics cases included severe disciplinary action in five cases: the dismissal of two employees and the demotion of three employees. Seven employees were given written warnings, and nine employees received verbal warnings (see Fig. 3).

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body Text)

Reported Ethics Cases—2014



Source: CGF Office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

Fig. 3. Disposition of substantiated major ethics cases in 2014.

Minor Ethics Cases
Minor ethics cases included those that did not involve serious violations of company policy or illegal conduct. During 2014, ethics officers and company managers handled 3,286 such cases. Minor ethics cases were further classified as follows:

Presents findings in detail

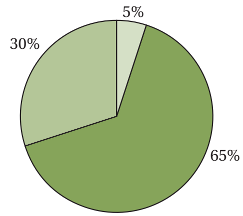
- Informational queries from employees
- Situations involving coworkers
- Situations involving management

As might be expected during the initial year of the Ethics Program implementation, the majority of contacts made by employees were informational, involving questions about the new policies and procedures. These informational contacts comprised 65 percent of all contacts of a minor nature and numbered 2,148. Employees made 989 contacts regarding ethics concerns involving coworkers and 149 contacts regarding ethics concerns involving management (see Fig. 4).

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body Text)

F

Reported Ethics Cases—2014



Informational	2,148
Involving Coworkers	989
Involving Management	149
Total Cases	3,286

Informational
Situation Involving Coworkers
Situation Involving Management

Source: CGF Office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

Fig. 4. Minor ethics cases in 2014.

Mode of Contact

The effectiveness of the Ethics Program rested on the dissemination of information to employees and the provision of accessible channels through which employees could gain information, report concerns, and obtain guidance. Employees were encouraged to first go to their managers with any ethical concerns, because those managers would have the most direct knowledge of the immediate circumstances and individuals involved.

Assesses findings

Other channels were put into operation, however, for any instance in which an employee did not feel able to go to his or her manager. The ethics officers companywide were available to employees through telephone conversations, face-to-face meetings, and e-mail contact. Ethics officers also served as contact points for managers in need of support and assistance in handling the ethics concerns reported to them by their subordinates.

The Ethics Hotline became operational in mid-January 2014 and offered employees assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. The Ethics Hotline was accessible to all employees on a 24-hour, 7-day basis. Ethics officers companywide took responsibility on a rotational basis for handling calls reported through the hotline.

9

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body Text)

F

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

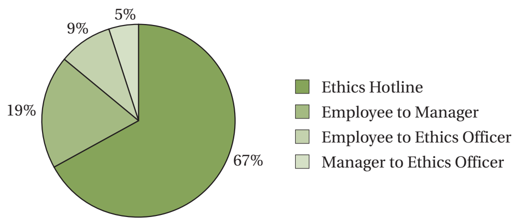
In summary, ethics information and guidance were available to all employees during 2014 through the following channels:

- Employee to manager
- Employee telephone, face-to-face, and e-mail contact with ethics officer
- Manager to ethics officer
- Employee Hotline

Bulleted lists help organize and summarize information

The mode of contact in the 3,458 reported ethics cases was as follows (see Fig. 5):

- In 19 percent of the reported cases, or 657, employees went to managers with concerns.
- In 9 percent of the reported cases, or 311, employees contacted an ethics officer.
- In 5 percent of the reported cases, or 173, managers sought assistance from ethics officers.
- In 67 percent of the reported cases, or 2,317, contacts were made through the Ethics Hotline.



Source: CGF Office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

Fig. 5. Mode of contact in reported ethics cases in 2014.

10

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body Text)

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The effectiveness of CGF's Ethics Program during the first year of implementation is most evidenced by (1) the active participation of employees in the program and the 3,458 contacts employees made regarding ethics concerns through the various channels available to them, and (2) the action taken in the cases reported by employees, particularly the disposition of the 30 substantiated major ethics cases.

Pulls together findings

One of the 12 steps to building a successful Ethics Program identified by Frank Navran in *Workforce* magazine is an ethics communication strategy. Navran explains that such a strategy is crucial in ensuring

Uses sources for support

> that employees have the information they need in a timely and usable fashion and that the organization is encouraging employee communication regarding the values, standards and the conduct of the organization and its members. (119)

The 3,458 contacts by employees during 2014 attest to the accessibility and effectiveness of the communication channels that exist in CGF's Ethics Program.

An equally important step in building a successful ethics program is listed by Navran as "Measurements and Rewards," which he explains as follows:

> In most organizations, employees know what's important by virtue of what the organization measures and rewards. If ethical conduct is assessed and rewarded, and if unethical conduct is identified and dissuaded, employees will believe that the organization's principals mean it when they say the values and code of ethics are important. (121)

Long quotation in MLA style

Disseminating information about the disposition of ethics cases, particularly information about the severe disciplinary actions taken in major ethics violations, sends a message to employees that unethical or illegal conduct will not be tolerated. Making public such actions taken in cases of ethical misconduct provides "a golden opportunity to make other employees aware that the behavior is unacceptable and why" (Ferrell, Fraedrich, and Ferrell 129).

Interprets findings

11

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Conclusions and Recommendations)

F

Reported Ethics Cases—2014

With these two points in mind, I offer the following recommendations for consideration for plans for the Ethics Program's second year:

Recommends specific steps

- Maintain the channels of communication now available in the Ethics Program
- Increase financial and technical support for the Ethics Hotline, the most highly used mode of contact in the reported ethics cases in 2014
- Disseminate this report in some form to employees to ensure employees' awareness of CGF's commitment to uphold its Ethics Policy and Procedures
- Implement some measure of recognition for ethical behavior, such as an "Ethics Employee of the Month," to promote and reward ethical conduct

To ensure that employees see the value of their continued participation in the Ethics Program, feedback is essential. The information in this annual review, in some form, should be provided to employees. Knowing that the concerns they reported were taken seriously and resulted in appropriate action by Ethics Program administrators would reinforce employee involvement in the program.

Although the negative consequences of ethical misconduct contained in this report send a powerful message, a means of communicating the *positive* rewards of ethical conduct at CGF should be implemented. Various options for recognition of employees exemplifying ethical conduct should be considered and approved. See MLogs, "Create and Evaluate a Code of Conduct," *Business Ethics Forum*. Management Logs, 12 Sept. 2009. Web. 11 Dec. 2013.

Links recommendations to company goal

Continuation of the Ethics Program's successful 2014 operations, with the implementation of the above recommendations, should ensure the continued pursuit of the Ethics Program's purpose: "to promote a positive work environment that encourages open communication regarding ethics and compliance issues and concerns."

12

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Conclusions and Recommendations)

Reported Ethics Cases — 2014

Section begins on a new page

WORKS CITED

CGF. "Ethics and Conduct at CGF Aircraft Corporation." *CGF Aircraft Corporation*. CGF, 1 Jan. 2013. Web. 11 Feb. 2014.

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Ferrell, O. C., John Fraedrich, and Linda Ferrell. *Business Ethics: Ethical Decision Making and Cases*. 9th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2013. Print.

Navran, Frank. "12 Steps to Building a Best-Practices Ethics Program." *Workforce* 76.9 (1997): 117–22. Web. 10 Jan. 2014.

This report uses MLA style

13

F

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Works Cited)

format

Format refers to both the organization of information in a document and the physical arrangement of information on the page.

In one sense, format refers to the conventions that govern the scope and placement of information in such job-related writing as **formal reports**, **proposals**, and various types of **correspondence**. For example, in formal reports, the **table of contents** precedes the preface but follows the title page and the **abstract**. Likewise, although variations exist, parts of **letters**—such as inside address, salutation, and complimentary closing—are arranged in standard patterns. See also **e-mail** and **memos**.

Format also refers to the general physical appearance of a finished document, whether printed or electronic. See also **layout and design** and **writing for the Web**.

former / latter

Former and *latter* should be used to refer to only two items in a sentence or paragraph.

▸ The president and his aide emerged from the conference, the *former* looking nervous and the *latter* looking glum.

Because these terms make the reader look to previous material to identify the reference, they complicate reading and are best avoided.

forms

Forms are used widely to gather data and information from respondents in a standardized print or digital design. Figure F–6 shows an example of a typical form used for a medical claim. See also **questionnaires**.

An effective form makes it easy for one person to supply information and for another person to retrieve, record, and interpret that information. Ideally, a form should be self-explanatory to someone seeing it for the first time. When preparing a form, determine the kind of information you are seeking and arrange the requests for information or questions in a logical order. To ensure the usability of the form, test it with people from your target **audience** or others before distributing the final version.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Information gathered on forms can be sensitive, personal, or subject to confidentiality laws, so make sure to request information in a way that is not invasive or illegal. Unless otherwise indicated on

104-M S A
Section 125 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Claim Form

Form title

Employee Name: ______________________________

Social Security Number: ______-____-_______

Writing lines

Name of Employer: ______________________________

Employee Signature: ___________________________

Complete section below for medical, dental, or vision reimbursement.

Instructions

CLAIM TYPE I: MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNT

Amount of Expense Incurred: $_________________________

Dates of Services: From: ______________ To: ___________

Complete section below for reimbursement of care for your dependent provided by a child-care facility, an adult dependent-care center, or a caretaker.

Instructions

CLAIM TYPE II: DEPENDENT-CARE ACCOUNT

Amount of Expense Incurred: $_________________________

Name of Dependent-Care Provider: _____________________

Provider Social Security or Federal ID Number: ____-__-_____

Mail or fax form with documentation to:
Specialized Benefit Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 498
Framingham, MA 01702
Fax: (508) 877-1182
For additional claim forms: www.sbsclaims.com

Mailing and contact information

FIGURE F–6. Form (for a Medical Claim)

the form, the person filling out the form should have the expectation of confidentiality. If you are concerned about issues of confidentiality or legality, check your organization's policy; in a classroom, seek your instructor's advice. ❖

Choosing Paper or Digital

You can develop forms as printed documents or interactive digital versions. Printed forms can help individuals with limited computer access, as in some manufacturing and service industries. Printed forms can also be useful at conferences or other in-person events. Digital forms, however, are especially well suited for conference or seminar registrations, job applications, and various order forms. Digital forms not only standardize respondents' interfaces but also link to databases that tabulate and interpret data. A digital form can be encrypted for security and programmed to ensure that all necessary fields are completed correctly before the form can be successfully submitted. See also **writing for the Web**.

Designing a Form

At the top of the form, clearly indicate preliminary information, such as the name of your organization, the title of your form, and any reference number. Place instructions at the beginning of the form or at the beginning of each section of the form and use **headings** or other design elements, such as the boldface type and shaded text boxes in Figure F–6. Place instructions for submitting printed forms or distributing the copies of multiple-copy forms at the bottom of each page. For printed forms, allow space for elements such as signatures and dates.

You can design digital forms specific to your needs with form-design software, word-processing software, or markup languages (such as HTML or PHP/MySQL). At the end of digital forms, include a "submit" button that is programmed to record the data, to open a new page, or to send a confirming e-mail reporting successful completion. See also **layout and design**.

Entry Lines and Fields. A print form can be designed so that the person filling it out provides information on a writing line, in a writing block, or in square boxes. A *writing line* is simply a rule with a caption, such as the line for "Employee Name" shown in Figure F–6. A *writing block* is essentially the same as a writing line, except that each entry is enclosed in a ruled block, making it unlikely for the respondent to associate a caption with the wrong line.

When it is possible to anticipate all likely responses, you can make the form easy to fill out by writing the question on the form, supplying a labeled box for each anticipated answer, and asking the respondent to check the appropriate boxes. Such a design also makes it easy to tabulate the data.

For digital forms, these functions are accomplished with form fields such as text boxes, option (or *radio*) buttons, drop-down menus, lists, and check boxes, which can be aligned using table cells or grouping. Each form field should have a label prompting users to type information or to select from a list of options. Labels for text boxes, drop-down menus, and lists should be positioned to the left; labels for radio buttons and check boxes should be positioned to the right. Be sure as well to indicate required form fields.

Sequencing Entries. The main portion of the form includes the entries that are required to obtain the necessary data. Arrange entries in an order that will be the most logical to the person filling out the form.

- Open with questions that are easy for respondents to complete or answer.
- Sequence entries to fit the subject matter. A form requesting reimbursement for travel expenses would logically be organized chronologically from the beginning to the end of the appropriate period.
- If the response to one item is based on the response to another item, be sure the items appear in the correct order.
- Group requests for related information together whenever possible.

Writing Questions

Forms should ask questions in ways that are best suited to the types of data you hope to collect. The two main types are open-ended questions and closed-ended questions.

- *Open-ended questions* allow respondents to answer questions in their own words. Such questions are most appropriate if you wish to elicit responses you may not have anticipated (as in a complaint form) or if there are too many possible answers to use a multiple-choice format. However, the responses to open-ended questions can be difficult to tabulate and analyze.
- *Closed-ended questions* provide a list of options from which the respondent can select, limiting the range of possible responses. When you want to make sure you receive a standardized, easy-to-tabulate response, use any of the types of closed-ended questions that follow:
    - *Multiple choice*: Choose one (or sometimes more than one) response from a preset list of options.

- *Ranked choice*: Rank items according to preference, such as selecting vacation days or choosing job assignments.
- *Forced choice*: Choose between two preset options, such as yes/no or male/female.
- *Likert choice*: Choose among a range of options on a numerically defined scale, such as 1 = very unsatisfied, 3 = neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, or 5 = very satisfied.

Be sure your questions are both simple and specific, and provide enough space for an adequate response.

▶ Would your department order another X2L Copier? Yes ☐ No ☐

Questions are often worded as captions. Keep captions brief and to the point; avoid wordy repetition by combining related information under an explanatory heading.

WORDY What make of car (or vehicle) do you drive? ______________
What year was it manufactured? ______________
What model is it? ______________
What is the body style? ______________

CONCISE Vehicle Information
Make ______________ Year ______________
Model ______________ Body Style ______________

Make captions (*Make*, *Model, Year*, *Body Style*) as specific as possible. If a requested date is other than the date on which the form is being filled out, the caption should read, for example, "Effective date" or "Date issued," rather than simply "Date." As in all writing, put yourself in your reader's place and imagine what sort of requests would be clear.

For detailed and up-to-date information on designing paper and digital forms, see www.stcsig.org/usability/topics/forms.html.

forums (*see* blogs and forums)

fragments (*see* sentence fragments)

functional shift

Many words shift easily from one **part of speech** to another, depending on how they are used. When they do, the process is called a *functional shift*, or a shift in function.

- It takes ten minutes to *walk* from the laboratory to the emergency room. However, the long *walk* reduces efficiency.
  [*Walk* shifts from **verb** to **noun**.]
- I talk to Jim in the Chicago office on the *phone* every day. He was concerned about the office *phone* expenses. He will *phone* the home office from London.
  [*Phone* shifts from noun to **adjective** to verb.]
- *After* we discuss the project, we will begin work. *After* lengthy discussions, we began work. The partners worked well together forever *after*.
  [*After* shifts from **conjunction** to **preposition** to **adverb**.]

Jargon is often the result of functional shifts. In hospitals, for example, an *attending physician* is often referred to simply as the "attending" (a shift from an adjective to a noun). Likewise, in nuclear plant construction, a *reactor containment building* is called a "containment" (a shift from an adjective to a noun). Do not shift the function of a word indiscriminately merely to shorten a phrase or an expression. See also **affectation**, **audience**, and **conciseness**.

G

garbled sentences

A garbled sentence is one that is so tangled with structural and grammatical problems that it cannot be repaired. Garbled sentences often result from an attempt to squeeze too many ideas into one sentence.

- ▸ My job objectives are accomplished by my having a diversified background which enables me to operate effectively and efficiently, consisting of a degree in computer science, along with twelve years of experience, including three years in Staff Engineering-Packaging sets a foundation for a strong background in areas of analyzing problems and assessing economical and reasonable solutions.

Do not try to patch such a sentence; rather, analyze the ideas it contains, list them in a logical sequence, and then construct one or more entirely new sentences. An analysis of the preceding example yields the following five ideas:

- My job requires that I analyze problems to find economical and workable solutions.
- My diversified background helps me accomplish my job.
- I have a computer-science degree.
- I have twelve years of job experience.
- Three of these years have been in Staff Engineering-Packaging.

Using those five ideas—together with **parallel structure**, **sentence variety**, **subordination**, and **transition**—the writer might have described the job as follows:

- ▸ My job requires that I analyze problems to find economical and workable solutions. Both my education and experience help me achieve this goal. Specifically, I have a computer-science degree and twelve years of job experience, three of which have been in the Staff Engineering-Packaging Department.

See also **clarity**, **mixed constructions**, and **sentence construction**.

gender

In English grammar, *gender* refers to the classification of **nouns** and **pronouns** as masculine, feminine, and neuter. The gender of most words can be identified only by the choice of the appropriate pronoun (*he*, *she*, *it*). Only these pronouns and a select few nouns (*man/woman*, *buck/doe*) or noun forms (*heir/heiress*) reflect gender. Many such nouns have been replaced by single terms that apply to both sexes. See also **biased language** and **he / she**.

G

Gender is important to writers because they must be sure that nouns and pronouns within a grammatical construction agree in gender. A pronoun, for example, must agree with its noun antecedent in gender. We refer to a woman as *she* or *her*, not as *it*; to a man as *he* or *him*, not as *it*; to a building as *it*, not as *he* or *she*. See also **agreement**.

ESL TIP for Assigning Gender

The English language has an almost complete lack of gender distinctions. That can be confusing for a nonnative speaker of English whose native language may assign gender. In the few cases in which English does make a gender distinction, there is a close connection between the assigning of gender and the sex of the subject. The few instances in which gender distinctions are made in English are summarized as follows:

Subject pronouns	he/she
Object pronouns	him/her
Possessive adjectives	his/her(s)
Some nouns	king/queen, boy/girl, bull/cow, among others

When a noun, such as *doctor*, can refer to a person of either sex, you need to know the sex of the person to whom the noun refers to determine the gender-appropriate pronoun.

- ▸ The doctor gave *her* patients advice.
  [Doctor is female.]
- ▸ The doctor gave *his* patients advice.
  [Doctor is male.]

When the sex of the noun antecedent is unknown, be sure to follow the guidelines for nonsexist writing in the entry **biased language**.

general and specific methods of development

General and specific **methods of development** organize information either from general points to specific details (Figure G–1) or from specific details to a general conclusion (Figure G–2). As with all methods of development, most writers blend and use combinations of methods.

General to Specific

The general-to-specific method of development is especially useful for teaching **readers** about something with which they are not familiar because you can begin with generally known information and lead to new and increasingly specific details. This method can also be used to support a general statement with facts or examples that validate the statement. For example, if you begin your writing with the general statement "Companies that diversify are more successful than those that do not," you could follow that statement with examples and statistics that prove

Subject: Expanding Our Supplier Base for Computer Chips

Based on the information presented at the supply meeting on April 13, we recommend that the company initiate relationships with computer-chip manufacturers. Several events make such an action necessary.

General statement

Our current supplier, Datacom, is experiencing growing pains and is having difficulty shipping the product on time. Specifically, we can expect a reduction of between 800 and 1,000 units per month for the remainder of this fiscal year. The number of units should stabilize at 15,000 units per month thereafter.

Supporting information

Domestic demand for our computers continues to grow. Demand during the current fiscal year is up 500,000 units over the last fiscal year. Our sales projections for the next five years show that demand should peak next year at about 830,000 units given the consumer demand, which will increase exponentially.

Specific details

Finally, our expansion into the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan markets will require additional shipments of at least 175,000 units per quarter for the remainder of this fiscal year. Sales Department projections put global computer sales at double that rate, or 350,000 units per fiscal year, for the next five years.

FIGURE G–1. General-to-Specific Method of Development

Specific details

Recently, a government agency studied the use of passenger-side air bags in 4,500 accidents involving nearly 7,200 front-seat passengers of the vehicles involved. Nearly all the accidents occurred on routes that had a speed limit of at least 40 mph. Only 20 percent of the adult front-seat passengers were riding in vehicles equipped with passenger-side air bags. Those riding in vehicles not equipped with passenger-side air bags were more than twice as likely to be killed as passengers riding in vehicles with such air bags.

General conclusion

A conservative estimate is that 40 percent of the adult front-seat passenger-vehicle deaths could be prevented if all vehicles came equipped with passenger-side air bags. Children, however, should always ride in the backseat because other studies have indicated that a child can be killed by the deployment of an air bag. For adult front-seat passengers in an accident, chances of survival are far greater if the vehicle is equipped with a passenger-side air bag.

FIGURE G–2. Specific-to-General Method of Development

to the reader that companies that diversify are, in fact, more successful than companies that do not.

A document organized entirely in a general-to-specific sequence discusses only one point. All other information in the document supports the general statement, as illustrated in Figure G–1 from a memo about locating additional computer-chip suppliers.

Specific to General

Specific-to-general development is especially useful when you wish to persuade skeptical readers of a general principle with an accumulation of specific details and evidence that reach a logical **conclusion**. It carefully builds its case, often with examples and analogies in addition to facts or statistics, and does not actually make its point until the end. (See also **order-of-importance method of development**.) Figure G–2 is an example of the specific-to-general method of development.

global communication

The continual expansion of the global marketplace and the growing need for many businesses to participate globally means that the ability to communicate with audiences from varied cultural backgrounds is essential. See **audience**.

Many entries in this book, such as **meetings** and **résumés**, are based on U.S. cultural patterns. The treatment of such topics might be very different in other cultures where leadership styles, persuasive strategies, and even legal constraints differ. As illustrated in **international correspondence**, organizational patterns, forms of courtesy, and ideas about efficiency can vary significantly from culture to culture. What might be seen as direct and efficient in the United States could be considered blunt and even impolite in other cultures. The reasons behind these differing ways of viewing communication are complex. Researchers often measure cultural differences through such concepts as the importance of honor or "face saving," perceptions of time, and individual versus group orientation. Because cultures evolve and global communication affects cultural patterns, you must be able to adapt to cultural variations. The checklist that follows offers useful approaches that can help you adapt.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Communicating Globally**

- ✔ Discuss the differing cultures within your company or region to reinforce the idea that people can interpret verbal and nonverbal communications differently.
- ✔ Invite global and intercultural communication experts to speak at your workplace. Companies in your area may have employees who could be resources for cultural discussions.
- ✔ Understand that the key to effective communication with global audiences is recognizing that cultural differences, despite the challenges they may present, offer opportunities for growth for both you and your organization.
- ✔ Consult with someone from your intended audience's culture. Many phrases, gestures, and visual elements are so subtle that only someone who is very familiar with the culture can explain the effect they may have on others from that culture. See also **global graphics** for more information.

Intercultural Press publishes books on "intercultural, multicultural and cross-cultural studies and informative country guides to help you do business and form strong relationships in foreign countries." See http://nicholasbrealey.com/boston/subjects/interculturalpress.html.

global graphics

In a global business and technology environment, **graphs** and other **visuals** require the same careful attention given to other aspects of **global communication**. The complex cultural connotations of visuals challenge writers to think beyond their own experience when they are aiming for audiences outside their own culture.

Symbols, images, and even colors are not free from cultural associations—they depend on **context**, and context is culturally determined. For instance, in North America, a red cross is commonly used as a symbol for first aid or a hospital. In Muslim countries, however, a cross (red or otherwise) represents Christianity, whereas a crescent (usually green) signifies first aid or a hospital. A manual for use in Honduras could indicate "caution" by using a picture of a person touching a finger below the eye. In France, however, that gesture means "You can't fool me."

Figure G–3 shows two different graphics depicting weight lifters. The drawing at the left may be appropriate for U.S. audiences and others. However, that graphic would be highly inappropriate in many cultures where the image of a partially clothed man and woman in close proximity would be contrary to deeply held cultural beliefs and even laws about the public depiction of men and women. The drawing at the right in Figure G–3, however, depicts a weight lifter with a neutral icon that avoids the connotations associated with more realistic images of people.

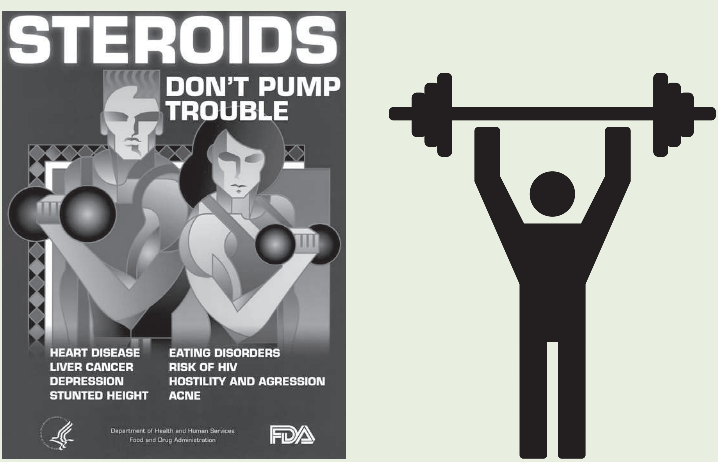


FIGURE G–3. Graphics for U.S. (left) and Global (right) Audiences

These examples suggest why the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) established agreed-upon symbols, such as those shown in Figure G–4, designed for public signs, guidebooks, and manuals.*

*Learn more through the useful illustrations in "The International Language of ISO Graphical Symbols" at www.iso.org/graphical-symbols_booklet.pdf.

FIGURE G–4. International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Symbols

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Appropriate Global Graphics**

- ✔ Consult with an expert or test your use of graphics with individuals from your intended audience's country who understand the effect that visuals may have on an **audience**. See also **presentations**.
- ✔ Organize visual information for the intended audience. Some culture groups read visuals from left to right in clockwise rotation; others read visuals from right to left in counterclockwise rotation.
- ✔ Be sure that your graphics have no unintended political or religious implications.
- ✔ Carefully consider how you depict people in visuals — body exposure, positions, and clothing (see Figure G–3).
- ✔ Use outlines or neutral abstractions to represent human beings. Consider stick figures as in Figure G–4.
- ✔ Choose neutral colors (or those you know are appropriate) or grayscale, which carries no connotation, for your graphics. In some cultures, red symbolizes good fortune or joy; in others, red indicates danger.
- ✔ Check your use of punctuation marks, which are as language specific as symbols. For example, in North America, the question mark generally represents the need for information or help. In many countries, that symbol has no meaning at all.
- ✔ Create simple visuals with universal shapes, as illustrated in Figure G–4.
- ✔ Explain the meaning of icons or symbols that cannot be changed, such as a company logo.

glossaries

A glossary is an alphabetical list of definitions of specialized terms used in a **formal report**, a **manual**, or another long document. You may want to include a glossary if some readers in your audience are not familiar with specialized or technical terms you use.

Keep glossary entries concise and be sure they are written in language that all the readers of your document can understand.

- *Amplitude modulation*: Varying the amplitude of a carrier current with an audio-frequency signal.

Arrange the terms alphabetically, with each entry beginning on a new line. The definitions then follow the terms, dictionary style. In a formal report, the glossary begins on a new page and appears after the appendix(es) and bibliography.

Including a glossary does not relieve you of the responsibility of **defining terms** that your reader will not know when those terms are first mentioned in the text.

gobbledygook

Gobbledygook is writing that suffers from an overdose of traits guaranteed to make it stuffy, pretentious, and wordy. Such traits include the overuse of big and mostly abstract words, **affectation** (especially long variants), **buzzwords**, **clichés**, **euphemisms**, inappropriate **jargon**, stacked **modifiers**, and **vague words**. (See also **abstract / concrete words**.) Gobbledygook is writing that attempts to sound official (officialese), legal (legalese), or scientific. Consider the following statement from an auto-repair release form.

LEGALESE I hereby authorize the above repair work to be done along with the necessary material and hereby grant you and/or your employees permission to operate the car or truck herein described on streets, highways, or elsewhere for the purpose of testing and/or inspection. An express mechanic's lien is hereby acknowledged on above car or truck to secure the amount of repairs thereto.

DIRECT You have my permission to do the repair work listed on this work order and to use the necessary material. You may drive my vehicle to test its performance. I understand that you will keep my vehicle until I have paid for all repairs.

See also **clarity**, **conciseness**, **plain language**, and **word choice**.

good / well

Good is an **adjective**, and *well* is an **adverb**.

ADJECTIVE Janet presented a *good* plan.

ADVERB She presented the plan *well*.

Well also can be used as an adjective to describe health (a *well* child, *wellness* programs). See also **bad / badly**.

grammar

Grammar is the systematic description of the way words work together to form a coherent language. In that sense, it is an explanation of the structure of a language. However, grammar is popularly taken to mean the set of rules that governs how a language ought to be spoken and written. In that sense, it refers to the **usage** conventions of a language.

Those two meanings of grammar—how the language functions and how it ought to function—are easily confused. To clarify the distinction, consider the expression *ain't*. Unless used intentionally to add colloquial flavor, *ain't* is unacceptable because its use is considered nonstandard. Yet taken strictly as a **part of speech**, the term functions perfectly well as a verb. Whether it appears in a declarative sentence ("I ain't going") or an interrogative sentence ("Ain't I going?"), it conforms to the normal pattern for all verbs in the English language. Although readers may not approve of its use, they cannot argue that it is ungrammatical in such sentences.

To achieve **clarity**, you need to know grammar both as a description of the way words work together and as the conventions of usage. Knowing the conventions of usage helps you select the appropriate over the inappropriate word or expression. (See also **word choice**.) A knowledge of grammar helps you diagnose and correct problems arising from how words and phrases function in relation to one another. For example, knowing that certain words and phrases function to modify other words and phrases gives you a basis for correcting those **modifiers** that are not doing their job. Understanding **dangling modifiers** helps you avoid or correct a construction that obscures the intended meaning. In short, an understanding of grammar and its special terminology is valuable chiefly because it enables you to recognize and correct problems so that you can communicate clearly and precisely. For a complete list of grammar entries, see the Contents by Topic on the inside front cover.

grant proposals

Grant proposals are written to nonprofit and government organizations to request the approval of and funding for projects that solve a problem or fulfill a need. A scientist, for example, may write a grant proposal to the National Institutes of Health requesting a specific sum of money to study a new cancer therapy, or the executive director of Habitat for Humanity may write a grant proposal to a local government requesting funding to purchase supplies to construct new housing for disadvantaged families in the area.

The advice in the entry **proposals** for assessing audience and purpose, writing persuasively, maintaining **ethics in writing**, and managing a project within a tight deadline applies as well to writing grant proposals. This entry focuses on the particular needs of grant-proposal writers.

Granting organizations typically post opportunities, along with detailed application guidelines, on their Web sites and specify their requirements for the format and content of proposals. Most federal, state, and large nonprofit government grants are now submitted electronically, and various sections may have imposed word, character, or content limits that are enforced electronically. When preparing a proposal document, always organize its elements in the exact order described or required in the **request for proposals** (RFP) or in the grant maker's guidelines. Although application guidelines and processes may differ from one organization to another, grant proposals generally require the following sections at a minimum:

- Cover letter
- Title page
- Application form
- Introduction (summary)
- Literature review (if needed)
- Project narrative
  - *Project description*
  - *Project outcomes*
  - *Budget narrative*
  - *Task schedule*
- Organization description
- Conclusion
- Attachments

Cover Letter

Usually one page long, the **cover letter** should identify who you are and your professional affiliation. It should specify the grant that you are applying for, summarize the proposed project, and include the amount of funding you are requesting.

Title Page

On a single page, show the **title** of the project, names of project staff and their affiliations, the date submitted, and the name of the recipient's organization. This page serves as the cover of the grant proposal.

Application Form

Especially in online grant applications, an application form may replace the cover letter and title page. This form may be one or more pages and may require you to check boxes, fill in blanks, or insert brief descriptions or other information into text boxes or blank spaces. A word or character limit (typically 250–400 words) may be imposed or enforced. An official signature (or its electronic equivalent) is often required. This section may request detailed information about the applicant organization, such as staff or board of directors' demographic composition or its human resources policies.

Introduction

The **introduction** or summary is your proposal at a glance—it briefly describes (within a given limit) the problem to be solved and projects the expected outcomes of your grant proposal. If substantial **research** is involved, you may also describe your proposed research methods (interviews, questionnaires, videotapes, observations, and so on) in a separate paragraph. See also **abstracts**.

Literature Review

The literature review lists the relevant research sources you consulted in preparing your proposal. Also called a *References* or *Works Cited* section, it allows reviewers of your proposal to assess your familiarity with current research in the field. Is your research up to date? Thorough? Pertinent? Be selective: Include only relevant journal articles, books, interviews, broadcasts, **blogs and forums**, and other sources. In nonresearch proposals (those not based on secondary or formal research), a limited number of citations are frequently included in text within the project narrative or as footnotes or endnotes.

Project Narrative

The heart of the proposal, the project narrative describes in detail the scope of the work, expected outcomes, list of tasks, project activity schedule from start to finish, and estimated cost. Be specific and thorough.

Project Description. The project description includes an overview of the project and details of how the research project or program will be conducted (its methodology). In nonresearch proposals, include a succinct *statement of need*—also called a *case statement*—which presents the facts and evidence that support the need for the project. The information presented can come from authorities in the field, as well as from your organization's own experience or research. A logical and persuasive statement of need demonstrates that your company or nonprofit organization sufficiently understands the situation and is therefore capable of addressing it satisfactorily. Clearly indicate why or how your solution improves on existing or previous ones, and cite evidence to support this. Emphasize the benefits of the proposed activities for the grant maker's intended constituency or target population and explain why your solution to the problem or plan to fulfill the need should be approved. Most RFPs and grant-maker guidelines provide a list of specific questions for applicants to answer or required topics that must be persuasively addressed in this section.

G

Project Outcomes. Having described the preparations and justification for the program, the grant writer must describe the outcomes or deliverables of the proposal—what the funding organization can expect as a result of the time, labor, and financial support it has invested in the program. Outcomes are stated as quantifiable objectives—improvements in reading scores, volume of carbon emission reductions, aerobic fitness measures, and so on. Grant proposals, especially those solicited by government agencies, also must provide detailed plans for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to evaluate the success or failure of the research or program in achieving the stated outcomes.*

Budget Narrative. Next, include a budget-narrative section that provides a detailed listing of costs for personnel, equipment, building renovations, and other grant-related expenses. This information must be clear, accurate, and arranged in an easily understood format for those evaluating the data (usually in a **table**). Many granting organizations, including government agencies, require that specified budget forms be used. If your proposal is approved, you are being entrusted with funds belonging to someone else and you are accountable for them. Your cost estimates may also be subject to changes over which you have no control, such as price increases for equipment, software, or consulting assistance. The project may also require ongoing funding following completion of the grant's tasks. Either provide an estimate of such costs or note that they will appear in a Future Funding or Sustainability section.

Task Schedule. Next, prepare a schedule of tasks that need to be performed to implement the program or complete the project. Arrange them as bulleted points in sequence from first to last with due dates for each, or present them in a table or perhaps in a Gantt chart as described in **graphs**.

*Many grant writers find the system called SMART useful. The SMART system assists writers in setting feasible performance goals and means of measuring success. It is described at www.yale/edu/hronline/focus/goal.html.

Organization Description

The organization description may follow the Introduction or it may be placed just prior to the Conclusion, depending on RFP requirements or the granting organization's guidelines. Describe the applicant organization briefly in terms of mission, history, qualifications, and credibility (significant, related accomplishments), taking care to include all information requested in the RFP or grant guidelines. Granting organizations consider not only the merits of the proposed program or research but also your organization's standing in the community and similar advantages.

Conclusion

This brief wrap-up section emphasizes the benefits or advantages of your project. This section affords you one more opportunity to give the funding organization a reason why your proposal merits its support. Emphasize the benefits of the research, program, or other activities for the grant maker's intended constituency or target population. Finally, express your appreciation for the opportunity to submit the proposal and close with a statement of your willingness to provide further information.

Attachments

Funding organizations request supporting information, such as nonprofit-status documentation, copies of legal documents (for example, articles of incorporation or bylaws), or lists of information that you may need to design and compose yourself. Provide a comprehensive list of attachments and clearly label each item to guide the grant reviewer in evaluating the proposal package. See also **appendixes**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Writing Grant Proposals

- ✔ Analyze the granting organization's RFP or guidelines carefully to best formulate your request to match its funding interests and priorities.
- ✔ Review the descriptions of proposal contexts, strategies, and types in the **proposals** entry.
- ✔ Respond to every question or address every topic requested.
- ✔ Strive for **conciseness** in the narrative without sacrificing **clarity**—make every word count.
- ✔ Emphasize the benefits of your proposal to the granting organization and its constituents.
- ✔ Follow all instructions meticulously because failure to include requested information or to observe format requirements may be grounds for rejection or lack of review.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Grant Proposals** (*continued*)

✔ Review the final grant proposal carefully. Because many online submission systems do not spell check, draft sections in a word processor, then paste them into the electronic form.

G

graphs

A graph presents numerical or quantitative data in visual form and offers several advantages over presenting data within the text or in **tables**. Trends, movements, distributions, comparisons, and cycles are more readily apparent in graphs than they are in tables. However, although graphs present data in a more comprehensible form than tables do, they are often less precise. For that reason, some **audiences** may need graphs to be accompanied by tables that give exact data. The types of graphs described in this entry include line graphs, bar graphs, pie graphs, and picture graphs. For advice on integrating graphs within text, see **visuals**; for information about using presentation graphics, see **presentations**. For combining graphs with other elements, see **infographics**.

Line Graphs

A line graph shows the relationship between two variables or sets of numbers by plotting points in relation to two axes drawn at right angles (Figure G–5). The vertical axis usually represents amounts, and the horizontal axis usually represents increments of time. Line graphs that portray more than one set of variables (double-line graphs) allow for comparisons between two sets of data for the same period of time. You can emphasize the difference between the two lines by shading the space between them, as shown in Figure G–5.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Be especially careful to proportion the vertical and horizontal scales so that they present the data precisely and free of visual distortion. To do otherwise is not only inaccurate but also potentially unethical. (See **ethics in writing**.) In Figure G–6, the graph at the left gives the appearance of a dramatic decrease in lab-test failures because the scale is unevenly compressed, with some years selectively omitted. The graph at the right represents the trend more accurately because the years are evenly distributed without omissions. ❖

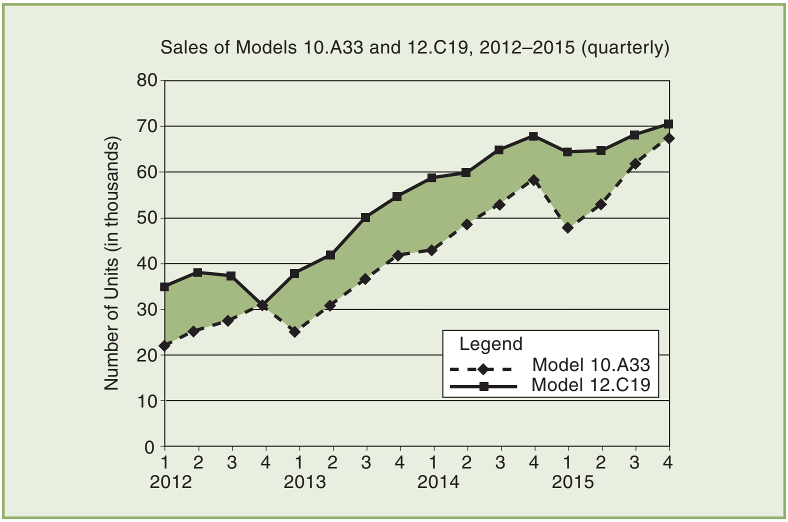


FIGURE G–5. Double-Line Graph (with Shading)

Bar Graphs

Bar graphs consist of horizontal or vertical bars of equal width, scaled in length to represent some quantity. They are commonly used to show (1) quantities of the same item at different times, (2) quantities of different items at the same time, and (3) quantities of the different parts of an

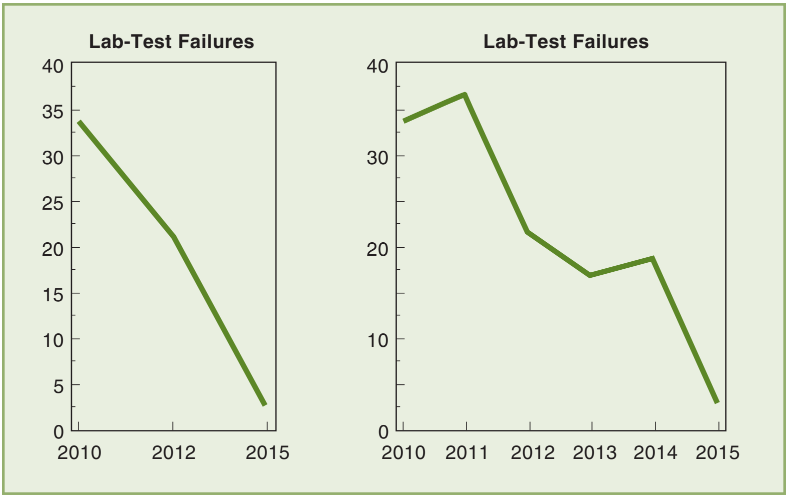


FIGURE G–6. Distorted (left) and Distortion-Free (right) Expressions of Data

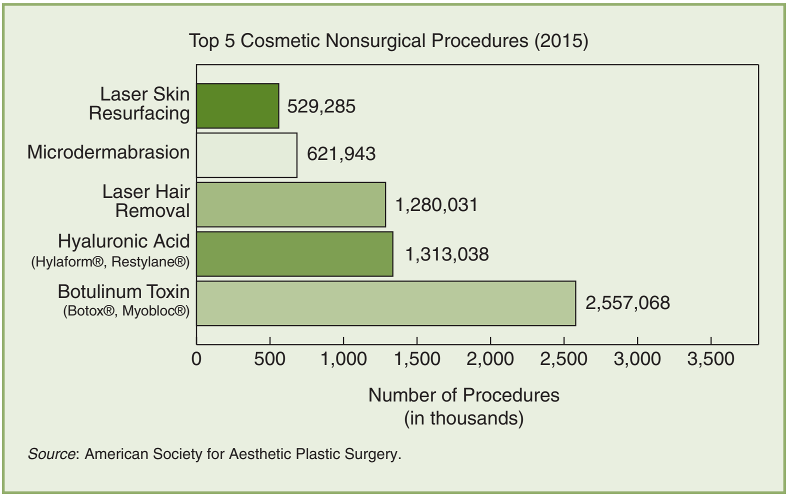


FIGURE G–7. Bar Graph (Quantities of Different Items During a Fixed Period)

item that make up a whole (in which case, the segments of the bar graph must total 100 percent). The horizontal bar graph in Figure G–7 shows the quantities of different items for the same period of time.

Bar graphs can also show the different portions of an item that make up the whole, as shown in Figure G–8. Such a bar graph is divided according to the appropriate proportions of the subcomponents of the item. This type of graph, also called a *column graph* when constructed vertically, can indicate multiple items. Where such items represent parts of a whole, as in Figure G–8, the segments in the bar graph must total 100 percent. Note that in addition to labels, each subdivision of a bar graph must be marked clearly by color, shading, or crosshatching, with a key or labels that identify the subdivisions represented. Be aware that three-dimensional graphs can make sections seem larger than the amounts they represent.

A Gantt chart is a type of horizontal bar graph designed to plan and track the status of projects from beginning to end. As shown in Figure G–9, the horizontal axis represents the length of a project divided into time increments—days, weeks, or months. The timeline usually runs across the top of the chart. The vertical axis represents the individual tasks that make up the project and can include a second column listing the staff responsible for each task. The horizontal bars in the body of the chart identify each task and show its beginning and end dates. Gantt charts are often prepared with spreadsheet or project-management software. See also **collaborative writing**.

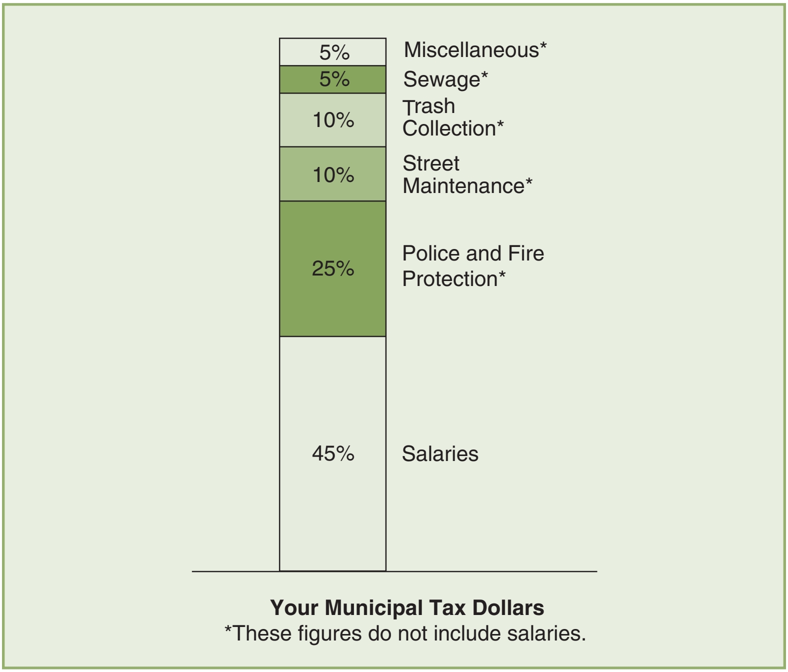


FIGURE G–8. Bar (Column) Graph (Showing the Parts That Make Up the Whole)

Pie Graphs

A pie graph presents data as wedge-shaped sections of a circle. The circle equals 100 percent, or the whole, of some quantity, and the wedges represent how the whole is divided. Many times, the data shown in a bar graph could also be depicted in a pie graph. For example, Figure G–8 shows percentages of a whole in a bar-graph form. Figure G–10 shows the same data converted into a pie graph, dividing "Your Municipal Tax Dollars" into wedge-shaped sections that represent percentages with salaries emphasized. Pie graphs provide a quicker way of presenting information than can be shown in a table, yet a more detailed breakdown of the same information often accompanies a pie graph.

Picture Graphs

Picture graphs are modified bar graphs that use pictorial symbols of the item portrayed. Each symbol corresponds to a specified quantity of the item, as shown in Figure G–11. Note that for precision and clarity, the picture graph includes the total quantity following the symbols.

G

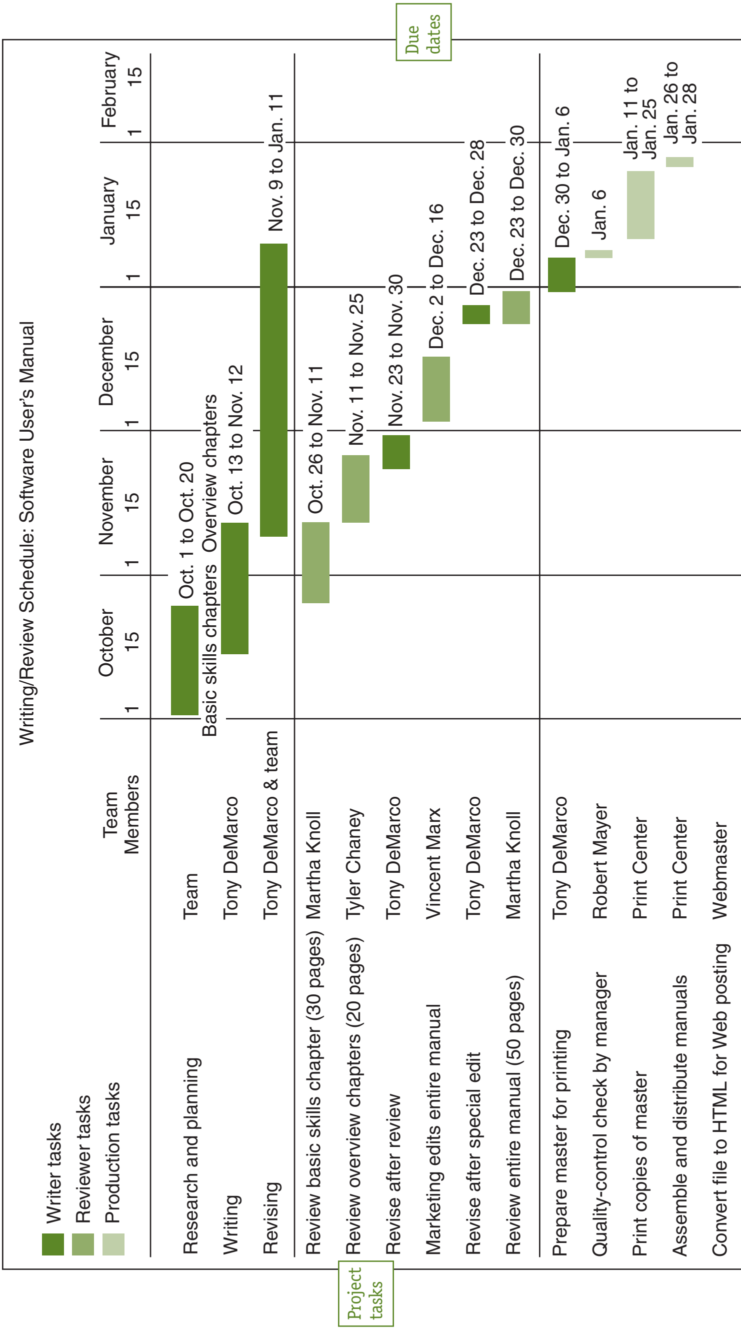


FIGURE G–9. Gantt Chart Showing Project Schedule

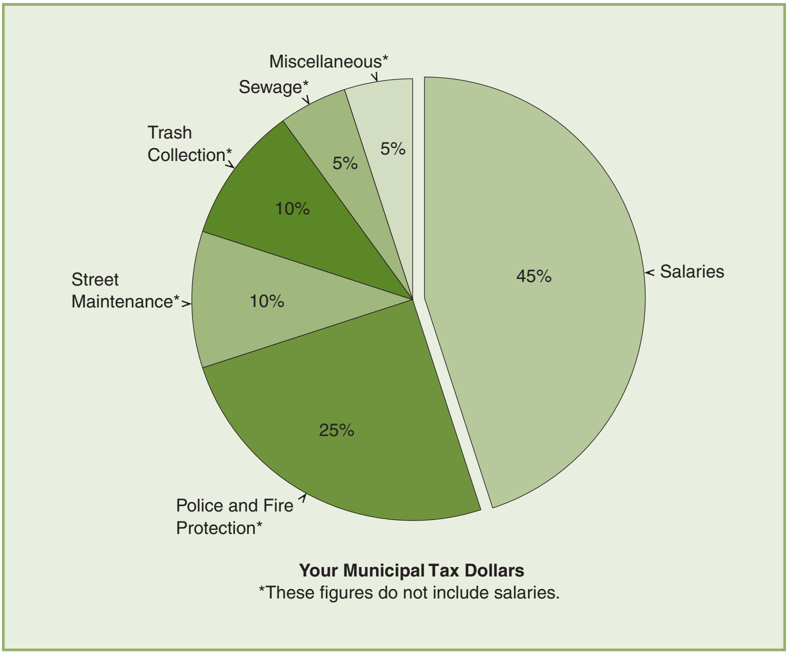


FIGURE G–10. Pie Graph (Showing Percentages of the Whole)

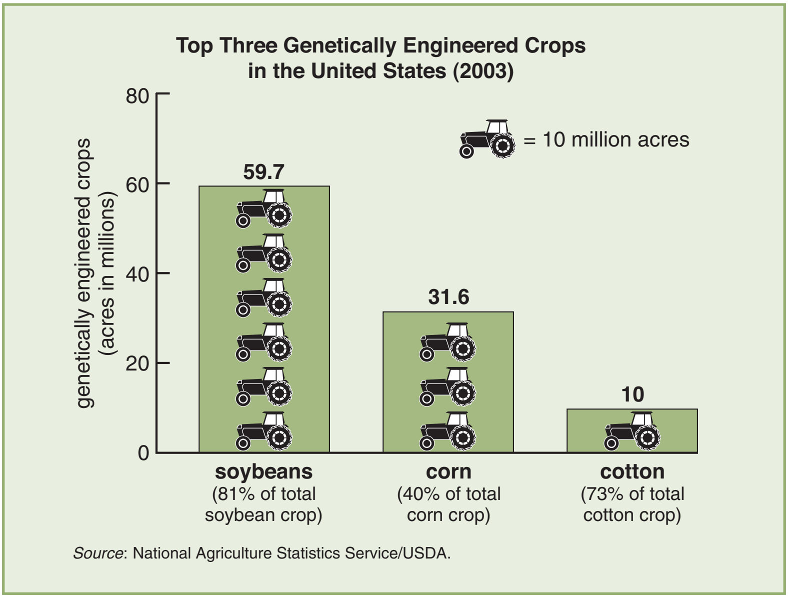


FIGURE G–11. Picture Graph

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Creating Graphs

FOR ALL GRAPHS

✔ Give your graph a descriptive title that is accurate and concise.

✔ Use, as needed, a key or legend that lists and defines symbols (see Figure G–5).

✔ Include a source line under the graph at the lower left when the data come from another source (see Figure G–11).

✔ Place explanatory footnotes directly below the figure caption or label (see Figures G–8 and G–10).

FOR LINE GRAPHS

✔ Indicate the zero point of the graph (the point where the two axes intersect).

✔ Insert a break in the scale if the range of data shown makes it inconvenient to begin at zero.

✔ Divide the vertical axis into equal portions, from the least amount (or zero) at the bottom to the greatest amount at the top.

✔ Divide the horizontal axis into equal units from left to right and label the units to show what they represent.

✔ Make all lettering read horizontally if possible, although the caption or label for the vertical axis is usually positioned vertically (see Figure G–5).

FOR BAR GRAPHS

✔ Differentiate among the types of data each bar or part of a bar represents by color, shading, or crosshatching.

✔ Avoid three-dimensional graphs when they make bars seem larger than the amounts they represent.

FOR PIE GRAPHS

✔ Make sure that the complete circle is equivalent to 100 percent.

✔ Sequence the wedges clockwise from largest to smallest, beginning at the 12 o'clock position, whenever possible.

✔ Limit the number of items in the pie graph to avoid clutter and to ensure that the wedges are thick enough to be clear. (Some software allows users to open and examine wedges in greater detail.)

✔ Give each wedge a distinctive color, pattern, shade, or texture.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Graphs** (*continued*)

- ✔ Label each wedge with its percentage value and keep all call-outs (labels that identify the wedges) horizontal.
- ✔ Detach a wedge, as shown in Figure G–10, if you wish to draw attention to a particular segment of the pie graph.

FOR PICTURE GRAPHS

- ✔ Use picture graphs to add interest to **presentations** and documents (such as **newsletters**) that are aimed at wide audiences.
- ✔ Choose symbols that are easily recognizable. See also **global graphics**.
- ✔ Let each symbol represent the same number of units.
- ✔ Indicate larger quantities by using more symbols instead of larger symbols because relative sizes are difficult to judge accurately.
- ✔ Indicate the total quantity following the symbols, as shown in Figure G–11.
- ✔ Indicate the zero point of the graph when appropriate.

H

he / she

The use of either *he* or *she* to refer to both sexes excludes half of the population. (See also **biased language**.) To avoid this problem, you could use the phrases *he or she* and *his or her*. ("Whoever is appointed will find *his or her* task difficult.") However, *he or she* and *his or her* are clumsy when used repeatedly, as are *he/she* and similar constructions. One solution is to reword the sentence to use a plural **pronoun**; if you do, change the **nouns** or other pronouns to match the plural form.

Administrators *their jobs* *they understand*
▸ ~~The administrator~~ cannot do ~~his or her job~~ until ~~he or she understands~~ the organization's culture.

In other cases, you may be able to avoid using a pronoun altogether.

an
▸ Everyone must submit ~~his or her~~ expense report by Monday.

Of course, a pronoun cannot always be omitted without changing the meaning of a sentence.

Another solution is to omit troublesome pronouns by using the imperative **mood**.

Submit all *s*
▸ ~~Everyone must submit his or her~~ expense report by Monday.

headers and footers

A *header* in a **formal report** or other document appears at the top of each page, and a *footer* appears at the bottom of each page. Although the information included in headers and footers varies greatly from one organization to the next, the header and footer shown in Figure H–1 are typical.

Headers or footers should include at least the page number but may also include the document title, the topic (or subtopic) of a section, the

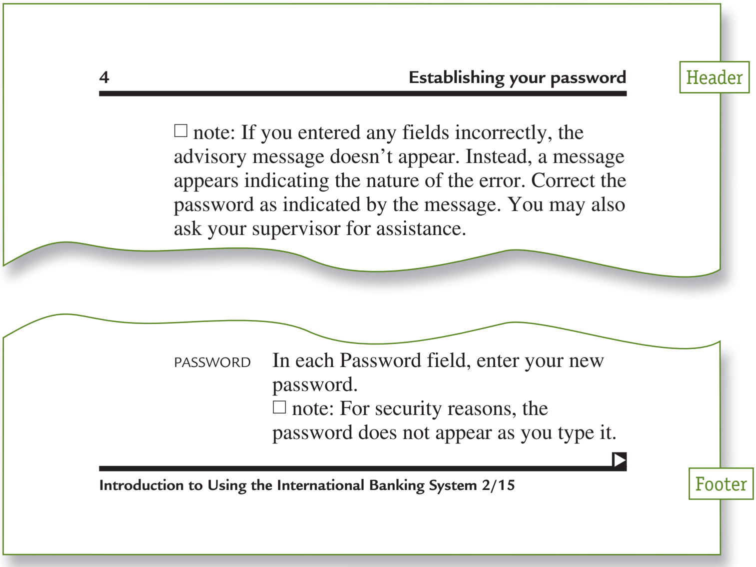


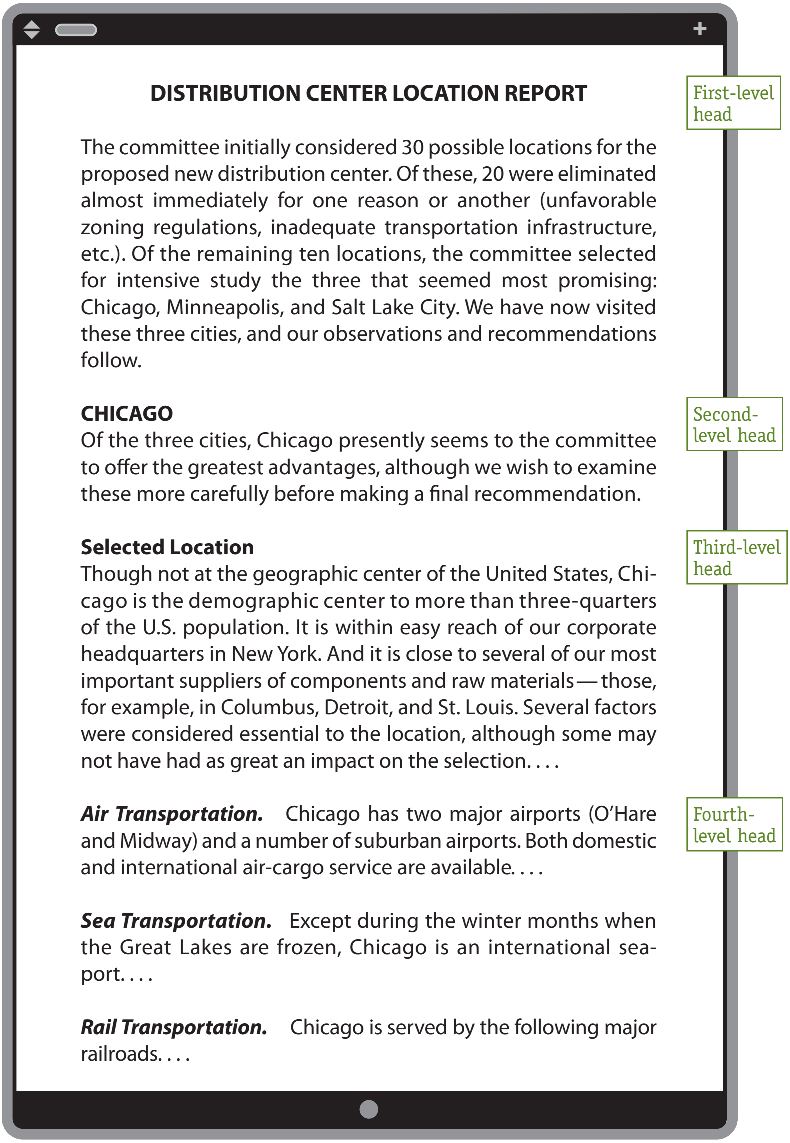
FIGURE H–1. Header and Footer

date of the document, the names of the author or recipients, and other identifying information to help **readers** keep track of where they are in the document. Keep your headers and footers concise because too much information in them can create visual clutter. For examples of headers used in correspondence, see **letters** and **memos**. See also **layout and design** and **writing for the Web**.

headings

Headings (also called *heads*) are titles or subtitles that highlight the main topics and signal topic changes within the body of a document, whether an **e-mail**, a **memo**, a **report**, or a Web page. (See also **writing for the Web**.) Headings help **readers** find information and divide the material into comprehensible segments. Some documents, such as **formal reports** and **proposals**, may need several levels of headings (as shown in Figure H–2) to indicate major divisions, subdivisions, and even smaller units. If possible, avoid using more than four levels of headings. See also **layout and design**.

H



DISTRIBUTION CENTER LOCATION REPORT

The committee initially considered 30 possible locations for the proposed new distribution center. Of these, 20 were eliminated almost immediately for one reason or another (unfavorable zoning regulations, inadequate transportation infrastructure, etc.). Of the remaining ten locations, the committee selected for intensive study the three that seemed most promising: Chicago, Minneapolis, and Salt Lake City. We have now visited these three cities, and our observations and recommendations follow.

CHICAGO

Of the three cities, Chicago presently seems to the committee to offer the greatest advantages, although we wish to examine these more carefully before making a final recommendation.

Selected Location

Though not at the geographic center of the United States, Chicago is the demographic center to more than three-quarters of the U.S. population. It is within easy reach of our corporate headquarters in New York. And it is close to several of our most important suppliers of components and raw materials—those, for example, in Columbus, Detroit, and St. Louis. Several factors were considered essential to the location, although some may not have had as great an impact on the selection. . . .

Air Transportation. Chicago has two major airports (O'Hare and Midway) and a number of suburban airports. Both domestic and international air-cargo service are available. . . .

Sea Transportation. Except during the winter months when the Great Lakes are frozen, Chicago is an international seaport. . . .

Rail Transportation. Chicago is served by the following major railroads. . . .

FIGURE H–2. Headings Used in a Document

Headings typically represent the major topics of a document. In a short document, you can use the major divisions of your outline as headings; in a longer document, you may need to use both major and minor divisions.

General Heading Style

No one format for headings is correct. Often an organization settles on a standard format, which everyone in that organization follows. Sometimes a client for whom a report or proposal is being prepared requires a particular format. In the absence of specific guidelines, follow the system illustrated in Figure H–2.

Decimal Numbering System

The decimal numbering system uses a combination of numbers and decimal points to differentiate among levels of headings. Some documents, such as **specifications**, benefit from the decimal numbering system for ease of cross-referencing sections. The following example shows the correspondence between different levels of headings and the decimal numbers used:

1. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING
    1.1 Second-level heading
    1.2 Second-level heading
        1.2.1 Third-level heading
        1.2.2 Third-level heading
            1.2.2.1 Fourth-level heading
            1.2.2.2 Fourth-level heading
    1.3 Second-level heading
2. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING

Although decimal headings are indented in an outline or a **table of contents**, they are flush with the left margins when they function as headings in the body of a report. Every heading starts on a new line, with an extra line of space above and below the heading.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Headings**

✔ Use headings to signal a new topic. Use a lower-level heading to indicate a new subtopic within the larger topic.

✔ Make headings concise but specific enough to be informative, as in Figure H–2.

✔ Avoid too many or too few headings or levels of headings; too many clutter a document, and too few fail to provide recognizable structure.

✔ Ensure that headings at the same level are of relatively equal importance and have **parallel structure**.

✔ Subdivide sections only as needed; when you do, try to subdivide them into at least two lower-level headings.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Headings** (*continued*)

- ✔ Do not allow a heading to substitute for discussion; the text should read as if the heading were not there.
- ✔ Do not leave a heading as the final line of a page. If two lines of text cannot fit below a heading, start the section at the top of the next page.

hyphens

DIRECTORY

Hyphens with Compound Words 250
Hyphens with Modifiers 250
Hyphens with Prefixes and Suffixes 251
Hyphens and Clarity 251
Other Uses of the Hyphen 251

The hyphen (-) is used primarily for linking and separating words and parts of words. The hyphen often improves **clarity** (as in *re-sign* and *resign*). The hyphen is sometimes confused with the **dash** (—), which has many other functions.

Hyphens with Compound Words

Some **compound words** are formed with hyphens (*able-bodied*, *over-the-counter*). Hyphens are also used with multiword **numbers** from twenty-one through ninety-nine and fractions when they are written out (*three-quarters*). Most current **dictionaries** indicate whether compound words are hyphenated, written as one word, or written as separate words.

Hyphens with Modifiers

Two- and three-word **modifiers** that express a single thought are hyphenated when they precede a **noun**.

- ▸ It was a *well-written* report.

However, a modifying phrase is not hyphenated when it follows the noun it modifies.

- ▸ The report was *well written*.

If each of the words can modify the noun without the aid of the other modifying word or words, do not use a hyphen (a *new laser* printer). If the first word is an **adverb** ending in *-ly*, do not use a hyphen (a *privately held* company). A hyphen is always used as part of a letter or number modifier (*A-frame house*, *22-inch screen*).

In a series of unit modifiers that all have the same term following the hyphen, the term following the hyphen need not be repeated throughout the series; for greater smoothness and brevity, use the term only at the end of the series.

▸ The third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor laboratories were inspected.

Hyphens with Prefixes and Suffixes

A hyphen is used with a **prefix** when the root word is a proper noun (*pre-Columbian*, *anti-American*, *post-Newtonian*). A hyphen may be used when the prefix ends and the root word begins with the same vowel (*re-enter*, *anti-inflammatory*). A hyphen is used when *ex-* means "former" (*ex-president*, *ex-spouse*) and may be used to emphasize a prefix. ("He is *anti-change*.") The **suffix** *-elect* is hyphenated (*president-elect*).

Hyphens and Clarity

The presence or absence of a hyphen can alter the meaning of a sentence.

AMBIGUOUS We need a biological waste management system.

That sentence could mean one of two things: (1) We need a system to manage "biological waste" or (2) We need a "biological" system to manage waste.

CLEAR We need a *biological-waste* management system. [1]

CLEAR We need a biological *waste-management* system. [2]

To avoid confusion, some words and modifiers should always be hyphenated. *Re-cover* does not mean the same thing as *recover*, for example; the same is true of *re-sign* and *resign* and *un-ionized* and *unionized*.

Other Uses of the Hyphen

Hyphens are used between letters showing how a word is spelled.

▸ In his e-mail, he misspelled *believed* as b-e-l-e-i-v-e-d.

A hyphen can stand for *to* or *through* between letters and numbers (*pages 44-46*, *the Detroit-Toledo Expressway*, *A-L and M-Z*).

Hyphens are commonly used in telephone numbers (*800-555-1212*), Web addresses (*computer-parts.com*), file names (*report-15.doc*), and similar number/symbol combinations. See also **dates**.

Hyphens are also used to divide words at the end of a line, especially for full-justified margins within small columns. The following are standard guidelines for using hyphens to divide words at the end of lines.

- Do not divide one-syllable words.
- Divide words at syllable breaks, which you can determine with a dictionary.
- Do not divide a word if only one letter would remain at the end of a line or if fewer than three letters would start a new line.
- Do not divide a word at the end of a page; carry the word over to the next page.
- If a word already has a hyphen in its spelling, divide the word at the existing hyphen.
- Do not use a hyphen to break a URL or an e-mail address at the end of a line. See also **documenting sources**.

I

idioms

An idiom is a group of words that has a special meaning apart from its literal meaning. Someone "runs for political office" in the United States, for example, while a candidate "stands for office" in the United Kingdom. Because such expressions are specific to a culture, nonnative speakers must memorize them.

Idioms are often constructed with **prepositions** that follow **adjectives** (*similar to*), **nouns** (*need for*), and **verbs** (*approve of*). Some idioms can change meaning slightly with the preposition used, as in *agree to* ("consent") and *agree with* ("in accord"). The following are typical idioms that give nonnative speakers trouble.

call off [cancel]	hand in [submit]
call on [visit a client]	hand out [distribute]
drop in on [visit unexpectedly]	look up [research a subject]
find out [discover information]	run into [meet by chance]
get through with [finish]	run out of [deplete supply]
give up [quit]	watch out for [be careful]

Idioms often provide helpful shortcuts. In fact, they can make writing more natural and lively. Avoid them, however, if your writing is to be translated into another language or read in other English-speaking countries. Because no language system can fully explain such usages, a reader must check **dictionaries** or usage guides to interpret the meaning of idioms. See also **English as a second language**, **global communication**, and **international correspondence**.

illegal / illicit

If something is *illegal*, it is prohibited by law. If something is *illicit*, it is prohibited by either law or custom. *Illicit* behavior may or may not be *illegal*, but it does violate social convention or moral codes and therefore usually has a clandestine or immoral connotation. ("The employee's *illicit* sexual behavior caused a scandal, but the company's attorney concluded that no *illegal* acts were committed.") See **connotation / denotation**.

illustrations (*see* visuals)

imply / infer

If you *imply* something, you hint at or suggest it. ("Her e-mail *implied* that the project would be delayed.") If you *infer* something, you reach a conclusion based on evidence or interpretation. ("The manager *inferred* from the e-mail that the project would be delayed.")

in / into

I

In means "inside of"; *into* implies movement from the outside to the inside. ("The equipment was *in* the test chamber, so she reached *into* the chamber to adjust it.")

in order to

Most often, *in order to* is a meaningless filler phrase that is dropped into a sentence without thought. See also **conciseness**.

- To ~~In order to~~ open the program, enter the user name and password before you complete the security protocol.

However, the phrase *in order to* is sometimes essential to the meaning of a sentence.

- If the vertical scale of a graph line would not normally show the zero point, use a horizontal break in the graph *in order to* include the zero point.

In order to also helps control the **pace** of a sentence, even when it is not essential to the meaning of the sentence.

- The committee must know the estimated costs *in order to* evaluate the feasibility of the project.

in terms of

When used to indicate a shift from one kind of language or terminology to another, the phrase *in terms of* can be useful.

- *In terms of* gross sales, the year has been relatively successful; however, *in terms of* net income, it has been discouraging.

When simply dropped into a sentence because it easily comes to mind, *in terms of* is meaningless **affectation**. See also **conciseness**.

- She was thinking ~~in terms~~ of subcontracting much of the work.

incident reports

The incident report is used to analyze such events as accidents, equipment failures, or health emergencies. For example, the report shown in Figure I–1 describes an accident involving personal injury. The report assesses the causes of the problem and suggests changes necessary to prevent its recurrence. Because it is usually an internal document, an incident report normally follows the **memo** format unless your organization has a standard incident report form.

In the subject line of the memo, state the precise problem you are reporting. Then, in the body of the report, provide a detailed, precise description of the problem. What happened? Where and when did the problem occur? Was anybody hurt? Was there any property damage? Was there a work stoppage?

In your **conclusion**, state what has been or will be done to correct the conditions that led to the problem. That may include, for example, recommendations for training in safety practices, using improved equipment, and wearing protective clothing. See also **reports**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Because insurance claims, workers' compensation awards, and even lawsuits may hinge on the information contained in an incident report, be sure to include precise times, dates, locations, treatment of injuries, names of any witnesses, and any other crucial information. (Notice the careful use of language and factual detail in Figure I–1.) Be thorough and accurate in your analysis of the problem and support any judgments or conclusions with facts. Be objective: Always use a neutral **tone** and avoid assigning blame. If you speculate about the cause of the problem, make it clear to your **readers** that you are speculating. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

indexing

An index is an alphabetical list of all the major topics and sometimes subtopics in a written work. It cites the pages where each topic can be found and allows **readers** to find information on particular topics quickly

I

Consolidated Energy, Inc.

To: Marvin Lundquist, Vice President
Administrative Services

From: Kalo Katarlan, Safety Officer *KK*
Field Service Operations

Date: August 20, 2015

Subject: Field Service Employee Accident on August 4, 2015

The following is an initial report of an accident that occurred on Monday, August 4, 2015, involving John Markley, and that resulted in two days of lost time.

Accident Summary
John Markley stopped by a rewiring job on German Road. Chico Ruiz was working there, stringing new wire, and John was checking with Chico about the materials he wanted for framing a pole. Some tree trimming had been done in the area, and John offered to help remove some of the debris by loading it into the pickup truck he was driving. While John was loading branches into the bed of the truck, a piece broke off in his right hand and struck his right eye.

Accident Details
1. John's right eye was struck by a piece of tree branch. John had just undergone laser surgery on his right eye on Friday, July 31, to reattach his retina.
2. John immediately covered his right eye with his hand, and Chico Ruiz gave him a paper towel with ice to cover his eye and help ease the pain.

7. On Thursday, August 6, John returned to his eye surgeon. Although bruised, his eye was not damaged, and the surgically reattached retina was still in place.

Recommendations
To prevent a recurrence of such an accident, the Safety Department will require the following actions in the future:

- When working around and moving debris such as tree limbs or branches, all service crew employees must wear safety eyewear with side shields.
- All service crew employees must always consider the possibility of shock for an injured employee. If crew members cannot leave the job site to care for the injured employee, someone on the crew must call for assistance from the Service Center. The Service Center phone number is printed in each service crew member's handbook.

FIGURE I–1. Incident Report (Using Printed Memo)

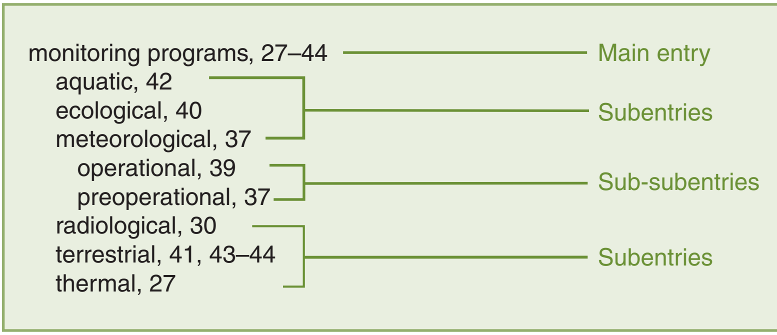


FIGURE I–2. Index Entry (with Main Entry, Subentries, and Sub-subentries)

and easily, as shown in Figure I–2. The index always comes at the very end of the work.

The key to compiling a useful index is selectivity. Instead of listing every possible reference to a topic, select references to passages where the topic is discussed fully or where a significant point is made about it. For index entries like those in Figure I–2, choose key terms that best represent a topic. Key terms are those words or phrases that a reader would most likely look for in an index. For example, the key terms in a reference to the development of legislation about **environmental impact statements** would probably be *legislation* and *environmental impact statement*, not *development*. In selecting terms for index entries, use chapter or section titles only if they include such key terms. For index entries on **tables** and **visuals**, use the words from their titles that will function as key terms a reader might seek.

Compiling an Index

Do not attempt to compile an index until the final manuscript is completed because terminology and page numbers will not be accurate before then. The best way to manually compile a list of topics is to read through your written work from the beginning; each time a key term appears in a significant context, note the term and its page number. An index entry can consist solely of a main entry and its page number.

- ▶ aquatic monitoring programs, 42

An index entry can also include a main entry, subentries, and even sub-subentries, as shown in Figure I–2. A subentry indicates the pages where a specific subcategory or subdivision of the main topic can be found. When you have compiled a list of key terms for the entire work, sort the main entries alphabetically, then sort all subentries and sub-subentries alphabetically beneath their main entries. To help indexers with this process, the American Society for Indexing lists software available for indexing at its Web site, www.asindexing.org.

Wording Index Entries

The first word of an index entry should be the principal word because the reader will look for topics alphabetically by their main words. Selecting the right word to list first is easier for some topics than for others. For instance, *tips on repairing electrical wire* would not be a suitable index entry because a reader looking for information on electrical wire would not look under the word *tips*. Ordinarily, an entry with two keywords, such as *electrical wire*, should be indexed under each word (*electrical wire* and *wire, electrical*). A main index entry should be written as a **noun** or a noun **phrase** rather than as an **adjective** alone or a **verb**.

I

▶ electrical wire, 20–22
  grounding, 21
  insulation, 20
  repairing, 22
  size, 21

DIGITAL TIP

Creating an Index

Most word-processing programs include tools that provide a quick and efficient way to create an alphabetical subject index of your document. The index generated by your word-processing software will still need careful review, but using the software to create the first draft can save time. If you need to index a highly complex document, you may want to consider specialized indexing software designed for use by professional indexers and publishers. To view a list of indexing tools and instructions on creating a standard index, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Creating an Index."

Cross-Referencing

Cross-references in an index help readers find other related topics in the text. A reader looking up *technical writing*, for example, might find cross-references to *report* or *manual*. Cross-references do not include page numbers; they merely direct readers to another main index entry where they can find page numbers. The two kinds of cross-references are *see* references and *see also* references.

See references are most commonly used with topics that can be identified by several different terms. Listing the topic page numbers by only one of the terms, the indexer then lists the other terms throughout the index as *see* references.

- economic costs. *See* benefit-cost analyses

See references also direct readers to index entries where a topic is listed as a subentry.

- L-shaped fittings. *See* elbows, L-shaped fittings

See also references indicate other entries that include additional information on a topic.

- ecological programs, 40–49. *See also* monitoring programs

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Formatting an Index**

- ✔ Use lowercase for the first words and all subsequent words of main entries, subentries, and sub-subentries unless they are proper nouns or would otherwise be capitalized. See **capitalization**.
- ✔ Use italics for the cross-reference terms *see* and *see also*.
- ✔ Place each subentry in the index on a separate line, indented from its main entry. Indent sub-subentries from the preceding subentry. Indentations allow readers to scan a column quickly for pertinent subentries or sub-subentries.
- ✔ Separate entries from page numbers with commas.
- ✔ Format the index economically with double columns, as is done in the index to this book.

indiscreet / indiscrete

Indiscreet means "lacking in prudence or sound judgment." ("His public discussion of the proposed merger was *indiscreet*.") *Indiscrete* means "not divided or divisible into parts." ("The separate departments, once combined, become *indiscrete*.") See also **discreet / discrete**.

infographics

Infographics are visual forms of communication that make complex information understandable by combining text, numbers, icons, **graphs**, **flowcharts**, **drawings**, and other **visuals** into a unified whole, as shown in Figure I–3. They are often used to educate wide audiences and can be especially useful for **instructions** and **presentations**. Infographics might be used to show an overview of a process (how to take out a personal loan), a natural phenomenon (the evolution of an animal species), an accident (the anatomy of a train wreck), or a project plan (public transportation options in a city and projected passenger usage). Each of these subjects might prove difficult to illustrate concisely with text or with images alone. See also **tables**.

Infographics can be static, noninteractive visuals intended for public display, print publication, or high-resolution online download. They can also take digital, interactive forms, including such tools as mouseover pop-ups that reveal additional details or animated elements that showcase multiple cause-and-effect scenarios.

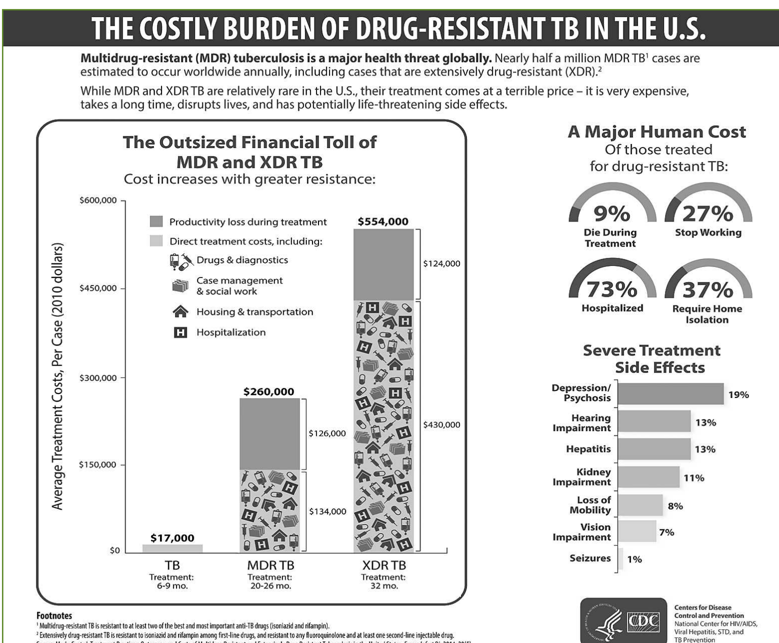


FIGURE I–3. Infographic

Source: http://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom/docs/2014/MDR-XDR-Treatment-Infographic2014.pdf.

They are frequently created by graphic designers who collaborate with subject-area experts on the content. However, professionals without a formal design background can also create infographics for the workplace using a range of free online tools. Search for "tools for creating infographics" or visit such sites as piktochart.com, infogr.am, and creately.com. See the *Writer's Checklist: Creating Infographics* below.

Note the infographic in Figure I–3 depicting the growing burden of drug-resistant tuberculosis in the U.S. It combines explanatory text, typographic devices (captions and icons), and dramatic graphs, all organized into a unified overview of the toll taken by this disease. It also cites the source information for the infographic and identifies its designers. This process could have been described in a text-dense article, but its impact and explanatory power in the graph are striking and memorable.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Infographics**

- ✔ Use images appropriate to the topic, **purpose**, and **audience.**
- ✔ Select images (illustrations and icons), where possible, that are self-explanatory.
- ✔ Arrange text and images in the appropriate sequence to illustrate a process.
- ✔ Do not use dated or obsolete images or icons (rotary telephones, modems).
- ✔ Use culturally neutral images for international audiences (see **global graphics**).
- ✔ Use design elements — logo, typeface, colors — consistent with your organization's branding practices.
- ✔ Ensure that all types of data, graphics, and illustrations are uniform in color and design (see **layout and design**).
- ✔ Check the text for **conciseness**, **clarity**, and accuracy.
- ✔ Cite your sources of information appropriately (see **plagiarism**).

inquiries and responses

The purpose of writing inquiry messages is to obtain responses to requests or to specific questions, as in Figure I–4 on page 262, which shows a college student's request for information from an official at a power company. Inquiries may benefit either the reader (as in requests for information about a product that a company sells) or the writer (as

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: SMetcalf@MillerAssociates.com

CC:

Show BCC

Subject: Info Request: Heating Systems

Dear Ms. Metcalf:

As an architecture student at the University of Dayton, I am working with a team of students to design an energy-efficient house for a class project. We need information on heating systems based on the specifications of our design. To meet our deadline, we would appreciate any information you could provide by November 17.

The house we are designing contains 2,000 square feet of living space (17,600 cubic feet) and meets all the requirements in your brochure "Insulating for Efficiency." We need the following information, based on the southern Ohio climate:

- The proper-size heat pump for our design.
- The wattage of the supplemental electrical heating units required.
- The estimated power consumption and rates for those units for one year.

We will be happy to send you our preliminary design report. If you have questions or suggestions, contact me at kparsons@fly.ud.edu or call 513-229-4598.

Thank you for your help.

Kenneth Parsons

FIGURE I–4. Inquiry

in the student's inquiry in Figure I–4). Inquiries that primarily benefit the writer require the use of **persuasion** and special consideration of the needs of your **audience**. See also **correspondence**.

Respond to an inquiry by answering promptly, and be sure to answer every inquiry or question asked, as shown in Figure I–5. How long and how detailed your response should be depends on the nature of the question and the information the writer provides. If you have received an inquiry that you feel you cannot answer, find out who can and forward the inquiry to that person. The person who replies to a forwarded inquiry should state in the first paragraph of the response who has forwarded the original inquiry, as shown in Figure I–5.

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: kparsons@fly.ud.edu

CC: SMetcalf@MillerAssociates.com

Show BCC

Subject: RE: Info Request: Heating Systems

Dear Mr. Parsons:

Susan Metcalf forwarded to me your October 13 inquiry about the house that your architecture team is designing. I can estimate the heating requirements of a typical home of 17,600 cubic feet as follows:

- For such a home, we would generally recommend a heat pump capable of delivering 40,000 Btus, such as our model AL-42 (17 kilowatts).
- With the AL-42's efficiency, you don't need supplemental heating units.
- Depending on usage, the AL-42 unit averages between 1,000 and 1,500 kilowatt-hours from December through March. To determine the current rate for such usage, check with Dayton Power and Light Company.

I can give you an answer that would apply specifically to your house based on its particular design (such as number of stories, windows, and entrances). If you send me more details, I will be happy to provide more precise figures for your interesting project.

Regards,

Ian Mori

FIGURE I–5. Response to an Inquiry

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Writing Inquiries and Responding

✔ Make your questions specific, clear, and concise to receive a prompt, helpful reply.

✔ Phrase your request so that the reader will know immediately the type of information you are seeking, why you need it, and how you will use it.

✔ Present questions in a numbered or bulleted **list**, if possible, to make it easy for your reader to respond.

✔ Keep the number of questions to a minimum to improve your chances of receiving a prompt response.

(continued)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Inquiries and Responding** (*continued*)

- ✔ Offer some inducement for the reader to respond, if possible, such as promising to share the results of your research. See also **"you" viewpoint**.
- ✔ Promise to keep responses confidential, when appropriate.
- ✔ Provide a date by which you need a response.
- ✔ Close by thanking the reader for taking the time to respond and provide your contact information, as shown in Figure I–4.
- ✔ Respond to an inquiry promptly if you have the information and authority.
- ✔ Check your organization's policy and any special issues related to your response.
- ✔ Notify the writer if you need to forward the inquiry to someone else for response.

I

inside / inside of

In the phrase *inside of*, the word *of* is redundant and should be omitted.

▸ The switch is just inside ~~of~~ the door.

Using *inside of* to mean "in less time than" is colloquial and should be avoided in writing.

in less than
▸ They were finished ~~inside of~~ an hour.

insoluble / insolvable

The words *insoluble* and *insolvable* are sometimes used interchangeably to mean "incapable of being solved." *Insoluble* also means "incapable of being dissolved."

▸ Until yesterday, the production problem seemed *insolvable*.

▸ *Insoluble* fiber passes through the intestines largely intact.

instant messaging

Instant messaging (IM) is a communications medium that allows both real-time text communications and the transfer of text or other files, such as an image or a document. (See also **text messaging**.) Instant messaging is especially useful to those who are working in an environment that demands near-instant, brief written exchanges between two or more participants. See also **e-mail** and **selecting the medium**.

To set up routine IM exchanges, work with those with whom you regularly exchange messages to find the appropriate software or tool to use. Consider available tools, such as computer programs or interfaces built into other electronics, as well as text-message capabilities on a mobile phone. Then add to your contact list the user names of those with whom you regularly exchange messages. Choose a screen name that your colleagues will recognize. If you use IM routinely as part of your job, set an "away" status (or message) that signals when you are not available for IM sessions.

When writing instant messages, keep them simple and to the point, covering only one subject in each message to prevent confusion and inappropriate responses. Because screen space is often limited and speed is essential, many who send instant messages use abbreviations and shortened spellings ("u" for "you"). Be sure that your reader will understand such abbreviations; when in doubt, avoid them.

In Figure I–6, the manager of a software-development company in Maine ("Diane") is exchanging instant messages with a business partner in the Netherlands ("Andre"). Notice that the correspondents use an informal style that includes personal and professional abbreviations with which both are familiar ("NP" for *no problem*; and "QSG" for *Quick Start Guide*). These messages demonstrate how IM can not only help people exchange information quickly but also build rapport among distant colleagues and team members.

* instant message with Andre	Last message received at 09:04 AM
8:58 AM	Andre: Hi Diane!
	me: good morning
9:00 AM	Andre: Time for a quick question?
	me: NP!
	Andre: How is it going with the QSG?
9:01 AM	Andre: Will you be finished soon?
	me: I am working on it.
	me: I am targeting Friday
9:02 AM	Andre: If you are not quite finished, send me what you have.
	me: I would recommend finishing the QSG before we focus on user guide.
9:03 AM	Andre: good idea
	Andre: ok, I won't keep you any longer
	Andre: bye
9:04 AM	me: Talk to you later.

FIGURE I–6. Instant-Message Exchange

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Be sure to follow your employer's IM policies, such as any limitations on sending personal messages during work hours or requirements concerning confidentiality. If no specific policy exists, check with your management before using this medium. ❖

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Instant-Messaging Privacy and Security**

- ✔ Set up distinct business and professional contact lists (or accounts) to avoid inadvertently sending a personal message to a business associate.
- ✔ Learn the options, capabilities, and security limitations of your IM system and set the preferences that best suit your use of the system.
- ✔ Save significant IM exchanges (or logs) for your future reference.
- ✔ Be aware that instant messages can be saved by your recipients and may be archived by your employer. (See the Professionalism Note on page 164.)
- ✔ Do not use professional IM for office gossip or inappropriate exchanges.

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instructions

Instructions that are clear and easy to follow prevent miscommunication and help **readers** complete tasks effectively and safely. To write effective instructions, you must thoroughly understand the process, system, or device you are describing. Often, you must observe someone as he or she completes a task and you must perform the steps yourself before you begin to write. Keep in mind that the most effective instructions often combine written elements and **visuals** that reinforce each other. See also **manuals**.

Writing Instructions

Consider the level of knowledge of primary and secondary readers in your **audience**. If all your readers have good backgrounds in the topic, you can use fairly specialized terms. If that is not the case, use **plain language** or include a glossary for specialized terms that you cannot avoid. See also **repurposing**.

Clear and easy-to-follow instructions are written as commands in the imperative **mood**, active **voice**, and (whenever possible) present **tense**.

Raise the .

▶ ~~The~~ access lid ~~will be raised by the operator.~~

Although **conciseness** is important in instructions, **clarity** is essential. You can make sentences shorter by leaving out some **articles** (*a*, *an*, *the*), some **pronouns** (*you*, *this*, *these*), and some **verbs**, but such sentences may result in **telegraphic style** and be harder for the reader to understand. For example, the first version of the following instruction for placing a document in a scanner tray is confusing.

CONFUSING Place page in tray with printed side facing opposite.

CLEAR Place the page in the document tray with the printed side facing away from you.

One good way to make instructions easy to follow is to divide them into short, simple steps in their proper sequence. Steps can be organized with words (*first*, *next*, *finally*) that indicate time or sequence.

▸ *First*, determine the problem the customer is having with the computer. *Next*, observe the system in operation. *At that time*, question the customer until you are sure that the problem has been explained completely. *Then* analyze the problem and make any necessary adjustments.

You can also use numbers, as in the following:

▸ 1. Connect each black cable wire to a brass terminal.
2. Attach one 4-inch green jumper wire to the back.
3. Connect the jumper wire to the bare cable wire.

Consider using the numbered- or bulleted-list feature of your word-processing software to create sequenced steps. See **lists**.

Plan ahead for your reader. If the instructions in step 2 will affect a process in step 9, say so in step 2. Sometimes your instructions have to make clear that two operations must be performed simultaneously. Either state that fact in an **introduction** to the specific instructions or include both operations in one step.

CONFUSING 1. Hold down the CONTROL key.
2. Press the RETURN key before releasing the control key.

CLEAR 1. While holding down the CONTROL key, press the RETURN key.

If your instructions involve many steps, break them into stages, each with a separate heading so that each stage begins again with step 1. Using **headings** as dividers is especially important if your reader is likely to be performing the operation as he or she reads the instructions.

Illustrating Instructions

Illustrations should be developed together with the text, especially for complex instructions that benefit from visuals that foster clarity and

I

conciseness. Using **drawings**, **flowcharts**, **infographics**, **maps**, **photographs**, and other **visuals** fosters clarity by enabling your readers to identify relationships more easily than do long explanations. Some instructions, such as those for products sold internationally, use only visuals. The entry **global graphics** describes visuals that avoid culture-specific connotations and are often used in such instructions.

Consider the **layout and design** of your instructions to most effectively integrate visuals. Highlight important visuals as well as text by making them stand out from the surrounding text. Consider using boxes and boldface or distinctive headings. Experiment with font style, size, and color to determine which devices are most effective.

The instructions in Figure I–7 guide the reader through the steps of streaking a saucer-sized disk of material (called *agar*) used to grow bacteria colonies. The purpose is to thin out the original specimen (the *inoculum*) so that the bacteria will grow in small, isolated colonies. This section could be part of other, larger instructional documents for which streaking is only one step among others.

Warning Readers

Alert your readers to any potentially hazardous materials (or actions) before they reach the step for which the material is needed. Caution readers handling hazardous materials about any requirements for special clothing, tools, equipment, and other safety measures. Highlight warnings, cautions, and precautions to make them stand out visually from the surrounding text. Present warning notices in a box, in all uppercase letters, in large and distinctive fonts, or in color. Experiment with font style, size, and color to determine which devices are most effective.

Figure I–8 shows a warning from an instruction manual for the use of a gas grill. The drawing reinforces the text warning by illustrating the grill's proper clearance from buildings.

Various standards organizations and agencies publish guidelines on the use of terminology, colors, and symbols in instructions and labeling. Two widely influential organizations that publish such guidelines are the American National Standards Institute (www.ansi.org) and the International Organization for Standardization (www.iso.org).

Testing Instructions

To test the accuracy and clarity of your instructions, ask someone who is not familiar with the task to follow your directions. A first-time user can spot missing steps or point out passages that should be worded more clearly. As you observe your tester, note any steps that seem especially confusing and revise accordingly. See **usability testing**.

STREAKING AN AGAR PLATE

Distribute the inoculum over the surface of the agar in the following manner:

1. Beginning at one edge of the saucer, thin the inoculum by streaking back and forth over the same area several times, sweeping across the agar surface until approximately one-quarter of the surface has been covered. *Sterilize the loop in an open flame.*
2. Streak at right angles to the originally inoculated area, carrying the inoculum out from the streaked areas onto the sterile surface with only the first stroke of the wire. Cover half of the remaining sterile agar surface. *Sterilize the loop.*
3. Repeat as described in Step 2, covering the remaining sterile agar surface.

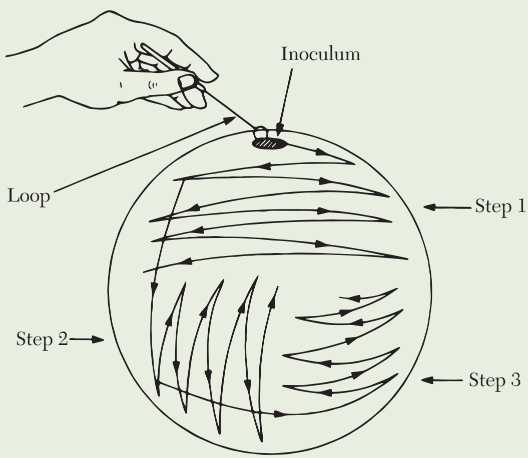


FIGURE I–7. Illustrated Instructions

WARNING

- The assembler/owner is responsible for the assembly, installation, and maintenance of the grill.
- Use the grill outdoors only.
- Do not install your grill in or on recreational vehicles and/or boats.
- Do not let children operate or play near the grill.
- Keep the grill area clear and free from materials that burn, gasoline, bottled gas in any form, and other flammable vapors and liquids.
- Do not block holes in bottom and back of grill.
- Visually check burner flames on a regular basis.
- Use the grill in a well-ventilated space. Never use in an enclosed space, carport, garage, porch, patio, or building made of combustible construction, or under overhead construction.
- Keep grills a distance of 3 ft. (approximately 1 m), from buildings to reduce the possibility of fire or heat damage to materials.

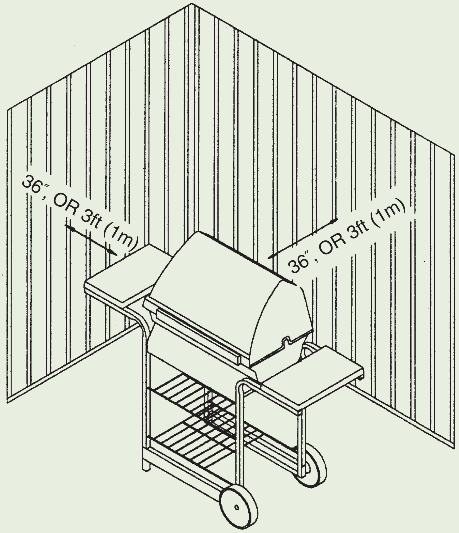


FIGURE I–8. Warning in a Set of Instructions

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Writing Instructions

- ✔ Use the imperative mood and the active voice.
- ✔ Use short sentences and simple present tense as much as possible.
- ✔ Avoid technical terminology and **jargon** that your readers might not know, including undefined **abbreviations**.
- ✔ Do not use elegant variation (two different words for the same thing). See also **affectation**.
- ✔ Eliminate any **ambiguity**.
- ✔ Use effective visuals and highlighting devices.
- ✔ Include appropriate warnings and cautions.
- ✔ Verify that measurements, distances, times, and relationships are precise and accurate.
- ✔ Test your instructions by having someone, such as a member of your audience, follow them while you observe.

insure / ensure / assure

Insure, *ensure*, and *assure* all mean "make secure or certain." *Assure* refers to people, and it alone has the connotation of setting a person's mind at rest. ("I *assure* you that the equipment will be available.") *Ensure* and *insure* mean "make secure from harm." Only *insure* is widely used in the sense of guaranteeing the value of life or property.

▶ We need all the data to *ensure* the success of the project.

▶ We should *insure* the contents of the warehouse.

intensifiers

Intensifiers are **adverbs** that emphasize degree, such as *very*, *quite*, *rather*, *such*, and *too*. Although intensifiers serve a legitimate and necessary function, unnecessary intensifiers can weaken your writing. Eliminate those that do not make an obvious contribution or replace them with specific details.

▶ The team learned the ~~very~~ good news that it had been awarded a *$10,000* ~~rather substantial monetary~~ prize for its design.

Some words (such as *perfect*, *impossible*, and *final*) do not logically permit intensification because, by definition, they do not allow degrees of comparison. Although **usage** often ignores that logical restriction, avoid such comparisons in technical writing. See also **adjectives**, **conciseness**, and **equal / unique / perfect**.

interface

An *interface* is a surface that provides a common boundary between two bodies or areas. The bodies or areas may be conceptual or physical ("the *interface* of a computer and an external storage device"). Do not use *interface* as a substitute for the verbs *cooperate*, *interact*, or even *work with*. See also **affectation** and **buzzwords**.

interjections

An interjection is a word or phrase standing alone or inserted into a sentence to exclaim or to command attention. Grammatically, it has no connection to the sentence. An interjection can be strong (*Hey! Ouch! Wow!*) or mild (*oh*, *well*, *indeed*). A strong interjection is followed by an **exclamation mark**.

- ▶ *Wow!* Profits more than doubled last quarter.

A weak interjection is followed by a comma.

- ▶ *Well,* we need to rethink the proposal.

An interjection inserted into a sentence usually requires a comma before it and after it.

- ▶ We must, *indeed,* rethink the proposal.

Because they get their main expressive force from sound, interjections are more common in speech than in writing. Use them sparingly.

international correspondence

Business **correspondence** varies among national cultures. Organizational patterns, persuasive strategies, forms of courtesy, formality, and ideas about efficiency differ from country to country. For example, in the United States, direct, concise correspondence usually demonstrates courtesy by not wasting the reader's time. In many other countries, however, such directness and brevity may seem rude to **readers**, suggesting that the writer is dismissive or lacking in manners. (See **audience** and **tone**.) Likewise, where a U.S. writer might consider one brief **letter** or **e-mail** sufficient to communicate a request, a writer in another country may expect an exchange of three or four longer letters to pave the way for action.

Cultural Differences in Correspondence

When you read correspondence from businesspeople in other cultures or countries, be alert to differences in such features as customary expressions, openings, and closings. Business writers in some cultures, for example, traditionally use indirect openings that may express good wishes about the recipient's family or compliment the reader's success or prosperity. Consider deeper issues as well, such as how writers from other cultures express bad news. Some cultures traditionally express negative messages, such as refusals, indirectly to avoid embarrassing the recipient. (See **refusal letters**.) Such cultural differences are often based on perceptions of time, face-saving, and other traditions. The features and communication styles of specific national cultures are complex; the entry **global communication** provides information and resources for cross-cultural study. See also **global graphics**.

Cross-Cultural Examples

Figures I–9 and I–10 show a draft and a final version of a letter written by an American businessperson to a Japanese businessperson. The opening and closing of the draft in Figure I–9 do not include enough of the politeness strategies that are important in Japanese culture, and the informal salutation inappropriately uses the recipient's first name (*Dear Ichiro:*). This draft also contains **idioms** (*looking forward*, *company family*), **jargon** (*transport will be holding*), **contractions** (*I'm*, *don't*), informal language (*just e-mail or fax*, *Cheers*), and humor and allusion (*"ptomaine palace" across from our main offices*).

Compare that letter to the one in Figure I–10, which is written in language that is courteous, literal, and specific. This revised letter begins with concern about the recipient's family and prosperity because that opening honors traditional Japanese patterns in business correspondence. The letter is free of slang, idioms, and jargon. The sentences are shorter than in the draft; in addition, bulleted lists break up the paragraphs, contractions are avoided, months are spelled out, and 24-hour-clock time is used.

When writing for international readers, rethink the ingrained habits that define how you express yourself, learn as much as you can about the cultural expectations of others, and focus on politeness strategies that demonstrate your respect for readers. Doing so will help you achieve **clarity** and mutual understanding with international readers.

U.S. writer moves too quickly to use of first name.

"Looking forward" is an idiom that may not be clear.

Draft for Review

First paragraph gets to business abruptly: add more personal greeting.

Contraction (*I'm*) is too informal and may not appear in an English dictionary.

Dear Ichiro:

I'm writing to confirm travel arrangements for your visit to Tucson next month. We at Sun West are looking forward to meeting you and cultivating a successful business relationship between our two companies.

Jargon ("transport") is inappropriate.

I understand that you will arrive on 3/19/15 on Delta, flight #186 at 1:30 p.m. (itinerary enclosed). When you pick up your baggage at Tucson, go directly toward the "taxi-limo" area where our transport will be holding a card with your name and can take you directly to Loewes Ventana Canyon Resort. The resort has an excellent restaurant—we promise not to take you to the "ptomaine palace" across from our main offices!

Abbreviated with U.S. date format: use March 19, 2015.

Inappropriate humor and allusion.

We are excited to meet you. We want you to meet our company family. After you meet everyone, you will enjoy a catered breakfast in our conference room. Events include presentations from the president of the company and from departmental directors on several topics.

The use of "family" is a figure of speech that could be confusing.

First three sentences use overly simplified style.

I have enclosed a guidebook and map of Tucson and material on our company. If you see anything that interests you, let me know, and we will be happy to show you our city and all it has to offer. And if you have any questions about the company before we see you, just e-mail or fax (I don't think regular mail will get to us in time).

Abrupt and informal: add more goodwill to closing.

Cheers,

Ty Smith
Vice President

FIGURE I–9. Inappropriate International Correspondence (Draft Marked for Revision)

Sun West Corporation, Inc.

2565 North Armadillo
Tucson, AZ 85719
Phone: (602) 555-6677
Fax: (602) 555-6678 sunwest.com

March 5, 2015

Ichiro Katsumi
Investment Director
Toshiba Investment Company
1-29-10 Ichiban-cho
Tokyo 105, Japan

Dear Mr. Katsumi:

I hope that you and your family are well and prospering in the new year. We at Sun West Corporation are very pleased that you will be coming to visit us in Tucson this month. It will be a pleasure to meet you, and we are very gratified and honored that you are interested in investing in our company.

So that we can ensure that your stay will be pleasurable, we have taken care of all of your travel arrangements. You will

- Depart Narita–New Tokyo International Airport on Delta Airlines flight #75 at 1700 on March 19, 2015.
- Arrive at Los Angeles International Airport at 1050 local time and depart for Tucson on Delta flight #186 at 1205.
- Arrive at Tucson International Airport at 1330 local time on March 19.
- Depart Tucson International Airport on Delta flight #123 at 1845 on March 26.
- Arrive in Salt Lake City, Utah, at 1040 and depart on Delta flight #34 at 1115.
- Arrive in Portland, Oregon, at 1210 local time and depart on Delta flight #254 at 1305.
- Arrive in Tokyo at 1505 local time on March 27.

If you need additional information about your travel plans or information on Sun West Corporation, please call, fax, or e-mail me directly at tsmith@sunwest.com. That way, we will receive your message in time to make the appropriate changes or additions.

FIGURE I–10. Appropriate International Correspondence (*continued*)

Mr. Ichiro Katsumi 2 March 5, 2015

After you arrive in Tucson, a chauffeur from Skyline Limousines will be waiting for you at Gate 12. He or she will be carrying a card with your name, will help you collect your luggage from the baggage claim area, and will then drive you to the Loewes Ventana Canyon Resort. This resort is one of the most prestigious in Tucson, with spectacular desert views, high-quality amenities, and one of the best golf courses in the city. The next day, the chauffeur will be back at the Ventana at 0900 to drive you to Sun West Corporation.

We at Sun West Corporation are very excited to meet you and introduce you to all the staff members of our hardworking and growing company. After you meet everyone, you will enjoy a catered breakfast in our conference room. At that time, you will receive a schedule of events planned for the remainder of your trip. Events include presentations from the president of the company and from departmental directors on

- The history of Sun West Corporation
- The uniqueness of our products and current success in the marketplace
- Demographic information and the benefits of being located in Tucson
- The potential for considerable profits for both our companies with your company's investment

We encourage you to read through the enclosed guidebook and map of Tucson. In addition to events planned at Sun West Corporation, you will find many natural wonders and historical sites to see in Tucson and in Arizona in general. If you see any particular event or place that you would like to visit, please let us know. We will be happy to show you our city and all it has to offer.

Again, we are very honored that you will be visiting us, and we look forward to a successful business relationship between our two companies.

Sincerely,

Ty Smith

Ty Smith
Vice President

Enclosures (2)

FIGURE I–10. Appropriate International Correspondence (*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing International Correspondence**

- ✔ Observe the guidelines for courtesy, such as those in the *Writer's Checklist: Using Tone to Build Goodwill* in **correspondence** on pages 108–9.
- ✔ Write clear and complete sentences: Unusual word order or rambling sentences will frustrate and confuse readers. See **garbled sentences**.
- ✔ Avoid an overly simplified style that may offend or any **affectation** that may confuse the reader. See also **English as a second language**.
- ✔ Avoid humor, irony, and sarcasm; they are easily misunderstood outside their cultural **context**.
- ✔ Do not use idioms, jargon, slang expressions, unusual **figures of speech**, or **allusions** to events or attitudes particular to American life.
- ✔ Consider whether necessary technical terminology can be found in abbreviated English-language dictionaries; if it cannot, carefully define such terminology.
- ✔ Do not use contractions or **abbreviations** that may not be clear to international readers.
- ✔ Avoid inappropriate informality, such as using first names too quickly.
- ✔ Write out **dates**, whether in the month-day-year style (*June 11, 2015* not *6/11/15*) used in the United States or the day-month-year style (*11 June 2015* not *11/6/15*) used in many other parts of the world.
- ✔ Specify time zones or refer to international standards, such as Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or Universal Time Coordinated (UTC).
- ✔ Use international measurement standards, such as the metric system (*18°C*, *14 cm*, *45 kg*) where possible.
- ✔ Ask someone from your intended audience's culture or with appropriate expertise to review your draft before you complete your final **proofreading**.

I

interviewing for information

Interviewing others who have knowledge of your subject is often an essential method of **research** in technical writing.

Determining the Proper Person to Interview

Many times, your subject or **purpose** logically points to the proper person to interview for information. For example, if you were writing a feasibility report about marketing consumer products in India, you would want to interview someone with extensive experience in that area. The following sources can help you determine the appropriate person to interview: (1) workplace colleagues or faculty in appropriate academic departments; (2) local chapters of professional societies; (3) "Contact" and "About" sections on organizational Web sites, and (4) targeted Internet searches.

Preparing for the Interview

Before the interview, learn as much as possible about the person you are going to interview and the organization for which he or she works.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE When you contact the prospective interviewee, explain who you are, why you would like an interview, the subject and purpose of the interview, the best setting or medium for the interview (in person, phone, videoconference, e-mail), and approximately how much time it will take. You should also ask permission if you plan to record the interview and let your interviewee know that you will allow him or her to review your draft.

After you have made the appointment, prepare a list of questions to ask your interviewee. Avoid vague, general questions. A question such as "Do you think the Web would be helpful for you?" is too general to elicit useful information. It is better to ask specific but open-ended questions, such as the following: "Many physicians in your specialty are using the Web to answer routine patient questions. How might providing such information on your Web site affect your relationship with your patients?"

Conducting the Interview

Arrive promptly or connect on time if videoconferencing and be prepared to guide the discussion. During the interview, take only memory-jogging notes that will help you recall the conversation later; do not ask your interviewee to slow down so that you can take detailed notes. As the interview is reaching a close, take a few moments to skim your notes and ask the interviewee to clarify anything that is ambiguous.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE If you plan to conduct an interview using videoconferencing, find an environment that is quiet and allows you to focus on the interview. Be mindful of your surroundings, personal appearance, and the appearance of your videoconferencing platform because all will be conveyed to the person you are interviewing. Make sure that you can take notes in a way that allows you to maintain your focus on your subject, as described in **listening**. Finally, ensure that you are using high-quality, reliable software and connections.

Expanding Your Notes Soon After the Interview

Immediately after leaving the interview, use your memory-jogging notes to help you mentally review the interview and expand those notes. Do not postpone this step. No matter how good your memory is, you will forget some important points if you do not complete this step at once. See also **note-taking**.

Interviewing by Phone or E-mail

When an interviewee is not available for a face-to-face meeting or videoconference, consider a phone interview. Most of the principles for conducting face-to-face interviews apply to phone interviews; be aware, however, that phone calls do not offer the important nonverbal cues of face-to-face or video meetings. Further, taking notes can be challenging while holding a phone, so consider using a high-quality headset or speakerphone to alleviate that problem.

Another alternative is to consider an **e-mail** interview in which you exchange a number of back-and-forth messages. Such an interview, however, lacks the spontaneity and the immediacy of an in-person, a video, or a phone conversation. But the interviewing principles in this entry can still help you obtain useful responses. Before you send any questions, make sure that your contact is willing to participate and respond to follow-up clarifications. As a courtesy, give the respondent a general idea of the number of questions you plan to ask and the level of detail you expect. When you send the questions, ask for a reasonable deadline from the interviewee ("Would you be able to send your response by . . . ?").

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Interviewing Successfully

- ✔ Be pleasant but purposeful. You are there to get information, so don't be timid about asking leading questions on the subject.
- ✔ Use the list of questions you have prepared, starting with the less complex topics to get the conversation started and moving toward the more challenging aspects.
- ✔ Let your interviewee do most of the talking. Remember that the interviewee is the expert.
- ✔ Be objective. Do not offer your opinions on the subject. You are there to get information, not to debate.
- ✔ Ask additional questions as they arise.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Interviewing Successfully** (*continued*)

- ✔ Do not get sidetracked. If the interviewee strays too far from the subject, ask a specific question to direct the conversation back on track.
- ✔ If you use audio or video recording, do not let it lure you into relaxing so that you neglect to ask crucial questions.
- ✔ After thanking the interviewee, ask permission to contact him or her again to clarify a point or two as you complete your interview notes.
- ✔ A day or two after the interview, thank the interviewee in a brief note.

I

interviewing for a job

Job interviews can take place in person, by phone, or by videoconference. They may last 30 minutes, an hour, or several hours. Sometimes an initial job interview is followed by a series of additional interviews that can last a half or full day. Often just one or two people conduct the interview, but on occasion a group or panel of four or more attend. Because it is impossible to know exactly what to expect, it is important to be well prepared. See also **job search**.

Before the Interview

Before the interview, learn everything you can about the organization, asking yourself such questions as the following:

- What kind of organization (profit, nonprofit, government) is it?
- What are the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization?
- What types of services or products does the company provide?
- Does the company operate locally, regionally, or internationally?
- Is the company privately owned or employee owned?
- How many employees are there?
- Is the company a subsidiary of a larger operation?
- How long has the company been in business?
- How does the company differentiate itself from its competitors?
- Where and how will I fit in? Does there appear to be opportunity for advancement?

You can obtain information from current employees, the company's Web site, press releases, prospectuses, annual reports, business articles about the company, and local news sources. The company's Web site in particular may help you learn about the company's size, sales volume, product line, credit rating, branch locations, subsidiary companies, new products and services, expansion plans, and similar information. Careful Internet **research** can provide important background information, but do not hesitate to seek help from a librarian for sources accessible through a library, such as *Dun and Bradstreet*, *Standard and Poor's*, and *Thomas' Register*.

Try to anticipate the questions your interviewer might ask and rehearse your answers in advance. Be sure you understand a question before answering it and avoid responding too quickly with a rehearsed reply. Be prepared to respond in a natural and relaxed manner, taking care not to provide unnecessary details. Interviewers typically ask the following questions:

- What are your short-term and long-term occupational goals?
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?
- What are your major strengths and weaknesses?
- Do you work better with others or alone?
- What academic or career accomplishment are you particularly proud of? Describe it.
- Why are you leaving your current job?
- May we contact your previous employer?
- Why do you want to work for this organization?
- Why should I hire you?
- What salary and benefits do you expect? (see pages 283–84 for salary negotiations)

Some employers, however, rather than ask such straightforward questions, use behavioral interviews that focus on asking the candidate to provide examples or respond to hypothetical situations. Interviewers who use behavior-based questions are looking for specific examples from your experience. Prepare for the behavioral interview by recollecting challenging situations or problems that you successfully resolved. Examples of behavior-based questions include the following:

- Tell me about a time when you experienced conflict while on a team.
- If I were your boss and you disagreed with a decision I made, what would you do?
- How have you used your leadership skills to bring about change?

- Tell me about a time when you failed and what you learned from the experience.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Plan to arrive 10 to 15 minutes early to the interview; never be late. Always bring extra copies of your résumé, a note pad, samples of your work or portfolio (if applicable), and a list of references with contact information. Turn off any electronic devices prior to your arrival. If you are asked to complete an application form, read it carefully before you write and proofread it when you are finished. The form provides a written record for company files and indicates to the company how well you follow directions and complete a task.

During the Interview

The interview enables a potential employer to learn about you, and it allows you to learn how you might fit into that organization. The interview actually begins when you arrive. What you wear and how you act make a first impression. In general, dress simply and conservatively, avoid extremes in fragrance and cosmetics, and be well groomed. Be polite to other employees you meet.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Be aware that visible tattoos and body piercings are not acceptable in many white-collar and service-industry positions. Employers are within their legal rights to maintain such a policy. Act prudently if you suspect tattoos and piercings are not acceptable—cover tattoos and remove piercings.

Behavior. After introductions, thank the interviewer for his or her time, express your pleasure at meeting him or her, and remain standing until you are offered a seat. Sit up straight (good posture suggests self-assurance), maintain eye contact with the interviewer, and try to appear relaxed and confident. During the interview, use nervous energy to your advantage by channeling it into the alertness that you will need to listen and respond effectively. Do not attempt to take extensive notes. You can jot down a few facts, but keep your focus on the interviewer. Do not use an electronic device (laptop or tablet), unless you need to showcase a portfolio. See also **listening**.

Responses. When you answer questions, do not ramble or stray from the subject. Say only what you must to answer each question properly and then stop, but avoid giving just yes or no answers—they usually do not allow the interviewer to learn enough about you. Some interviewers allow a silence to fall just to see how you will react. The burden of conducting the interview is the interviewer's, not yours—and he or she may interpret your rush to fill a void in the conversation as a sign of insecurity. If such a silence makes you uncomfortable, be ready to ask an intelligent question about the company.

If the interviewer overlooks important points, bring them up. Let the interviewer mention salary first. Doing so yourself may indicate that you are more interested in the money than in the work. Make sure, however, that you are aware of prevailing salaries and benefits in your field or geographic region.

Interviewers look for a degree of self-confidence and an applicant's understanding of the field, as well as genuine interest in the field, the company, and the job. Ask questions to communicate your interest in the job and the company. Interviewers respond favorably to applicants who can communicate and present themselves well.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Questions that seem personal, appear to breach legal ethics, or otherwise make you uncomfortable not only can be hard to answer but also can quickly erode the confidence you worked so hard to build during your preparation. Remaining composed and remembering that the employer's objective is simply to determine whether you are the best candidate for the position will help you respond appropriately to difficult questions. Be brief, concise, and truthful in your answers. Common questions that may broach sensitive subjects may include the following:

- Have you ever experienced a layoff or been terminated?
- Why did you stay with previous employers on average for just a year?
- Why do you have such a large gap of employment between these dates? ❖

Salary. Salary negotiations can take place at the end of a job interview, after a formal job offer, or over the course of several conversations. Prepare by determining salary ranges in your field by checking Web sites, such as salary.com, payscale.com, and glassdoor.com. If you are on campus, check with your career-development office, which can advise you on local job salary ranges.

Remember that you are negotiating a package and not just a starting salary. Some employers have excellent benefits packages that can balance a lower base salary, as the following possibilities suggest:

- Tuition reimbursement for continued education
- Payment of relocation costs
- Paid personal leave or paid vacations
- Retirement and pension plans
- Profit sharing: investment or stock options
- Bonuses or cost-of-living adjustments

- Overtime potential and compensation
- Flexible hours and work-from-home options
- Health, dental, optical, and disability coverage
- Commuting or parking-cost reimbursement
- Family leave or elder-care benefits

If you do not wish to provide a specific salary requirement during a job interview, you can respond with a wide salary range that you know would be reasonable for someone at your level in your line of work in that region of the country. For example, you could say, "I would hope for a salary somewhere between $35,000 and $45,000, but of course this is negotiable." Throughout this process, focus on what is most important to you (not others) and on what you would find acceptable.

Conclusion. At the conclusion of the interview, thank the interviewer for his or her time. Be sure to make note of each interviewer's name or request business cards if convenient. Reiterate your interest in the position and try to get an idea of when the company expects to make a final decision. Reaffirm friendly contact with a firm handshake.

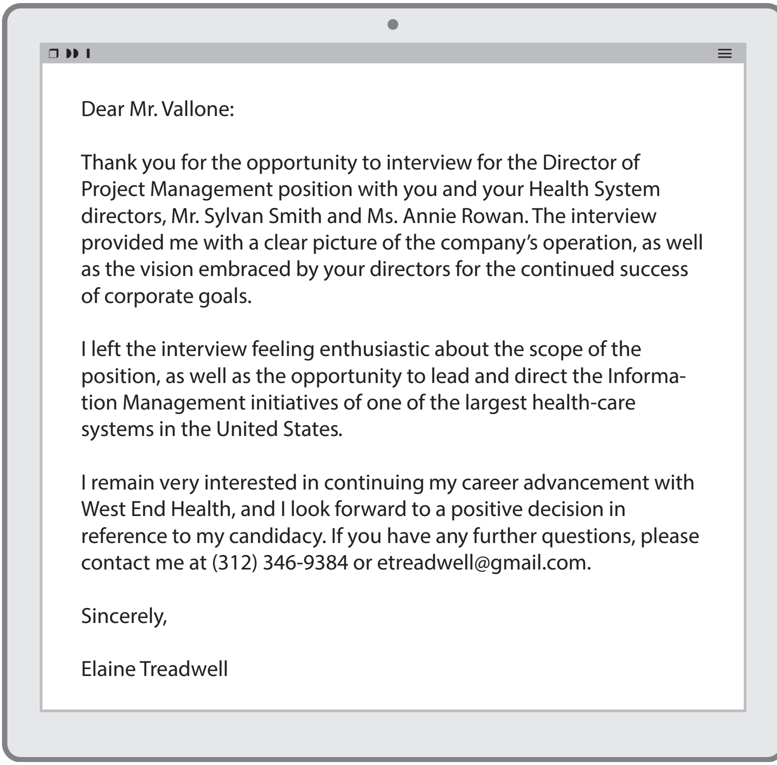
After the Interview

After you leave the interview, jot down the pertinent information you obtained, as it may be helpful in comparing job offers. As soon as possible following a job interview, send the interviewer(s) a thank-you note or e-mail. Such messages often include the following:

- Your thanks for the interview and to individuals or groups that gave you special help or attention during the interview
- The name of the specific job for which you interviewed
- Your impression of the opportunity
- Your confidence that you can perform the job well
- An offer to provide further information or to answer further questions

Figure I–11 shows a typical example of follow-up correspondence.

If you are offered a job you want, accept the offer verbally and write a brief letter of acceptance as soon as possible—certainly within a week. If you do not want the job, write a refusal letter or e-mail, as described in **acceptance / refusal letters**.



Dear Mr. Vallone:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the Director of Project Management position with you and your Health System directors, Mr. Sylvan Smith and Ms. Annie Rowan. The interview provided me with a clear picture of the company's operation, as well as the vision embraced by your directors for the continued success of corporate goals.

I left the interview feeling enthusiastic about the scope of the position, as well as the opportunity to lead and direct the Information Management initiatives of one of the largest health-care systems in the United States.

I remain very interested in continuing my career advancement with West End Health, and I look forward to a positive decision in reference to my candidacy. If you have any further questions, please contact me at (312) 346-9384 or etreadwell@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Elaine Treadwell

FIGURE I–11. Follow-up Correspondence

introductions

DIRECTORY

Routine Openings 286
Opening Strategies 286
  Objective 286
  Problem Statement 286
  Scope 287
  Background 287
  Summary 287
  Interesting Detail 287
  Definition 288
  Anecdote 288
  Quotation 288
  Forecast 288
  Persuasive Hook 289
Full-Scale Introductions 289
Manuals and Specifications 289

Every document must have either an opening or an introduction. An opening usually simply focuses the reader's attention on your topic and then proceeds to the body of your document. A full-scale introduction, discussed later in this entry, sets the stage by providing necessary information to understand the discussion that follows in the body. In general, **correspondence** and routine **reports** need only an opening; **formal reports**, major **proposals**, and other complex documents need a full-scale introduction. For a discussion of comparable sections for Web sites, see **writing for the Web**. See also **conclusions**.

Routine Openings

When your **audience** is familiar with your topic or if what you are writing is brief or routine, then a simple opening will provide adequate **context**, as shown in the following examples.

LETTER

Dear Mr. Ignatowski:
You will be happy to know that we corrected the error in your bank balance. The new balance shows . . .

E-MAIL

Jane, as I promised in my e-mail yesterday, I've attached the human resources budget estimates for fiscal year 2016.

MEMO

To date, 18 of the 20 specimens your department submitted for analysis have been examined. Our preliminary analysis indicates . . .

Opening Strategies

Opening strategies are aimed at focusing the readers' attention and motivating them to read the entire document.

Objective. In reporting on a project, you might open with a statement of the project's objective so that the readers have a basis for judging the results.

▸ The primary goal of this project was to develop new techniques to solve the problem of waste disposal. Our first step was to investigate . . .

Problem Statement. One way to give readers the perspective of your report is to present a brief account of the problem that led to the study or project being reported.

▸ Several weeks ago a manager noticed a recurring problem in the software developed by Datacom Systems. Specifically, error messages repeatedly appeared when, in fact, no specific trouble. . . .

After an extensive investigation, we found that Datacom Systems . . .

For proposals or formal reports, of course, problem statements may be more elaborate and a part of the full-scale introduction, which is discussed later in this entry.

Scope. You may want to present the **scope** of your document in your opening. By providing the parameters of your material, the limitations of the subject, or the amount of detail to be presented, you enable your readers to determine whether they want or need to read your document.

▶ This pamphlet provides a review of the requirements for obtaining a private pilot's license. It is not intended as a textbook to prepare you for the examination itself; rather, it outlines the steps you need to take and the costs involved.

Background. The background or history of a subject may be interesting and lend perspective and insight to a subject. Consider the following example from a newsletter describing the process of oil drilling:

▶ From the bamboo poles the Chinese used when the pyramids were young to today's giant rigs drilling in deep water, there has been considerable progress in the search for oil. But whether in ancient China or a modern city, underwater or on a mountaintop, the objective of drilling has always been the same—to manufacture a hole in the ground, inch by inch.

Summary. You can provide a summary opening by describing in abbreviated form the results, conclusions, or recommendations of your article or report. Be concise: Do not begin a summary by writing "This report summarizes . . ."

CHANGE This report summarizes the advantages offered by the photon as a means of examining the structural features of the atom.

TO As a means of examining the structure of the atom, the photon offers several advantages.

Interesting Detail. Often an interesting detail will attract the readers' attention and pique their curiosity. Readers of a **white paper** for a manufacturer of telescopes and scientific instruments, for example, may be persuaded to invest if they believe that the company is developing innovative, cutting-edge products.

▶ The rings of Saturn have puzzled astronomers ever since they were discovered by Galileo in 1610 using the first telescope. Recently, even more rings have been discovered. . . .

Our company's Scientific Instrument Division designs and manufactures research-quality, computer-controlled telescopes that promise to solve the puzzles of Saturn's rings by enabling scientists to use multicolor differential photometry to determine the rings' origins and compositions.

Definition. Although a definition can be useful as an opening, do not define something with which your audience is familiar or provide a definition that is obviously a contrived opening (such as "Webster defines *technology* as . . ."). A definition should be used as an opening only if it offers insight into what follows.

- *Risk* is often a loosely defined term. In this report, risk refers to a qualitative combination of the probability of an event and the severity of the consequences of that event. In fact, . . .

Anecdote. An anecdote can be used to attract and build interest in a subject that may otherwise be mundane; however, this strategy is best suited to longer documents and **presentations**.

- In his poem "The Calf Path" (1895), Sam Walter Foss tells of a wandering, wobbly calf trying to find its way home at night through the lonesome woods. It made a crooked path, which was taken up the next day by a lone dog. Then "a bellwether sheep pursued the trail over vale and steep, drawing behind him the flock, too, as all good bellwethers do." This forest path became a country lane that bent and turned and turned again. The lane became a village street, and at last the main street of a flourishing city. The poet ends by saying, "A hundred thousand men were led by a calf near three centuries dead."

  Many companies today follow a "calf path" because they react to events rather than planning. . . .

Quotation. Occasionally, you can use a quotation to stimulate interest in your subject. To be effective, however, the quotation must be pertinent—not some loosely related remark selected from a book of quotations.

- Richard Smith, founder of PCS Corporation, recently said, "I believe that managers need to be more 'people smart' than ever before. The management style of today involves much more than just managing the operations of a department—it requires understanding the personalities that comprise a corporation." His statement represents a growing feeling among corporate leaders that . . .

Forecast. Sometimes you can use a forecast of a new development or trend to gain the audience's attention and interest.

▸ In the not-too-distant future, we may be able to use a handheld medical diagnostic device similar to those in science fiction to assess the physical condition of accident victims. This project and others are now being developed at The Seldi Group, Inc.

Persuasive Hook. Although all opening strategies contain persuasive elements, the hook uses **persuasion** most overtly. A **brochure** touting the newest innovation in tax-preparation software might address readers in text or with a **visual**, as follows:

▸ Welcome to the newest way to do your taxes! TaxPro EZ ends the headache of last-minute tax preparation with its unique Web-Link feature.

Full-Scale Introductions

The purpose of a full-scale introduction is to give readers enough general information about the subject to enable them to understand the details in the body of the document. (See Figure F–5, pages 208–10.) An introduction should accomplish any or all of the following:

- *State the subject*. Provide background information, such as definition, history, or theory, to provide context for your readers.
- *State the purpose*. Make your readers aware of why the document exists and whether the material provides a new perspective or clarifies an existing perspective.
- *State the scope*. Tell readers the amount of detail you plan to cover.
- *Preview the development of the subject*. Especially in a longer document, outline how you plan to develop the subject. Providing such information allows readers to anticipate how the subject will be presented and helps them evaluate your conclusions or recommendations.

Consider writing an opening or introduction last. Many writers find that only after they have drafted the body of the document do they have a full enough perspective on the subject to introduce it adequately.

Manuals and Specifications

You may need to write one kind of introduction for reports, academic papers, or **trade journal articles** and a different kind for **manuals** or **specifications**. When writing an introduction for a manual or set of specifications, identify the topic and its primary purpose or function in the first sentence or two. Be specific, but do not go into elaborate detail. Your introduction sets the stage for the entire document, and it should provide readers with a broad frame of reference and an understanding of the overall topic. Then the reader is ready for the technical details in the body of the document.

How technical your introduction should be depends on your readers: What are their technical backgrounds? What kind of information are they seeking in the manual or specification? The topic should be introduced with a specific audience in mind—a computer user, for example, has different interests in an application program and a different technical vocabulary than a programmer. Whether you need to provide explanations or definitions of terminology will depend on your intended audience. The following example is written for readers who understand such terms as "constructor" and "software modules."

► The System Constructor is a program that can be used to create operating systems for a specific range of microcomputer systems. The constructor selects requested operating software modules from an existing file of software modules and combines those modules with a previously compiled application program to create a functional operating system designed for a specific hardware configuration. It selects the requested software modules, establishes the necessary linkage between the modules, and generates the control tables for the system according to parameters specified at run time.

You may encounter a dilemma that is common in technical writing: Although you cannot explain topic A until you have explained topic B, you cannot explain topic B before you have explained topic A. The solution is to explain both topics in broad, general terms in the introduction, as in the following paragraph that introduces "source units" and "destination units":

► The C/LAST programming language, which treats all peripheral units as file-storage units, allows your program to perform data input or output operations, depending on the specific unit. Peripheral units from which your program can only input data are referred to as *source units*; those to which your program can only output data are referred to as *destination units*.

Then, when you need to write a detailed explanation of topic A (*source units*), you will be able to do so because your reader will know just enough about both topics A and B to be able to understand your detailed explanation.

investigative reports

An investigative **report** offers a precise analysis of a workplace problem or issue in response to a need for information. The investigative report shown in Figure I–12, for example, evaluates whether a company should

Memo

To: Noreen Rinaldo, Training Manager
From: Charles Lapinski, Senior Instructor
Date: February 6, 2015
Subject: Adler's Basic English Program

As requested, I have investigated Adler Medical Instruments' (AMI's) Basic English Program to determine whether we might adopt a similar program.

AMI's program teaches medical technologists outside the United States who do not speak or read English to understand procedures written in a special 800-word vocabulary called *Basic English*. This program eliminates the need for AMI to translate its documentation into a number of different languages. The Basic English Program does not attempt to teach the medical technologists to be fluent in English but, rather, to recognize the 800 basic words that appear in Adler's documentation.

Course Analysis

The course teaches technologists a basic medical vocabulary in English; it does not provide training in medical terminology. Students must already know, in their own language, the meaning of medical vocabulary (e.g., the meaning of the word *hemostat*). Students must also have basic knowledge of their specialty, must be able to identify a part in an illustrated parts book, must have used AMI products for at least one year, and must be able to read and write in their own language.

Students receive an instruction manual, an illustrated book of equipment with parts and their English names, and pocket references containing the 800 words of the Basic English vocabulary plus the English names of parts. Students can write the corresponding word in their language beside the English word and then use the pocket reference as a bilingual dictionary. The course consists of 30 two-hour lessons, each lesson introducing approximately 27 words. No effort is made to teach pronunciation; the course teaches only recognition of the 800 words.

Course Success

The 800-word vocabulary enables the writers of documentation to provide medical technologists with any information that might be required because the subject areas are strictly limited to usage, troubleshooting, safety, and operation of AMI medical equipment. All nonessential words (*apple*, *father*, *mountain*, and so on) are eliminated, as are most synonyms (for example, *under* appears, but *beneath* does not).

Conclusions and Recommendations

AMI's program appears to be quite successful, and a similar approach could also be appropriate for us. I see two possible ways in which we could use some or all of the elements of AMI's program: (1) in the preparation of our student manuals or (2) as AMI uses the program.

I think it would be unnecessary to use the Basic English methods in the preparation of manuals for all of our students. Most of our students are English speakers to whom an unrestricted vocabulary presents no problem.

As for our initiating a program similar to AMI's, we could create our own version of the Basic English vocabulary and write our instructional materials in it. Because our product lines are much broader than AMI's, however, we would need to create illustrated parts books for each of the different product lines.

FIGURE I–12. Investigative Report

adopt a program called "Basic English" to prepare documentation for and to train non–English-speaking readers. See also **laboratory reports**.

Open an investigative report with a statement of its primary and any secondary **purposes**, then define the **scope** of your investigation. If the report includes a survey of opinions, for example, indicate the number of people surveyed and other identifying information, such as income categories and occupations. (See also **questionnaires**.) Include any information that is pertinent in defining the extent of the investigation. Then report your findings and discuss their significance with your **conclusions**.

Sometimes the person requesting the investigative report may need to make recommendations based on your findings. In that case, the report may be referred to as a recommendation report. See also **feasibility reports** and **incident reports**.

italics

Italics is a style of type used to denote **emphasis** and to distinguish book titles, foreign expressions, and certain other elements. Italic type is often signaled by underlining in material submitted for typesetting or where italic font is not available. You may need to italicize words that require special emphasis in a sentence. ("Contrary to projections, sales have *not* improved.") Do not overuse italics for emphasis, however. ("*This* will hurt *you* more than *me*.")

Foreign Words and Phrases

Foreign words and phrases are italicized: *bonjour*, *guten tag*, the sign said "*Se habla español.*" Foreign words that have been fully assimilated into English need not be italicized: cliché, etiquette, vis-à-vis, de facto, résumé. When in doubt about whether to italicize a word, consult a current dictionary.

Titles

Italicize the titles of separately published documents (print or electronic), such as books, Web and blog sites, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, brochures, and legal cases.

- ▸ *Turning Workplace Conflicts into Collaboration* [book] was reviewed in the *New York Times* [newspaper].
- ▸ *CNN Money* [Web site] reports that "written communication skills remain a top priority for U.S. businesses."

Abbreviations of such titles are italicized if their spelled-out forms would be italicized.

► The *NYT* is one of the nation's oldest newspapers.

Italicize the titles of CDs, DVDs, movies, plays, long poems, paintings, sculptures, and long musical works.

DVD-ROM	*Computer Security Tutorial*
PLAY	Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*
LONG POEM	T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*
MUSICAL WORK	Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*

Use **quotation marks** for parts of publications, such as chapters of books and sections within larger works.

► *Small Business Trends* (smallbiztrends.com/) [blog] posted "Microbusiness Economic Trends: Into the Future." [article]

Proper Names

The names of ships, trains, and aircraft (but not the companies or governments that own them) are italicized: U.S. aircraft carrier *Independence*, Amtrak's passenger train *Coast Starlight*. Craft that are known by model or serial designations are not italicized: DC-7, Boeing 747.

Words, Letters, and Figures

Words, letters, and figures discussed as such are italicized.

► The word *inflammable* is often misinterpreted.

► The *S* and *6* keys on my keyboard do not function.

Subheads

Subheads in a report are sometimes italicized.

► *Training Managers*. We are leading the way in developing first-line managers who not only are professionally competent but . . .

Exceptions

Some titles are not set off by italics, quotation marks, or underlining, although they are capitalized.

► Professional Writing [college course title], the Constitution, the Bible, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Lands' End Catalog.

Keep in mind your **context**, especially as you prepare material for screen display as in **writing for the Web**. See also **headings** and **layout and design**.

its / it's

Its is a possessive **pronoun** and does not use an **apostrophe**. *It's* is a **contraction** of *it is*.

- *It's* essential that the lab maintain *its* ~~its'~~ quality control.

See also **expletives** and **possessive case**.

I

J

jargon

Jargon is a specialized slang that is unique to an occupational or a professional group. For example, "the *attending*" is slang used by medical professionals to refer to "the attending physician" in a hospital. Jargon is at first understood only by insiders; over time, it may become known more widely and become a **buzzword**. If all your readers are members of a particular occupational group, jargon may provide an efficient means of communicating. However, if you have any doubt that your entire **audience** is part of such a group, avoid using jargon. See also **affectation**, **functional shift**, **gobbledygook**, and **plain language**.

job descriptions

Most companies use formal job descriptions to specify the duties of and requirements for many of the positions in the organization.* Job descriptions fulfill several important functions: They provide information on which equitable salary scales can be based, they help management determine whether all functions within a company are adequately supported, and they let both prospective and current employees know exactly what is expected of them. Together, all the job descriptions in a company present a picture of the organization's structure. The job description shown in Figure J–1 is typical. It never mentions the person holding the job described; it focuses, instead, on the job and the qualifications required to fill the position.

Although job-description formats vary from organization to organization, they commonly contain the following sections:

- The *accountability* section identifies, by title only, the person to whom the employee reports.
- The *scope of responsibilities* section provides an overview of the primary and secondary functions of the job and states, if applicable, who reports to the employee.

*Job descriptions are sometimes called *position descriptions*, a term also used for formal announcements of openings for professional or administrative positions.

Manager, Technical Publications
Dakota Electrical Corporation

Accountability

Reports directly to the Vice President, Customer Service.

Scope of Responsibilities

The Manager of Technical Publications plans, coordinates, and supervises the design and development of technical publications and documentation required to support the sale, installation, and maintenance of Dakota products. The manager is responsible for the administration and morale of the staff. The supervisor for instruction manuals and the supervisor for parts manuals report directly to the manager.

Specific Duties

- Directs an organization currently comprising 20 people (including two supervisors), over 75 percent of whom are writing professionals and graphic artists
- Screens, selects, and hires qualified applicants for the department
- Prepares a formal orientation program to familiarize writing trainees with the production of reproducible copy and graphic arts
- Evaluates the performance of and determines the salary adjustments for all department employees
- Plans documentation to support new and existing products
- Subcontracts publications and acts as a purchasing agent when needed
- Offers editorial advice to supervisors
- Develops and manages an annual budget for the Technical Publications Department
- Cooperates with the Engineering, Parts, and Service Departments to provide the necessary repair and spare-parts manuals upon the introduction of new equipment
- Serves as a liaison among technical specialists, the publications staff, and field engineers
- Recommends new and appropriate uses for the department within the company
- Keeps up with new technologies in printing, typesetting, art, and graphics and uses them to the advantage of Dakota Electrical Corporation where applicable

Requirements

- B.A. in professional writing or equivalent
- Minimum of three years' professional writing experience and a general knowledge of graphics, production, and Web design
- Minimum of two years' management experience with a knowledge of the general principles of management
- Strong interpersonal skills

FIGURE J–1. Job Description

J

- The *specific duties* section gives a detailed account of the particular duties of the job as concisely as possible.
- The *personal requirements* section lists the required or preferred education, training, experience, and licensing for the job.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Job Descriptions**

✔ Before attempting to write your job description, list all the different tasks you do in a week or a month. Otherwise, you will almost certainly leave out some of your duties.

✔ Focus on content. Remember that you are describing your job, not yourself.

✔ List your duties in decreasing order of importance. Knowing how your various duties rank in importance makes it easier to set valid job qualifications.

✔ Begin each statement of a duty with a **verb** and be specific. Write "Orient new staff members to the department" rather than "New staff orientation."

✔ Review existing job descriptions that are considered well written.

job search

Whether you are applying for your first job or want to change careers entirely, begin by assessing your knowledge, skills, interests, and abilities through **brainstorming**. Next, consider your career goals and values.* For instance, do you prefer working independently or collaboratively? Do you enjoy public settings? Do you like meeting people? How important are career stability and location? What would you most like to be doing in the immediate future? In two years? In five years?

Once you have narrowed your goals and identified a professional area that is right for you, consider the following sources to locate the job you want. Of course, do not rely on any one source exclusively.

- Networking and informational interviews
- Campus career services

*A good source for stimulating your thinking is the most recent edition of *What Color Is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters & Career-Changers* by Richard N. Bolles, published by Ten Speed Press.

- Strategic Web searches
- Job advertisements
- Trade and professional journal listings
- Employment agencies (private, temporary, government)
- Internships
- Direct inquiries

Organization is key to a successful job search. Keep files for potential jobs, and include in each file copies of job ads, **application cover letters**, **résumés**, follow-up correspondence, and contact information. Consider logging your job-search activity on a spreadsheet so that you always know exactly where to find who you have contacted and why. Whatever system you use, keeping track of names and what you have sent to potential employers is crucial.

J

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE *Personal branding* is a concept introduced by business guru Tom Peters that has increasingly gained in popularity. Businesses work to establish a positive reputation and image for high-quality products and the successful execution of its services. Personal branding is the idea of marketing a positive image or reputation of yourself. For example, if you are a consultant who sells products or services, the consistently professional and successful execution of service will be remembered as a core part of your brand. By learning how to influence other people's perceptions of your brand, you will gain an immediate advantage over the competition. See www.fastcompany.com/28905/brand-called-you.

Many components of the job search discussed in this entry can help you establish a strong personal brand. As you evaluate the opportunities of networking, social media, and internships, for example, keep in mind the core message you would like to send about yourself. Every interaction provides opportunities to enhance your visibility through a full suite of job-search materials. These materials may include a video résumé, business cards, a narrative biography, LinkedIn and other **social media** profiles, a personal Web site, a portfolio, reference letters, and testimonials. As you prepare these materials, project a consistent and unified branding message across all media outlets.

Networking and Informational Interviews

Career-development experts agree that many open positions are filled through networking. Networking involves communicating with people who might provide useful advice or may know of potential jobs in your interest areas. Your network may include people already working in your chosen field, contacts in professional organizations, professors, family members, or friends. Discussion groups and networking sites, such as LinkedIn, can be helpful in this process. In general, you should always be networking, even when you do not need assistance. Even a simple gesture, such as providing a reference for a recently unemployed colleague, can go a long way toward expanding your network.

Informational interviews are appointments you schedule with working professionals who can give you "insider" views of an occupation or industry. These brief meetings (usually 20 to 30 minutes) also offer you the chance to learn about employment trends as well as leads for employment opportunities. Because you ask the questions, these interviews allow you to participate in an interview situation that is less stressful than the job interview itself. To make the most of informational interviews, prepare carefully and review both **interviewing for information** and **interviewing for a job**.

Campus Career Services

A visit to a college career-development center is another good way to begin your job search. Government, business, and industry recruiters often visit campus career offices to interview prospective employees; recruiters also keep career counselors aware of their companies' current employment needs and submit job descriptions to them. Career counselors not only help you select a career but also put you in touch with the best and most current resources—identifying where to begin your search and saving you time. Career-development centers often hold workshops on résumé preparation and offer other job-finding resources on their Web sites.

Strategic Web Searches

In addition to professional and social-networking sites, you can use the Web in several ways to enhance your job search. First, consult sites that give advice about careers, job seeking, and résumé preparation like careerbuilder.com. Second, learn about businesses and organizations that may hire employees in your field by visiting their Web sites. Such company sites often describe the company's culture, list job openings, provide instructions for applicants, and offer an overview of employee benefits. Third, you can learn about jobs in your field and post your résumé for prospective employers at privately owned or government-sponsored online employment databases. For instance, among the many resources found at CareerOneStop (www.careeronestop.org), a job seeker can research salary ranges for a particular region or career field. This tool is particularly valuable when you are moving to a new location, considering a career transition, or determining a valid salary and benefits range for negotiating compensation packages.

Social Media

Social-media sites, such as LinkedIn, allow you to connect with people of like-minded interests both on an individual level and in a broad forum. Social media provides the opportunity to develop a positive image of your work through comments, personal and professional profiles, résumés, the associations to which you belong, and your social-media connections. These components of your social-media presence can help enhance your reputation and personal "brand."

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Surveys show that employers and employment recruiters peruse social media and search engines before recruiting candidates, so carefully consider the material that you post online when using such media as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. Keep in mind that many software packages allow prospective employers to compile an overview of a job seeker's online presence. Share online only what you would comfortably share at the office, and regularly check the privacy settings on any sites that you use.

Job Advertisements

Many employers advertise job openings on their Web sites, job boards, social-media sites, and newspapers. Because job listings can differ, search in both the printed and Web editions of local and big-city newspapers under *employment* or *job market*. Use the search options they provide or the general strategies for database searches discussed in the entry **research**.

A human-relations specialist interested in training, for example, might find the specialty listed under "Human Resources" or "Consulting Services." Depending on a company's or government agency's needs, the listing could be even more specific, such as "Software Education Specialist" or "Learning and Development Coordinator."

Set up job alerts on job-aggregator sites, such as indeed.com and simplyhired.com, scour job boards, company Web sites, and newspaper listings for jobs that meet your criteria and send you e-mail notifications. As you read the ads, take notes on salary ranges, job locations, job duties and responsibilities, and even the terminology used in the ads to describe the work.

Trade and Professional Journal Listings

Many industry associations publish periodicals of interest to people working in the industry. Such periodicals often contain job listings. To learn about the trade or professional associations for your occupation, consult online resources offered by your library or campus career office. You may also consult the following references at a library: *Encyclopedia of Associations* and *Encyclopedia of Business Information Sources*.

Employment Agencies (Private, Temporary, Government)

Private employment agencies are organizations that are in business to help people find jobs. Be sure you understand who is paying the agency's fee. Often the employer pays the agency's fee; however, if you have to pay, make sure you know exactly how much. As with any written agreement, read the fine print carefully.

A staffing agency or temporary placement agency could match you with an appropriate temporary or permanent job in your field. Temporary work for an organization for which you might want to work permanently is an excellent way to build your network while continuing your job search. Choose an employment or a temporary-placement agency carefully. Some are well established and reputable; others are not. Check with your local Better Business Bureau and your college career office before you sign any agreements.

Recruitment firms (sometimes called *headhunters*) are hired by organizations to fill general needs or specific positions. Especially if you have experience in a field, it is a good idea to make connections with recruiters on networking sites like LinkedIn. You can also search online for recruiters who specialize in your career field, and send your résumé to them through their Web-site form or by e-mail. Even if there is no suitable job opportunity, a résumé submitted to a recruitment firm could turn up in a future database search.

Local, state, and federal government agencies also offer many free or low-cost employment services. Locate local government agencies in Web or telephone directories under the name of your city, county, or state. For information on occupational trends, see the Occupational Outlook Handbook at www.bls.gov/oco. For information on jobs with the federal government, see the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at www.opm.gov, or USAJOBS, the federal government's official jobs site, at www.usajobs.gov. For information on salary negotiations, see page 283.

Internships

As you evaluate job options, consider taking an internship often lasting from six weeks to an entire semester (if not longer). An internship provides you with the chance to gain experience in a field through a variety of career opportunities. It enables you to

- Try a position without making a permanent commitment.
- Explore a field to clarify your career goals.
- Develop skills and gain experience in a new field or industry.
- Evaluate a prospective employer or firm.
- Acquire a mentor in the workplace.

- Establish networking contacts and professional references.
- Position yourself for a future job offer with the employer.

To locate internship opportunities, begin with your campus career-development office. Such offices usually post internship opportunities on their Web site, but you can also make appointments with counselors or take advantage of walk-in hours. Finally, try www.internships.com, a site that lists internships by type of employer, by location, by means of compensation (paid or unpaid), and by whether the work is full or part time.

Direct Inquiries

If you would like to work for a particular firm, write or call to ask whether it has any openings for people with your qualifications. Normally, you can contact the department head, the director of human resources, or both; for a small firm, however, write to the head of the firm. Such contacts work best if you have networked as described earlier in this entry.

A related strategy is to prepare a job-proposal letter—a highly targeted cover letter that outlines why your skills and credentials would be valuable to the employer. Before writing the letter, research the employer to find out about any upcoming plans, goals, and even obstacles to their success. Your job-proposal letter can show that you understand the challenges that employer is facing and you are part of the solution. Describe what you expect to accomplish, both short term and long term, if given the opportunity.

Job or Internship Applications

Applications typically reflect the standard candidate information that companies require in order to consider you for a position. These applications can be found at their place of business or on their company Web site. Some employers may require just the job application, while others may require the job application, a résumé, and an application cover letter. In some cases, you will be required to complete the job application online—often within a time limit—and, in others, you can download a form to complete at your convenience and return to the employer.

When filling out the job application, ensure that every blank is completed—your application should be neat and easy to read. See Figure J–2 for guidance. Follow all directions carefully; if a particular area does not apply to you, indicate that it is not applicable by writing N/A in the empty space. This strategy signifies to the employer that you have thoroughly read the form and taken note of every requirement. Do not volunteer more information than the employer is asking for on the application. If you do not complete all entries or if you miss the application deadline, it is likely you will not be considered for the position.

Employment Application

Employer Name: *ACME Tech Support–Internship Department* **Announcement / Job Number:** *ATS-11096*

Position Title: *Computer Support Technician Candidate* **Current Date:** *JAN/05/2015*

PERSONAL INFORMATION **Social Security Number:** *404-256-0776*

Name (Last, First, Middle)		Cell Phone Number
Duffy, John W.		*404-522-7765*
Home Address	**Mailing Address**	**Home Phone Number**

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY / WORK EXPERIENCE—Begin with Most Recent Employer

Dates From–To (MMM/DD/YYYY)	Company Name	Address, City, State, Zip
JUL/07/2014 – DEC/28/2015	*Computer Service Mart*	*1234 E. HWY 1, Atlanta, GA 30301*

Job Title and Responsibilities, Skills, Attributes — *Customer Service Representative. Received more than 150 incoming calls daily, and responded to more than 100 online contacts; documented customer concerns; routed calls to appropriate department (over 15 in-house, and 10 corporate); established rapport with customers and department representatives; used five different automated data-management systems to track service initiatives; supervised and trained four employees; promoted twice in a nine-month period; filled Computer Tech position when required.*

Reason for Leaving:	Salary or Hourly Wage:	Supervisor's Name	Telephone Number
Relocation	*$34,550 per year*	*Mr. Alfred Smith*	*404-506-1298*

Dates From–To (MMM/DD/YYYY)	Company Name	Address, City, State, Zip

LEGAL

Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? ☐ YES ☒ NO

MILITARY HISTORY—Complete a Separate Entry for Each Branch of Service

Dates From–To (MMM/DD/YYYY)	Branch of Service	Last Duty Station
MAY/08/2006 – MAY/20/2014	*U.S. Army*	*Ft. Army, SC*

Occupational Skill, Description of Responsibilities — *Communications Specialist. Sustained communication assets and provided continuity in phone service, Internet service, and secure satellite connections to organizations in both tactical and garrison operating environments. Supervised and trained 10 subordinates, prepared performance evaluations and scheduled continuing education, compiled weekly/monthly equipment status reports, traveled worldwide supporting unit operations in three different continents and more than 10 countries.*

FIGURE J–2. Sections from a Job-Application Form (*continued*)

EDUCATION / TRAINING—Include Technical/Academic Achievements/Correspondence and Military Courses

Have you obtained a high school diploma or GED certificate? ☒ YES ☐ NO

Type School	Institution Name & Location	Diploma/ Degree	Major	Date/Year	GPA
College/University	*University of Maryland, College Park, MD*	*B.S.*	*Bus Mgmt*	*Projected 2016*	*3.4*

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS / LICENSES

Type of License or Certificate	Awarded by:	Registration or Certificate No.	Expiration Date (MMM/DD/YYYY)
Commercial Driver's License	*State of Maryland*	*S87233597*	*NOV/06/2015*
Type of License or Certificate	**Awarded by:**	**Registration or Certificate No.**	**Expiration Date (MMM/DD/YYYY)**
Notary Public	*State of Georgia*	*752-09-330027*	*N/A*

OTHER SPECIAL SKILLS—List Other Specific Skills You Have to Offer for This Job Opening

Web Page Design and Hosting (Summer Internship, Programming Department, IBM, 2012).
Computer Maintenance / Repair Technician (Freelance Consultant, Community Research Department, 2012–2014).
Unit Communications / Networking Technician (Additional Duty, U.S. Army, 2010).
Typing Evaluation (Department of Labor Skills Assessment Division, 2014).
Bilingual (Fluent; Speak, read, and write Spanish and English).
Culturally Diverse (Traveled to three continents and visited more than 10 countries; firsthand experience in overcoming communication barriers).

REFERENCES—Provide Three Professional References (Persons Not Related to You)

Name, Job Title	Mailing Address	E-mail Address	Day Telephone	May We Contact?
Dr. J.R. Howard, Professor	*222 Hartford Street Atlanta, GA 30201*	*j.r.howard@gnet.com*	*404-522-9732*	☒ YES ☐ NO

I, *John Duffy* , certify that the information provided on this application is true and accurate to the best of
(printed name)
my knowledge.

Signature *John Duffy* Date *1/5/15*

FIGURE J–2. Sections from a Job-Application Form (*continued*)

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Providing false information in your job application can result in a cause for dismissal and will reflect poorly on your character. Be honest and keep in mind that if you are wrong for a position and lie to obtain it, the employer can just as easily discover this after you are hired. ❖

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Completing Job Applications: Print and Online**

- ✔ Read the entire application and keep your résumé at hand before you begin.
- ✔ Copy and paste responses to online applications from your word-processing program.
- ✔ Provide all requested information and complete irrelevant entries with *N/A* (for "not applicable").
- ✔ List a specific job title for the "Position Seeking" entry—entries "any" or "open" receive less consideration.
- ✔ List salary requirements as "negotiable" or give a range commensurate with the industry and region.
- ✔ Use positive phrases if asked why you left a previous employer: "relocation," "seeking new challenge," "career advancement," or possibly "will discuss at interview."
- ✔ List references (with their permission) who can speak to your professionalism, character, or work ethic.
- ✔ Attach a brief cover letter and résumé with your completed job application, if possible.
- ✔ Proofread for accuracy and consistency: Review the instructions and check all entries or fields, dates, position titles, links, grammar, and spelling.
- ✔ Make sure you date, sign (if in print), and submit or post the application by the deadline.
- ✔ Save for your records a copy or screen capture of your completed application.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** When faced with questions that are sensitive, you must carefully consider your response. If the question does not seem to raise a problem, you can choose to answer it. If you feel the question is inappropriate, you can respond with *N/A* or another response (such as a line through the blank); this will indicate that you have read the content.

Understanding that many employers conduct background checks on candidates to protect their interests will help you determine the validity of a question. For example, a banking institution might be concerned about a candidate's credit history, current debts, or bankruptcy status, or a government organization might be concerned about citizenship or ties to foreign countries. ❖

journal articles (*see* trade journal articles)

K

kind of / sort of

The phrases *kind of* and *sort of* should be used only to refer to a class or type of things.

- We require a special *kind of* training to ensure lab employee safety.

Do not use *kind of* or *sort of* to mean "rather," "somewhat," or "somehow." That usage can lead to vagueness; it is better to be specific.

VAGUE It was *kind of* a bad year for employee safety.

SPECIFIC The accident rate increased 10 percent last year.

know-how

The informal term *know-how*, meaning "special competence or knowledge," should be avoided in formal writing **style**.

skill.
- The applicant has impressive technical ~~know-how.~~

L

laboratory reports

Laboratory reports communicate the results of significant testing and experiments. (For simple, less formal reports, see **test reports**.) They describe the **purpose**, methodology, results, and conclusions of the test or experiment and, when necessary, may include recommendations. They may also include a references section to research sources directly cited in the report. The example shown in Figure L–1 shows sections from a typical laboratory report. See also **documenting sources**.

Laboratory reports often make extensive use of the passive **voice** because of their focus on test procedures, methodology, and findings.

- ▸ The arsenic values *are based* on wet-weight determination.

L

That is, the subject, most often, is the test or experiment, not the scientist or technician. If your report requires **graphs** or **tables**, integrate them into your report as described in the entry **visuals**.

lay / lie

Lay is a transitive **verb**—a verb that requires a direct object to complete its meaning—that means "place" or "put."

- ▸ We will *lay* the foundation one section at a time.

The past-tense form of *lay* is *laid*.

- ▸ We *laid* the first section of the foundation last month.

The perfect-tense form of *lay* is also *laid*.

- ▸ Since June, we *have laid* all but two sections of the foundation.

Lay is frequently confused with *lie*, which is an intransitive verb—a verb that does not require an object to complete its meaning—that means "recline" or "remain."

- ▸ A person in shock should *lie* down with legs slightly elevated.

PCB Exposure from Oil Combustion

Wayne County Firefighters Association

Submitted to:
Philip Landowe, President
Wayne County Firefighters Association
Wandell, IN 45602

Submitted by:
Analytical Laboratories, Incorporated
1220 Pfeiffer Parkway
Indianapolis, IN 46223
February 27, 2015

INTRODUCTION

Waste oil used to train firefighters was suspected by the Wayne County Firefighters Association of containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). According to information provided by Philip Landowe, President of the Association, it has been standard practice in training firefighters to burn 20–100 gallons of oil in a diked area of approximately 25–50 m^3. Firefighters would then extinguish the fire at close range. Exposure would last several minutes, and the exercise would be repeated two or three times each day for one week.

Oil samples were collected from three holding tanks near the training area in Englewood Park on November 14, 2014. To determine potential firefighter exposure to PCBs, bulk oil analyses were conducted on each of the samples. In addition, the oil was heated and burned to determine the degree to which PCB is volatized from the oil, thus increasing the potential for firefighter exposure via inhalation.

TESTING PROCEDURES

Bulk oil samples were diluted with hexane, put through a cleanup step, and analyzed in electron-capture gas chromatography. The oil from the underground tank that contained PCBs was then exposed to temperatures of 1008°C without ignition and 2008°C with ignition. Air was passed over the enclosed sample during heating, and volatized PCB was trapped in an absorbing medium. The absorbing medium was then extracted and analyzed for PCB released from the sample.

RESULTS

Bulk oil analyses are presented in Table 1. Only the sample from the underground tank contained detectable amounts of PCB. Aroclor 1260, containing 60 percent chlorine, was found to be present in this sample at 18 mg. Concentrations of 50 mg PCB in oil are considered hazardous. Stringent storage and disposal techniques are required for oil with PCB concentrations at these levels.

TABLE 1. Bulk Oil Analyses

Source	*Sample #*	*PCB Content (mg/g)*
Underground tank (11′ deep)	6062	18*
Circle tank	6063a	<1
(3′ deep)	6063b	<1
Square pool	6064a	<1
(3′ deep)	6064b	<1

*Aroclor 1260 is the PCB type. This sample was taken for volatilization study.

FIGURE L–1. Laboratory Report (*continued*)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS
At a concentration of 18 mg/g, 100 gallons of oil would contain approximately 5.5 g of PCB. Of the 5.5 g of PCB, about 0.3 g would be released to the atmosphere under the worst conditions.

The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists has established a threshold limit value (TLV)* of 0.5 mg/m^3 air for a PCB containing 54 percent Cl as a time-weighted average over an 8-hour work shift and has stipulated that exposure over a 15-minute period should not exceed 1 mg/m^3. The 0.3 g of released PCB would have to be diluted to 600 m^3 air to result in a concentration of 0.5 mg/m^3 or less. Because the combustion of oil lasted several minutes, a dilution to more than 600 m^3 is likely; thus, exposure would be less than 0.5 mg/m^3.

In summary, because exposure to this oil was limited and because PCB concentrations in the oil were low, it is unlikely that exposure from inhalation would be sufficient to cause adverse health effects. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that excessive exposure may have occurred under certain circumstances, based on factors such as excessive skin contact and the possibility that oil with a higher-level PCB concentration could have been used earlier. The practice of using this oil should be terminated.

* The safe average concentration that most individuals can be exposed to in an 8-hour day.

FIGURE L–1. Laboratory Report (*continued*)

The past-tense form of *lie* is *lay* (not *lied*). This form causes the confusion between *lie* and *lay*.

- The injured employee *lay* still for approximately five minutes.

The perfect-tense form of *lie* is *lain*.

- The injured employee *had lain* still for five minutes before the EMTs arrived.

layout and design

DIRECTORY

Design Principles 311
- Grouping 311
- Contrast 312
- Repetition 312

Typography 312
- Typeface and Type Size 312
- Type Style and Emphasis 313

Page-Design Elements 314
- Justification 314
- Headings 314
- Headers and Footers 314
- Lists 315
- Columns 315
- White Space 315
- Color 315

Visuals 315
- Icons 316
- Captions 316
- Rules 316

Page Layout and Thumbnails 316

Thoughtful layout and design can make even the most complex information accessible and give readers a favorable impression of the writer and the organization. To accomplish those goals, a design should help readers find information easily; offer a simple and uncluttered presentation; and highlight structure, hierarchy, and order. The design must also fit the **purpose** of the document and its **context**. For example, clients paying a high price for consulting services might expect a more sophisticated, polished design, while employees aware of pressing deadlines and budgets are likely to accept—or even expect—a standard, functional design for internal documents.

Design Principles

Readers are quick to make inferences based on the pattern, form, and organization of document elements. When creating documents and **visuals**, use those instincts to your advantage by keeping in mind three major principles of design: grouping, contrast, and repetition.

Grouping. Grouping helps readers see relationships among items on a page or screen, which in turn helps them grasp how information is organized and what is most important. Grouping can occur in several different ways.

- *Proximity*: Items that are close together seem like part of a group, while items that are far apart seem dissimilar. Related items (for example, a heading and the paragraph that follows it) should be closer together than less closely related items (a heading and the paragraph above the heading).
- *Similarity*: Items that share qualities (such as size, shape, or color) are viewed as similar and tend to be associated as part of a group.
- *Alignment*: Items that are aligned tend to be seen as part of a group. If the items in a bulleted list are aligned with one another and indented from the rest of the text, for example, readers immediately recognize them as related.

Contrast. Contrast sets items apart and helps readers quickly grasp which items are different from one another. For example, to emphasize one data bar in a graph, you might give it a different color or pattern from the other bars. To give readers an easy way to navigate a long document, you might contrast the headings from the body text by making them larger or a different color from the surrounding text.

Repetition. Repetition communicates consistency and predictability through repeated patterns of design elements whether on a page, screen, table, or visual. Inconsistencies in these patterns are confusing and distracting. If like items on a page (headings, footers, bulleted lists) vary slightly from one another in their design, readers do not know whether the items are supposed to be part of a related group. Consistency ensures that the patterns in a document or visual are clear and unambiguous. Repetition thus allows the users of a document to focus on the things they should pay attention to (the things that you, as the author, want them to pay attention to) instead of spending time trying to interpret the design.

Typography

Typography refers to the style and arrangement of type on a page. A complete set of all the letters, numbers, and symbols available in one typeface (or style) is called a *font*. The letters in a typeface have a number of distinctive characteristics, as shown in Figure L–2.

Typeface and Type Size. For most on-the-job writing, select a typeface primarily for its legibility. Avoid typefaces that make text difficult to read or that may distract readers. Instead, choose popular typefaces

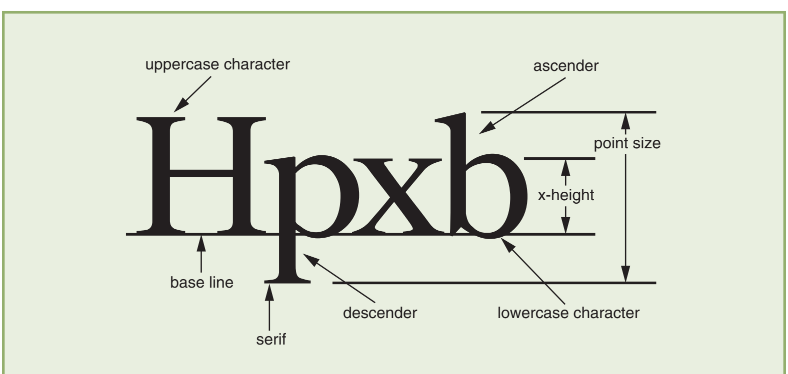


FIGURE L–2. Primary Components of Letter Characters

with which readers are familiar, such as Times New Roman or Arial. Avoid using more than two typefaces in the text of a document. For documents like **brochures** and **newsletters**, however, you may wish to use distinctively different typefaces for contrast among various elements such as headlines, **headings**, inset **quotations**, and sidebars. Experiment before making final decisions, keeping in mind your **audience**.

One way typefaces are characterized is by the presence or absence of serifs. Serif typefaces have projections, as shown in Figure L–2; sans serif styles do not. (*Sans* is French for "without.") The text of this book is set in Sabon, a serif typeface. Although sans serif type has a clean and uncluttered look, serif type is easier to read in print, especially in the smaller sizes. Sans serif, however, works well for headings (like the entry titles in this book) and for Web sites and documents read on-screen.

Ideal font sizes for the main text of paper documents range from 10 to 12 points.* However, for some elements or documents, you may wish to select typeface sizes that are smaller (as in footnotes) or larger (as in headlines for brochures). See Figure L–3 for a comparison of type sizes in a serif typeface.

Your readers and the distance from which they will read a document should help determine type size. For example, **instructions** that will rest on a table at which the reader stands require a larger typeface than a document that will be read up close. For **presentations** and **writing for the Web**, preview your document to see the effectiveness of your choice of point sizes and typefaces.

Type Style and Emphasis. One method of achieving emphasis through typography is to use capital letters. HOWEVER, LONG STRETCHES OF ALL UPPERCASE LETTERS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ. (See also **e-mail**.) Use all uppercase letters only in short spans, such as in headings.

6 pt. This size might be used for dating a source.

8 pt. This size might be used for footnotes.

10 pt. This size might be used for figure captions.

12 pt. This size might be used for main text.

14 pt. This size might be used for headings.

FIGURE L–3. Type Sizes (6- to 14-Point Type)

*A point is a unit of type size equal to 0.01384 inch, or approximately 1/72 of an inch.

Likewise, use **italics** sparingly because *continuous italic type reduces legibility and thus slows readers*. Of course, italics are useful if your aim is to slow readers, as in cautions and warnings. Highlighting in color may be useful to call attention to small sections or words in a document. **Boldface**, used in moderation, may be the best cuing device because it is visually different yet retains the customary shapes of letters and numbers.

Page-Design Elements

Thoughtfully used design elements can provide not only emphasis but also visual logic within a document by highlighting organization. The following typical elements can make your document accessible and effective: justification, headings, headers and footers, lists, columns, white space, and color. Some of these elements are illustrated in the **formal report** on pages 203–18.

L

Justification. Left-justified (ragged-right) margins are generally easier to read than full-justified margins, especially for text using wide margins on 8½ × 11″ pages. Left justification is also better if full justification causes your word-processing or desktop-publishing software to insert irregular spaces between words, producing unwanted white space or unevenness in blocks of text. Full-justified text is more appropriate for publications aimed at a broad audience that expects a more formal, polished appearance. Full justification is also useful with narrow, multiple-column formats because the spaces between the columns (called *alleys*) need the definition that full justification provides. The body text of this book is full-justified.

Headings. Headings reveal the organization of a document and help readers decide which sections they need to read. Provide typographic contrast between headings and the body text with either a different typeface or a different style (**bold**, *italic*, CAPS, and so on). Headings are often effective in boldface sans serif typeface that contrasts with a body text in a serif typeface.

Headers and Footers. A header in a report, letter, or other document appears at the top of each page (as in this book), and a footer appears at the bottom of each page. Document pages may have headers or footers (or both) that include such elements as the topic or subtopic of a section, the date the document was written, the page number, and the document name. Keep your headers and footers concise because too much information in them can create visual clutter. However—at a minimum—a multipage document should include the page number in a header or footer. For headers used in letters and memos, see **correspondence**.

Lists. Vertically stacked words, phrases, and other items with numbers or bullets can effectively highlight such information as steps in sequence, materials or parts needed, key or concluding points, and recommendations. For further detail, see **lists**.

Columns. As you design pages, consider how columns may improve the readability of your document. A single-column format works well with larger typefaces, double-spacing, and left-justified margins. For smaller typefaces and single-spaced lines, the two-column structure keeps text columns narrow enough so that readers need not scan back and forth across the width of the entire page for every line. Columns of different size can separate main text from secondary material. Avoid a single word or line carried over to the top of the next column or page; likewise, avoid opening a paragraph or stranding a word at the end of a column or page.

White Space. The area on a page or screen that is free of text or design elements is called "white space." It is an important element of design because it visually frames text and other elements, and breaks pages into manageable chunks. For example, white space between paragraphs helps readers see the information in each paragraph as a unit. White space between sections can also serve as a visual cue to signal that one section is ending and another is beginning.

L

Color. Color and screening (shaded areas on a page) can distinguish one part of a document from another or unify a series of documents. They can set off sections within a document, highlight examples, or emphasize warnings. In **tables**, screening can highlight column titles or sets of data to which you want to draw the reader's attention.

Visuals

Readers notice visuals before they notice text, and they notice larger visuals before they notice smaller ones. Thus, the size of an illustration suggests its relative importance. For newsletter articles and publications aimed at wide audiences, consider especially the proportion of the visual to the text. Magazine designers have traditionally used the three-fifths rule: Page layout is more dramatic and appealing when the major element (**photograph**, **drawing**, or other visual) occupies three-fifths rather than one-half the available space.

Visuals can be gathered in one place (for example, at the end of a report), but placing them in the text closer to their accompanying explanations makes them more effective. Illustrations in the text also provide visual relief. For advice on the placement of visuals, see the *Writer's Checklist: Creating and Integrating Visuals* on pages 569 and 572.

Icons. Icons are simplified pictorial or symbolic representations that are used online as links to programs (as in apps), commands, or files. In a printed document, icons can indicate a recurring feature or quality, such as a special cross-reference. Icons must be simple and easily recognized without accompanying text. For example, on the Web, national flags might symbolize different language versions of a document. For advice on using icons that are culturally appropriate, see **global graphics**.

Captions. Captions are titles that highlight or describe visuals. Captions often appear below figures and above tables; they may be aligned with the visual to the left or they may be centered.

Rules. Rules are vertical or horizontal lines used to enclose material in a box or to divide one area of the page from another. For example, rules and boxes set off visuals from surrounding explanations or highlight warning statements from the steps in instructions.

Page Layout and Thumbnails

Page layout involves combining typography, design elements, and visuals on a page to make a coherent whole. The flexibility of your design is affected by your design software, your method of printing the document, your budget, and whether your employer or client requires you to use a template.

Before you spend time positioning actual text and visuals on a page, especially for visually complex documents such as brochures, you may want to create a thumbnail sketch, in which blocks of simulated text and visuals indicate the placement of elements. You can go further by roughly assembling all the thumbnail pages to show the size, shape, form, and general style of a large document. Such a mock-up, called a *dummy*, allows you to see how a finished printed document will look.

lend / loan

Both *lend* and *loan* can be used as **verbs**, but *lend* is more common. ("The bank can *lend* [or *loan*] them the money.") Unlike *lend*, *loan* can be a **noun**. ("The bank approved our *loan*.")

letters

Business letters—normally written for those outside an organization—are often the most appropriate choice for formal communications with professional associates or customers. Letters may be especially effective for those people who receive a high volume of **e-mail** and other electronic messages. Letters printed on organizational letterhead communicate formality, respect, and authority. See **correspondence** for advice on writing strategy and style. See also **selecting the medium**.

Although word-processing software includes templates for formatting business letters, the templates may not provide the appropriate dimensions and elements you need. The following sections offer specific advice on formatting and related etiquette for business letters.*

Letter Format

If your employer requires a particular letter format, use it. Otherwise, follow the design guidelines shown in Figure L–4. Figure L–4 illustrates the popular *full-block style* in which the entire letter is aligned at the left margin. To achieve a professional appearance, center the letter on the page vertically and horizontally. Regardless of the default margin provided in a word-processing program, it is more important to establish a picture frame of blank space surrounding the text of the letter. When you use organizational stationery with letterhead at the top of the page, consider the bottom of the letterhead as the top edge of the paper. The right margin should be approximately as wide as the left margin. To give a fuller appearance to very short letters, increase both margins to about an inch and a half. Use your full-page or print-preview feature to check for proportion.

L

Heading

Unless you are using letterhead stationery, place your full return address and the date in the heading. Because your name appears at the end of the letter, it need not be included in the heading. Spell out words such as *street*, *avenue*, *first*, and *west* rather than abbreviating them. You may either spell out the name of the state in full or use the standard postal service abbreviation available at usps.com. The date usually goes directly beneath the last line of the return address. Do not abbreviate the name of the month. Begin the heading about two inches from the top of the page. If you are using letterhead that gives the company address, enter only the date, three lines below the last line of the letterhead.

Inside Address

Include the recipient's full name, title, and address in the inside address, two to six lines below the date, depending on the length of the letter. The inside address should be aligned with the left margin, and the left margin should be at least one inch wide.

*For additional details on letter formats and design, you may wish to consult a guide such as *The Gregg Reference Manual*, 11th ed., by William A. Sabin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010).

Letterhead

520 Niagara Street
Braintree, MA 02184

Phone: (781) 787-1175
Fax: (781) 787-1213
EvansTE.com

EVANS
and Associates
Transportation Engineers

Date

May 15, 2015

Inside address

Mr. George W. Nagel
Director of Operations
Boston Transit Authority
57 West City Avenue
Boston, MA 02210

Salutation

Dear Mr. Nagel:

Body

Enclosed is our final report evaluating the safety measures for the Boston Intercity Transit System.

We believe that the report covers the issues you raised in our last meeting and that you will be pleased with the results. However, if you have any further questions, we would be happy to meet with you again at your convenience.

We would also like to express our appreciation to Mr. L. K. Sullivan of your committee for his generous help during our trips to Boston.

Complimentary closing

Sincerely,

Signature

Carolyn Brown

Writer's signature block

Carolyn Brown, Ph.D.
Director of Research
cbrown@EvansTE.com

End notations

CB/ls
Enclosure: Final Safety Report
cc: ITS Safety Committee Members

FIGURE L–4. Full-Block-Style Letter (with Letterhead)

Salutation

Place the salutation, or *greeting*, two lines below the inside address and align it with the left margin. In most business letters, the salutation contains the recipient's personal title (such as *Mr.*, *Ms.*, *Dr.*) and last name, followed by a colon. If you are on a first-name basis with the recipient, use only the first name in the salutation.

Address women as *Ms.* unless they have expressed a preference for *Miss* or *Mrs.* However, professional titles (such as *Professor*, *Senator*, *Major*) take precedence over *Ms.* and similar courtesy titles.

When a person's first name could refer to either a woman or a man, one solution is to use both the first and last names in the salutation (*Dear Pat Smith:*).

For multiple recipients, the following salutations are appropriate:

- ▶ Dear Professor Allen and Dr. Rivera: [two recipients]
- ▶ Dear Ms. Becham, Ms. Moore, and Mr. Stein: [three recipients]
- ▶ Dear Colleagues: [*Members*, or other suitable collective term]

Subject Line

An optional element in a letter is a subject line, which should follow the salutation. Insert one blank line above and one blank line below the subject line. The subject line in a letter functions as it does for e-mail and other correspondence as an aid in focusing the topic and filing the letter. (For information on creating subject lines, see pages 113–14.)

Subject lines are especially useful if you are writing to a large company and do not know the name or title of the recipient. In such cases, you may address a letter to an appropriate department or identify the subject in a subject line and use no salutation.

▶ National Medical Supply Group
501 West National Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55407

Attention: Customer Service Department

Subject: Defective Cardio-100 Stethoscopes

I am returning six stethoscopes with damaged diaphragms that . . .

In other circumstances in which you do not know the recipient's name, use a title appropriate to the **context** of the letter, such as *Dear Customer* or *Dear IT Professional*.

Body

The body of the letter should begin two lines below the salutation (or any element that precedes the body, such as a subject or an attention line). Single-space within and double-space between paragraphs, as shown in Figure L–4. To provide a fuller appearance to a very short letter, you can increase the side margins or increase the font size. You can also insert extra space above the inside address, the writer's signature block, and the initials of the person typing the letter—but do not exceed twice the recommended space for each of these elements.

Complimentary Closing

Type the complimentary closing two spaces below the body. Use a standard expression such as *Sincerely*, *Sincerely yours*, or *Yours truly*. (If the recipient is a friend as well as a business associate, you can use a less formal closing such as *Best wishes* or *Best regards* or, simply, *Best*.) Capitalize only the initial letter of the first word, and follow the expression with a comma.

Writer's Signature Block

Type your full name four lines below and aligned with the complimentary closing. On the next line include your business title, if appropriate. The following lines may contain your individual contact information, such as a telephone number or an e-mail address, if not included in the letterhead or the body of your letter. Sign the letter in the space between the complimentary closing and your name.

End Notations

Business letters sometimes require additional information that is placed at the left margin, two spaces below the typed name and title of the writer in a long letter, four spaces below in a short letter.

Reference initials show the letter writer's initials in capital letters, followed by a slash mark (or colon), and then the initials of the person typing the letter in lowercase letters, as shown in Figure L–4. When the writer is also the person typing the letter, no initials are needed.

Enclosure notations indicate that the writer is sending material (such as an invoice or an article) along with the letter. Note that you should mention the enclosure in the body of the letter. Enclosure notations may take several forms:

- Enclosure: Final Safety Report
- Enclosures (2)
- Enc. *or* Encs.

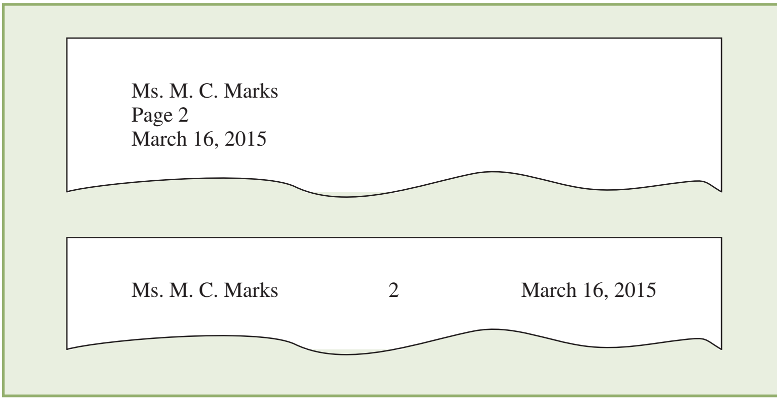


FIGURE L–5. Alternative Headers for the Second Page of a Letter

Copy notation ("cc:") tells the reader that a copy of the letter is being sent to the named recipient(s) (see Figure L–4). Use a blind-copy notation ("bcc:") when you do not want the addressee to know that a copy is being sent to someone else. A blind-copy notation appears only on the copy, not on the original ("bcc: Dr. Brenda Shelton"). See the Ethics Note in **e-mail** on page 168.

Continuing Pages

If a letter requires a second page (or, in rare cases, more), always carry at least two lines of the body text over to that page. Use plain (nonletterhead) paper of quality equivalent to that of the letterhead stationery for the second page. It should have a header with the recipient's name, the page number, and the date. Place the header in the upper left-hand corner or across the page, as shown in Figure L–5.

like / as

To avoid confusion between *like* and *as*, remember that *like* is a **preposition** and *as* (or *as if*) is a **conjunction**. Use *like* with a **noun** or **pronoun** that is not followed by a **verb**.

- ▶ The supervisor still behaves *like* a novice.

Use *as* before **clauses**, which contain verbs.

- ▶ He responded *as* we hoped he would.
- ▶ The presentation seemed *as if* it would never end.

Like and *as* are used in **comparisons**: *Like* is used in constructions that omit the verb, and *as* is used when the verb is retained.

- He adapted to the new system *like* a duck to water.
- He adapted to the new system *as* a duck adapts to water.

listening

Effective listening enables the listener to understand the directions of an instructor, the message in a speaker's **presentation**, the goals of a manager, and the needs and wants of customers. Above all, it lays the foundation for productive communication.

Fallacies About Listening

Most people assume that because they can hear, they know how to listen. In fact, *hearing* is passive, whereas *listening* is active. Hearing voices in a crowd or a ringing telephone requires no analysis and no active involvement—we have no choice but to hear such sounds. Listening, however, requires actively focusing on a speaker, interpreting the message, and assessing its worth. Listening also requires that you consider the **context** of messages and the differences in meaning that may be the result of differences in the speaker's and the listener's occupation, education, culture, sex, race, or other factors. See also **biased language**, **connotation / denotation**, **English as a second language**, and **global communication**.

L

Active Listening

To become an active listener, you need to take the following steps:

Step 1: Make a Conscious Decision. The first step to active listening is simply making up your mind to listen. Active listening requires a conscious effort, something that does not come naturally. The well-known precept offers good advice: "Seek first to understand and *then* to be understood."*

Step 2: Define Your Purpose. Knowing why you are listening can go a long way toward managing the most common listening problems: drift-

*Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*, 15th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2004).

ing attention, formulating your response while the speaker is still talking, and interrupting the speaker. To help you define your purpose for listening, ask yourself these questions:

- What kind of information do I hope to get from this exchange, and how will I use it?
- What kind of message do I want to send while I am listening? (Do I want to portray understanding, determination, flexibility, competence, or patience?)
- What factors—boredom, daydreaming, anger, impatience—might interfere with listening during the interaction? How can I keep these factors from placing a barrier between the speaker and me?

Step 3: Take Specific Actions. Becoming an active listener requires a willingness to become a responder rather than a reactor. A *reactor* simply says the first thing that comes to mind or draws a conclusion without checking to make sure that he or she accurately understands the message. In contrast, a *responder* waits to be certain that he or she understands the speaker's intended message before responding. Take the following actions to help you become a responder and not a reactor.

L

- Make a conscious effort to be impartial when evaluating a message. For example, do not dismiss a message because you dislike the speaker or are distracted by the speaker's appearance, mannerisms, or accent.
- Slow down the communication by asking for more information or by **paraphrasing** the message received before you offer your thoughts. Paraphrasing lets the speaker know you are listening, gives the speaker an opportunity to clear up any misunderstanding, and keeps you focused.
- Listen with empathy by putting yourself in the speaker's position. When people feel they are being listened to empathetically, they tend to respond with appreciation and cooperation, thereby improving the communication.
- Take notes, when possible, to help you stay focused on what a speaker is saying. **Note-taking** not only communicates your attentiveness to the speaker but also reinforces the message and helps you remember it.

Step 4: Adapt to the Situation. The requirements of active listening differ from one situation to another. For example, when you are listening to a lecture, you may be listening only for specific information. However, if you are on a team project that depends on everyone's contribution, you need to listen at the highest level so that you can gather information as well as pick up on nuances the other speakers may be communicating. See also **collaborative writing**.

lists

Vertically stacked lists of words, **phrases**, and other items are often highlighted with bullets, numbers, or letters to set them apart from surrounding text. Lists can save readers time by allowing them to see at a glance specific items or key points. They also help readers by breaking up complex statements and by focusing on such information as steps in sequence, materials or parts needed, questions or concluding points, and recommendations, as shown in Figure L–6.

As Figure L–6 also shows, you should provide **context** for a list with an introductory sentence followed by a **colon** (or no punctuation for an incomplete sentence). Ensure **coherence** by following the list with some reference to the list or the statement that introduced it.

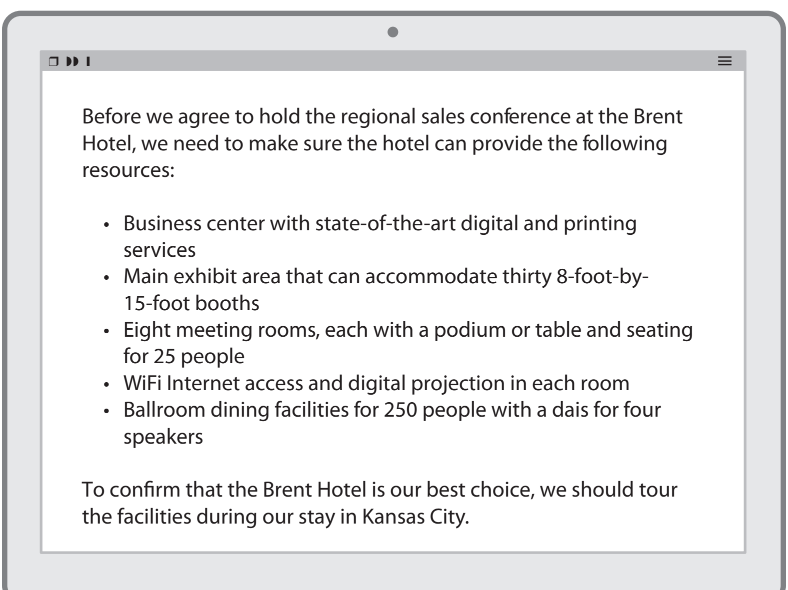


FIGURE L–6. Bulleted List in a Paragraph

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Lists

Follow the practices of your organization or use these guidelines for consistency and formatting.

CONSISTENCY

- ✔ Do not overuse lists or create extended lists in documents or in **presentation** slides.
- ✔ List only comparable items, such as tasks or equipment, that are balanced in importance (as in Figure L–6).
- ✔ Begin each listed item in the same way — whether with **nouns**, **verbs**, or other **parts of speech** — and maintain **parallel structure** throughout.
- ✔ List bulleted items in a logical order, keeping your **audience** and **purpose** in mind. See also **methods of development** and **persuasion**.

FORMATTING

- ✔ Capitalize the first word in each listed item, unless doing so is visually awkward.
- ✔ Use **periods** or other ending **punctuation** when the listed items are complete sentences.
- ✔ Avoid **commas** or **semicolons** following items and do not use the **conjunction** *and* before the last item in a list.
- ✔ Use numbers to indicate sequence or rank.
- ✔ Follow each number with a period and start the item with a capital letter.
- ✔ Use bullets (round, square, arrow) when you do not wish to indicate rank or sequence.
- ✔ When lists need subdivisions, use letters with numbers (see **outlining**).

literature reviews

A literature review is a summary of the relevant publications (printed and electronic) available on a particular subject over a specified period of time. For example, a literature review might describe significant material published in the past five years on a technique for improving emergency medical diagnostic procedures or it might describe all **reports** written in the past ten years on efforts to improve safety procedures at a particular company. A literature review tells readers what has been published on a particular subject and helps them determine what material they should read in full.

Some **trade journal articles** or academic papers begin with a brief literature review to bring the reader up to date on current research in the field. The writer then uses the review as background for his or her own discussion of the subject. Figure L–7 shows a literature review that serves as an **introduction** for an article that surveys the history of visual communication in the workplace. A literature review also could be a whole document in itself. Fully developed literature reviews are good starting points for detailed **research**.

To prepare a literature review, you must first research published material on your topic. Because your readers may begin their research based on your literature review, carefully and accurately cite all bibliographic information. As you review each source, note the **scope** of the book or article and judge its value to the reader. Save all printouts of computer-assisted searches—you may want to incorporate the sources in a bibliography. See also **documenting sources**.

Our field's growing awareness of the centrality of visual communication to the work of professional writers has given rise to much of the visually oriented research in pedagogy, rhetoric, and related areas within professional communication (see, for example, Brasseur, 1997; Kostelnick, 1994). Complementing this work, educators have also been actively developing courses and programs to help prepare students for the expanded professional roles they will likely assume. It is not surprising, therefore, that a 2003 survey of members of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) ascertained that teachers of professional writing give visual communication top billing as a topic of interest (Dayton & Bernhardt, 2004). However, while visual communication has established a firm foothold in professional communication research and pedagogy (Allen & Benninghoff, 2004), program coordinators and faculty more generally lack current data about the role of visual communication in the workplace. Such data could help to determine whether academic perceptions of the importance of visual communication are well founded, and, in turn, whether academic programs are meeting student needs in terms of workplace preparation. Such data could also provide concrete evidence in arguments about curricular design and enrich the information educators are able to offer students about the workplace life of the professional writer. As professional communication programs continue to mature and proliferate, such information will become even more useful.

FIGURE L–7. Literature Review

Source: Brumberger, Eva. "Visual Communication in the Workplace: A Survey of Practice." *Technical Communication Quarterly* 16, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 369–95.

Begin a literature review by defining the area to be covered and the types of works to be reviewed. For example, a literature review may be limited to articles and reports and not include any books. You can arrange your discussion chronologically, beginning with a description of the earliest relevant literature and progressing to the most recent (or vice versa). You can also subdivide the topic, discussing works in various subcategories of the topic.

Annotated **bibliographies** are similar to literature reviews because they summarize the content of published material in a subject area. Unlike literature reviews, however, an annotated bibliography cites each bibliographic item and then describes it in a single block of text. The description (or *annotation*) may include the **purpose** of a published work, its scope, the main topics covered, its historical importance, and anything else the writer feels the reader should know.

logic errors

Logic is the study of the principles of reasoning. In most writing, especially in writing intended to persuade an **audience**, logic is essential to demonstrating that your conclusions are valid. This entry describes typical errors in logic that can undermine the point you are trying to communicate and your credibility. See also **persuasion**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Many logic errors occur unintentionally. However, when they are used intentionally to mislead **readers**, that practice is unethical. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

Lack of Reason

When a statement is contrary to the reader's common sense, that statement is not reasonable. If, for example, you stated, "New York City is a small town," your reader might immediately question your statement. However, if you stated, "Although New York City's population is over eight million, it is composed of neighborhoods that function as small towns," your reader could probably accept the statement as reasonable.

Sweeping Generalizations

Sweeping generalizations are statements that are too broad or all-inclusive to be supportable. They are general statements that disregard exceptions: A flat statement such as "Management is never concerned about employees" ignores evidence that many managers are in fact concerned for their employees. Using such generalizations weakens your credibility.

Non Sequiturs

A non sequitur is a statement that does not logically follow a previous statement.

- I cleared off my desk, and the report is due today.

The missing link in these statements is that the writer cleared his or her desk to make space for materials to help finish the report that is due today. Avoid non sequiturs by making sure you explicitly state the logical connections of ideas and facts in your writing.

False Cause

A false cause (also called *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*) refers to the logical fallacy that because one event followed another event, the first somehow caused the second.

- I didn't bring my umbrella today. No wonder it is now raining.
- Because we now have our board meetings at the Education Center, our management turnover rate has declined.

Such errors in reasoning can happen when the writer hastily concludes that two events are related without examining whether a causal connection between them, in fact, exists.

Biased or Suppressed Evidence

A conclusion reached as a result of biased or suppressed evidence—self-serving data, questionable sources, purposely omitted or incomplete facts—is both illogical and unethical. Suppose you are preparing a report on the acceptance of a new policy among employees. If you distribute **questionnaires** only to those who think the policy is effective, the resulting evidence will be biased. Intentionally ignoring relevant data that might not support your position not only produces inaccurate results but also is unethical.

Fact Versus Opinion

Distinguish between fact and opinion. Facts include verifiable data or statements, whereas opinions are personal conclusions that may or may not be based on facts. For example, it is verifiable that distilled water boils at 100°C; that it tastes better or worse than tap water is an opinion. Distinguish the facts from your opinions in your writing so that your readers can draw their own conclusions.

Loaded Arguments

When you include an opinion in a statement and then reach conclusions that are based on that statement, you are loading the argument. Consider the following opening for a memo:

- I have several suggestions to improve the poorly written policy manual. First, we should change . . .

Unless everyone agrees that the manual is poorly written, readers may reject a writer's entire message because they disagree with this loaded premise. Conclusions reached with loaded statements are weak and can produce negative reactions in readers who detect the loading.

loose / lose

Loose is an **adjective** meaning "not fastened" or "unrestrained." ("He discovered a *loose* wire.") *Lose* is a **verb** meaning "be deprived of" or "fail to win." ("I hope we do not *lose* the contract.")

M

malapropisms

A malapropism is a word that sounds similar to the one intended but is ludicrously wrong in the **context**.

INCORRECT Our employees are less *sedimentary* now that we have a fitness center.

CORRECT Our employees are less *sedentary* now that we have a fitness center.

Intentional malapropisms are sometimes used in humorous writing; unintentional malapropisms can confuse readers and embarrass a writer. See also **figures of speech**.

manuals

Manuals (printed or digital) help customers and technical specialists use and maintain products. They are often written by professional technical writers, although in smaller companies, engineers or technicians may write them. See also **instructions** and review the entries **process explanation** and **technical writing style**.

Types of Manuals

User Manuals. User manuals are aimed at skilled or unskilled users of equipment and provide instructions for the setup, operation, and maintenance of a product. User manuals also typically include safety precautions and troubleshooting charts and guides.

Tutorials. Tutorials are self-study guides for users of a product or system. Either packaged with user manuals or provided in digital form, tutorials guide novice users through the operation of a product or system.

Training Manuals. Training manuals are used to prepare individuals for some procedure or skill, such as operating a respirator, flying an airplane, or processing an insurance claim.

Operators' Manuals. Written for skilled operators of construction, manufacturing, computer, or military equipment, operators' manuals contain essential instructions and safety warnings. They are often published in a convenient format that allows operators to use them at a work site.

Service Manuals. Service manuals help trained technicians repair equipment or systems, usually at the customer's location. Such manuals often contain troubleshooting guides for locating technical problems.

Special-Purpose Manuals. Some users need manuals that fulfill special purposes: These include programmer reference manuals; equipment overhaul, handling, and setup manuals; and safety-procedure manuals.

Designing and Writing Effective Manuals

Identify and Write for Your Audience. Will you be writing for an **audience** of novice users, intermediate users, or experts? Or will you be instructing a combination of users with different levels of technical knowledge and experience? Depending on your audience, you will make the following decisions:

- Which details to include (fewer for experts, more for novices)
- What level of technical vocabulary to use (necessary technical terminology for experts, **plain language** for novices)
- Whether to include a summary list of steps (experts will probably prefer using this summary list and not the entire manual; once novices and intermediate users gain more skill, they will also prefer referring just to this summary list)

Design your manual so that **readers** can use the equipment, software, or machinery while they are also reading your instructions. See also **layout and design**.

- Provide **headings** and subheadings using words that readers will find familiar so that they can easily locate particular sections and instructions.
- Write with precision and accuracy so that readers can perform the procedures appropriately.
- Use clear and well-labeled **visuals** to show readers exactly what equipment, online screens, or other items in front of them should look like.

Provide an Overview. An overview at the beginning of a manual should explain the overall purpose of the procedure, how the procedure can be useful to the reader, and any cautions or warnings the reader should know about before starting. If readers know the purpose of the procedure and its specific workplace applications, they will be more likely to pay close attention to the steps of the procedure and apply them appropriately in the future.

Create Major Sections. Divide any procedure into separate goals, create major sections to cover those goals, and state those goals in the section headings. If your manual has chapters, divide each chapter into specific subsections. In a manual for students about designing a Web page, an introductory chapter might include these subsections: (1) obtaining Web space, (2) accessing the new space, and (3) using a Web authoring tool.

Use Headings to Indicate the Goals of Actions. Within each section, you can use headings to describe *why* readers need to follow each step or each related set of steps. The conventional way to indicate a goal in a heading is to use the infinitive form of a **verb** ("*To scan* the document") or the gerund form ("*Scanning* the document"). Whichever verb form you choose for headings, use it consistently throughout your manual each time you want to indicate a goal. The following example shows how a heading can indicate the goal of a set of actions with the gerund form of the verb ("Scanning").

▶ **Scanning Documents**

Action 1	Place the document in the feeder
Action 2	Check the box below the window for single-page items
Action 3	Click "SCAN" to open the "Scan Manager"

Use the Imperative Verb Form to Indicate Actions. Use the imperative form each time you want to indicate an action. The previous example shows the conventional way to indicate an action by using the imperative form of verbs ("*Place* the document"; "*Check* the box"). The manual writer designated actions by placing subheads (Action 1, Action 2, Action 3) in the left margin and imperative verbs ("Place," "Check," and "Click") in the instructions to the right of the subheads.

Use Simple and Direct Verbs. Simple and direct verbs are most meaningful, especially for novice readers. Avoid **jargon** and terms known only to experts, unless you know that those experts constitute the entire reading audience.

POOR VERB CHOICE	BETTER VERB CHOICE
Attempt	Try
Depress, Hit	Press
Discontinue	Stop

Employ	Use
Enumerate	Count
Execute	Do
Observe	Watch
Segregate	Divide

Indicate the Response of Actions. When appropriate, indicate the expected response of an action to reassure readers that they are performing the procedure correctly (for example, "A blinking light will appear" or "You will see a red triangle"). Use the form you choose throughout a set of instructions to designate a response. In the following example, you can see how the response is indented farther to the right than the action, begins with a subhead ("Response"), and is indicated by a full sentence.

▶ Action 3 Click "SCAN" to open the "Scan Manager"

Response The "Scan Manager" will open and ask you to choose "preview," "scan," or "help."

Check for Usability. To test the accuracy and **clarity** of your instructions, at a minimum ask someone who is not familiar with the subject to use the manual to spot missing steps or confusing passages. In most cases, you should conduct systematic **usability testing** on manual drafts so that you can detect errors and other problems readers might encounter.

M

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing Manuals**

- ✔ Determine the best medium for your manual: online document, mobile application, printed document with spiral or loose-leaf binding, and so on. (See **selecting the medium**.)
- ✔ Pay attention to **organization** and **outlining**; to be useful to readers, manuals for complex products and systems must be well organized.
- ✔ Use a consistent format and design for each part of a manual: headings, subheadings, goals, actions, responses, cautions, warnings, and tips.
- ✔ Use standardized symbols, as described in **global graphics**, especially for international readers or where regulations require those symbols.
- ✔ Use visuals — such as screen shots, schematics, exploded-view **drawings**, **flowcharts**, **photographs**, and **tables** — placing them where they would most benefit readers.
- ✔ Include topic **indexes** to help readers find information.

(continued)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing Manuals** (*continued*)

- ✔ Use warning statements and standard symbols for potential dangers, as described on pages 268–69.
- ✔ Have manuals reviewed by your peers as well as by technical experts and other specialists to ensure that the manuals are helpful, accurate, and appropriate. See also **revision** and **proofreading**.
- ✔ Develop a procedure for updating the manual and explain that procedure in the introduction to the manual.

maps

Maps are often used to show specific geographic areas and features (such as roads, mountains, and rivers). They can also illustrate geographic distributions of populations, climate patterns, corporate branch office locations, and so forth. The map in Figure M–1, from an environmental assessment, shows the overlapping geographic areas served by three electric utilities in Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. Note that the map contains a figure number and title, scale of distances, key (or legend), compass, and distinctive highlighting for emphasis. Maps are often used in **reports**, **proposals**, **brochures**, **environmental impact statements**, and other documents in which readers need to know the location or geographic orientation of natural and human-constructed features. For maps and cartographic resources, see www.lib.utexas.edu/maps.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Using Maps**

- ✔ Follow the general guidelines discussed in **visuals** for placement of maps.
- ✔ Label each map clearly, and assign each map a figure number if it is one of a number of illustrations.
- ✔ Clearly identify all significant boundaries while eliminating those unnecessary for your purposes.
- ✔ Eliminate unnecessary information that may clutter a map. For example, if the purpose of the map is to show population centers, do not include mountain elevations, rivers, or other physical features.
- ✔ Include a scale of miles/kilometers or feet/meters to give your readers an indication of the map's proportions.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Using Maps** *(continued)*

- ✔ Indicate which direction is north with an arrow or a compass symbol.
- ✔ Emphasize key features by using color, shading, dots, crosshatching, or other appropriate symbols.
- ✔ Include a key, or legend, that explains what the different colors, shadings, or symbols represent.
- ✔ Consider **copyright** and potential **plagiarism** when incorporating maps found online into your documents.

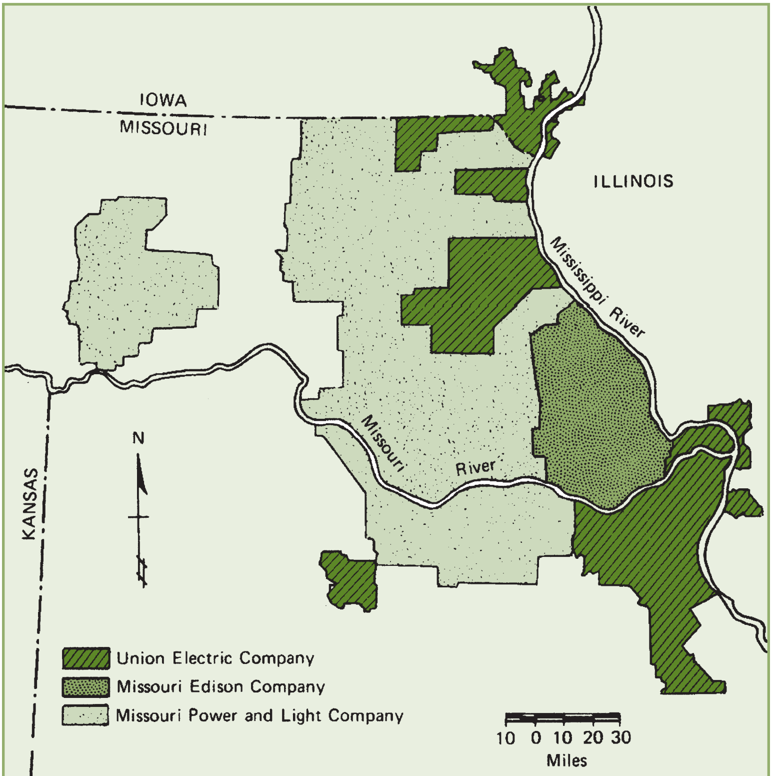


Figure 12. Location of Service Areas of Three Utilities
Source: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

FIGURE M–1. Map

M

mathematical equations

You can appropriately present mathematical equations and make them easy to read by following consistent standards throughout a document. Mathematicians often use scientific software packages to prepare and format research articles and reports with mathematical equations. Some scientific journals, in fact, require documents to be written with software packages such as LaTeX, Scientific Workplace, AMSTeX, or similar versions of TeX (www.latex-project.org). Unless you need to follow such specific styles or specifications, the guidelines in this entry should serve you well.

Formatting Equations

Set short and simple equations, such as $x(y) = y^2 + 3y + 2$, as part of the running text rather than displaying them on separate lines, as long as an equation does not appear at the beginning of a sentence. If a document contains multiple equations, identify them with numbers, as the following example shows:

$$x(y) = y^2 + 3y + 2 \tag{1}$$

Number displayed equations consecutively throughout the work. Place the equation number, in parentheses, at the right margin of the same line as the equation (or of the first line if the equation runs longer than one line). Leave at least four spaces between the equation and the equation number. Refer to displayed equations by number, for example, as "Equation 1" or "Eq. 1."

Positioning Displayed Equations

Equations that are set off from the text need to be surrounded by space. Triple-space between displayed equations and normal text. Double-space between one equation and another and between the lines of multiline equations. Count space above the equation from the uppermost character in the equation; count space below from the lowermost character.

Type displayed equations either at the left margin or indented five spaces from the left margin, depending on the length of the equations. When a series of short equations is displayed in sequence, align them on the equal signs.

$$p(x,y) = \sin(x + y) \tag{2}$$

$$p(x,y) = \sin x \cos y + \cos x \sin y \tag{3}$$

$$p(x_0, y_0) = \sin x_0 \cos y_0 + \cos x_0 \sin y_0 \tag{4}$$

$$q(x,y) = \cos(x + y) \qquad (5)$$
$$= \cos x \cos y - \sin x \sin y$$
$$q(x_0, y_0) = \cos x_0 \cos y_0 - \sin x_0 \sin y_0 \qquad (6)$$

Break an equation that requires two lines at the equal sign, carrying the equal sign over to the second portion of the equation.

$$_0\int^1 (f_n - \tfrac{n}{r} f_n)^2\, r\, dr + 2n\ _0\int^1 f_n f_n dr \qquad (7)$$
$$= {}_0\int^1 (f_n - \tfrac{n}{c} f_n)^2\, r\, dr + nf_n^2(1)$$

If you cannot break an equation at the equal sign, break it at a plus or minus sign that is not in **parentheses** or **brackets**. Bring the plus or minus sign to the next line of the equation, which should be positioned so that that line ends near the right margin of the equation.

$$ø(x, y, z) = (x^2 + y^2 + z^2)^{1/2}\, (x - y + z)\, (x + y - z)^2 \qquad (8)$$
$$- [\, f(x, y, z) - 3x^2]$$

The next-best place to break an equation is between parentheses or brackets that indicate multiplication of two major elements.

For equations that require more than two lines, start the first line at the left margin, end the last line at the right margin (or four spaces to the left of the equation's number), and center intermediate lines between the margins. Whenever possible, break equations at operational signs, parentheses, or brackets.

Omit punctuation after displayed equations, even when they end a sentence and even when a key list of defining terms follows (for example, P = pressure, psf; V = volume, cu ft; T = temperature, °C). Punctuation may be used before an equation, however, depending on the grammatical construction.

▸ The term $(n)_r$ may be written in a more familiar way by using the following algebraic device:

$$(n)_r = \frac{(n)(n-1)(n-2)\ldots(n-r+1)(n-r)(n-r-1)\ldots 3\cdot 2\cdot 1}{(n-4)(n-r-1)\ldots 3\cdot 2\cdot 1} \qquad (9)$$
$$= \frac{n!}{(n-r)!}$$

maybe / may be

Maybe (one word) is an **adverb** meaning "perhaps." ("*Maybe* the legal staff can resolve this issue.") *May be* (two words) is a **verb** phrase. ("It *may be* necessary to hire a specialist.")

media / medium

Media is the plural of *medium* and should always be used with a plural **verb**.

- ▸ Many communication *media are* available today.
- ▸ The Internet *is* a multifaceted *medium*.

meetings

Meetings allow people to share information and collaborate in ways that are often more productive than exchanges of multiple messages or conversations would allow. Like a **presentation**, a successful meeting requires planning and preparation. See also **selecting the medium**.

Planning a Meeting

Begin by determining the focus of the meeting, deciding who should attend, and choosing the best time and place to hold it. Prepare an agenda for the meeting and determine who should take the minutes.

M

Determine the Purpose of the Meeting. The first step in planning a meeting is to focus on the desired outcome by asking questions to help you determine the meeting's **purpose**: What should participants know, believe, or be able to do as a result of attending the meeting?

Once you have your desired outcome in focus, use the information to write a purpose statement for the meeting that answers the questions *what* and *why*.

- ▸ The purpose of this meeting is to gather ideas from the sales force [*what*] in order to create a successful sales campaign for our new Model PN-4 tablet computer [*why*].

Decide Who Should Attend. Determine first the key people who need to attend the meeting. If a meeting must be held without some key participants, ask those people for their contributions prior to the meeting or invite them to participate by speakerphone, videoconference, or such remote methods as described in *Digital Tip: Conducting Online Meetings* (page 339).

Choose the Meeting Time. Schedule a meeting for a time when all or most of the key people can be present. Consider as well other factors, such as time of day and the length of the meeting, which can influence its outcome:

- Monday morning is often a time people use to prepare for the coming week's work.
- Friday afternoon is often when people focus on completing the current week's tasks.
- Long meetings may need to include breaks to allow participants to respond to messages and take restroom breaks.
- Meetings held during the last 15 minutes of the day will be quick, but few people will remember what happened.
- Remote participants may need consideration for their time zones.

DIGITAL TIP

Scheduling Meetings Online

If you are responsible for scheduling meetings, you can simplify the process by using the advanced features of your organization's calendar application or using one of several free online scheduling tools. To view a list of these tools and tips for scheduling meetings more effectively, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Scheduling Meetings Online."

Choose the Meeting Location. Having a meeting at your own location can give you an advantage: You feel more comfortable than your guests, who are new to the surroundings. Holding the meeting on someone else's premises, however, can signal cooperation. For balance, especially when people are meeting for the first time or are discussing sensitive issues, meet at a neutral site where no one gains an advantage and attendees may feel freer to participate.

DIGITAL TIP

Conducting Online Meetings

When participants cannot meet face to face, consider holding a videoconference. In such meetings, the participants use an application on their computers to connect with other computers running compatible applications. Many of these applications are free or inexpensive, but all participants will need high-speed Internet connections and Webcams. To view a list of software programs that support videoconferencing and tips for running a successful videoconference, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Conducting Online Meetings."

Establish the Agenda. A tool for focusing the group, the agenda is an outline of what the meeting will address. Figure M–2 shows a typical agenda. Always prepare an agenda for a meeting, even if it is only an informal list of main topics. Ideally, the agenda should be distributed to attendees a day or two before the meeting. For a longer meeting in which participants are required to make a presentation, try to distribute the agenda a week or more in advance.

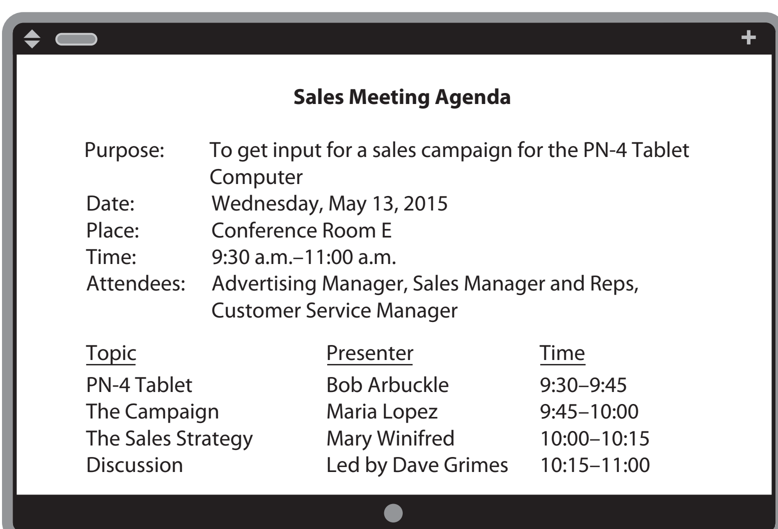
The agenda should list the attendees, the meeting time and place, and the topics you plan to discuss. If the meeting includes presentations, list the time allotted for each speaker. Finally, indicate an approximate length for the meeting so that participants can plan the rest of their day.

If the agenda is distributed in advance of the meeting, it should be accompanied by a memo or an e-mail informing people of the following:

- The purpose of the meeting
- The date and place of the meeting
- The meeting start and stop times
- The names of the people invited
- Instructions on how to prepare for the meeting

Figure M–3 shows a cover message to accompany an agenda.

Assign the Minute-Taking. Delegate the minute-taking to someone other than the leader. The minute-taker should record major decisions made and tasks assigned. To avoid misunderstandings, the minute-taker



Sales Meeting Agenda

Purpose: To get input for a sales campaign for the PN-4 Tablet Computer
Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2015
Place: Conference Room E
Time: 9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Attendees: Advertising Manager, Sales Manager and Reps, Customer Service Manager

Topic	Presenter	Time
PN-4 Tablet	Bob Arbuckle	9:30–9:45
The Campaign	Maria Lopez	9:45–10:00
The Sales Strategy	Mary Winifred	10:00–10:15
Discussion	Led by Dave Grimes	10:15–11:00

FIGURE M–2. Meeting Agenda

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: Advertising Manager, Sales Manager, Sales Representatives, Customer Service Manager

CC:

Show BCC

Subject: Planning Meeting for PN-4 Tablet

Sales Meeting Agenda.doc (29 KB) Download

Purpose of the Meeting
The purpose of this meeting is to get your ideas for the upcoming introduction and sales campaign for our new PN-4 tablet.

Date, Time, and Location
Date: May 13, 2015
Time: 9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room E (go to the ground floor, take a right off the elevator, third door on the left)

Attendees
The groups addressed above.

Meeting Preparation
Everyone should be prepared to offer suggestions on the following items:

- Sales features of the new PN-4 tablet
- Techniques for selling the PN-4 tablet
- Customer profile of potential buyers
- FAQs—questions customers may ask
- Anticipated support services (instructions, ancillaries)

Agenda
Please see the attached document.

FIGURE M–3. E-mail Announcing a Meeting with an Attached Agenda

needs to record each assignment, the person responsible for it, and the date on which it is due. Determine as well if the minute-taker will need to follow any legal or organizational rules for recording the minutes. The minute-taker is responsible for distributing the minutes to everyone, including appropriate nonattendees.

For a standing committee, it is best to rotate the responsibility of taking minutes. See also **minutes of meetings** and **note-taking**.

Conducting the Meeting

Assign someone to write on a board or project an image of information that needs to be viewed by everyone present.

During the meeting, keep to your agenda; however, create a productive environment by allowing room for differing views and fostering an environment in which participants listen respectfully to one another.

- Consider the feelings, thoughts, ideas, and needs of others—do not let your own agenda blind you to other points of view.
- Help other participants feel valued and respected by **listening** to them and responding to what they say.
- Respond positively to the comments of others whenever possible.
- Consider communication styles and approaches that are different from your own, particularly those from other cultures. See also **global communication**.

Deal with Conflict. Despite your best efforts, conflict is inevitable. However, conflict is potentially valuable; when managed positively, it can stimulate creative thinking by challenging complacency and showing ways to achieve goals more efficiently or economically. See **collaborative writing**.

Members of any group are likely to vary in their personalities and attitudes, and you may encounter people who approach meetings differently. Consider the following tactics for the interruptive, negative, rambling, overly quiet, and territorial personality types.

- The *interruptive person* rarely lets anyone finish a sentence and may intimidate the group's quieter members. Tell that person in a firm but nonhostile tone to let the others finish in the interest of getting everyone's input. By addressing the issue directly, you signal to the group the importance of putting common goals first.
- The *negative person* has difficulty accepting change and often considers a new idea or project from a negative point of view. Such negativity, if left unchecked, can demoralize the group and suppress enthusiasm for new ideas. If the negative person brings up a valid point, however, ask for the group's suggestions to remedy the issue being raised. If the negative person's reactions are not valid or are outside the agenda, state the necessity of staying focused on the agenda and perhaps recommend a separate meeting to address those issues.
- The *rambling person* cannot collect his or her thoughts quickly enough to verbalize them succinctly. Restate or clarify this person's ideas. Try to strike a balance between providing your own interpretation and drawing out the person's intended meaning.
- The *overly quiet person* may be timid or may just be deep in thought. Ask for this person's ideas, being careful not to embarrass the person. In some cases, you can have a quiet person jot down his or her ideas and give them to you later.
- The *territorial person* fiercely defends his or her group against real or perceived threats and may refuse to cooperate with members of other departments, companies, and so on. Point out that although such concerns may be valid, everyone is working toward the same overall goal and that goal should take precedence.

Close the Meeting. Just before closing the meeting, review all decisions and assignments. Paraphrase each to help the group focus on what individual participants have agreed to do and to ensure that the minutes will be complete and accurate. Now is the time to raise questions and to clarify any misunderstandings. Set a date by which everyone at the meeting can expect to receive copies of the minutes. Finally, thank everyone for participating, and close the meeting on a positive note.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Planning and Conducting Meetings**

- ✔ Develop a purpose statement for the meeting to focus your planning.
- ✔ Invite only those essential to fulfilling the purpose of the meeting.
- ✔ Select a time and place convenient to all those attending.
- ✔ Create an agenda and distribute it at least a day or two before the meeting.
- ✔ Assign someone to take meeting minutes.
- ✔ Ensure that the minutes record key decisions; assignments; due dates; and the date, time, and location of any follow-up meeting.
- ✔ Follow the agenda to keep everyone focused.
- ✔ Respect the views of others and how they are expressed.
- ✔ Use the strategies in this entry for handling conflict and attendees whose style of expression may prevent getting everyone's best thinking.
- ✔ Close the meeting by reviewing key decisions and assignments.

memos

Memos are used within organizations for routine correspondence, short **reports**, **proposals**, and other internal documents. Memos use a standard format (*To:*, *From:*, *Date:*, *Subject:*) whether sent on paper or attached to an **e-mail**.

Even for organizations where e-mail messages have largely taken the function of memos, a printed or an attached memo with organizational letterhead can communicate with formality and authority in addition to offering the full range of word-processing features. Paper memos are also useful in manufacturing and service industries, as well as in other businesses where employees do not have easy access to e-mail. For a discussion of writing strategies for memos, see **correspondence**. See also **selecting the medium**.

Memo Format

The memo shown in Figure M–4 illustrates a typical memo format. As this example illustrates, the use of **headings** and **lists** foster clarity by

Professional Publishing Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barbara Smith, Publications Manager
FROM: Hannah Kaufman, Vice President HK
DATE: April 13, 2015
SUBJECT: Schedule for ACM Electronics Brochures

Handwritten initials may be used with printed formal memos.

ACM Electronics has asked us to prepare a comprehensive set of brochures for its Milwaukee office by August 11, 2015. We have worked with similar firms in the past, so this job should be relatively easy to prepare. I estimate that the job will take nearly two months. Ted Harris has requested time and cost estimates for the project. Fred Moore in production will prepare the cost estimates, and I would like you to prepare a tentative schedule for the project.

Additional Personnel
In preparing the schedule, check the status of the following:
- Production schedule for all staff writers
- Availability of freelance writers
- Availability of dependable graphic designers

Ordinarily, we would not need to depend on outside personnel; however, because our bid for the *Wall Street Journal* special project is still under consideration, we could be short of staff in June and July. Further, we have to consider vacations that have already been approved.

Time Estimates
Please give me time estimates by April 20. A successful job done on time will give us a good chance to obtain the contract to do ACM Electronics' annual report for its stockholders' meeting this fall.

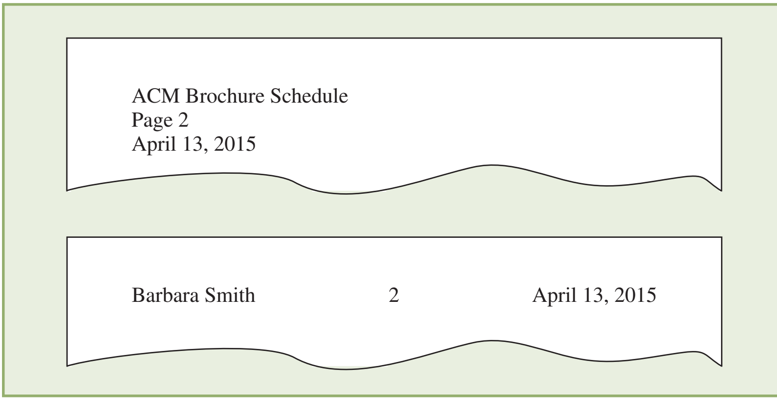
I am mailing separately several brochures that may be helpful.

cc: Ted Harris, President
Fred Moore, Production Editor

Copy notation may be placed at top with memo heading.

FIGURE M–4. Typical Memo Format (Printed or Attached to an E-mail)

M


ACM Brochure Schedule
Page 2
April 13, 2015

Barbara Smith 2 April 13, 2015

FIGURE M–5. Alternative Headers for the Second Page of Memos

providing **emphasis** and highlighting organization. See also **letters**. For a discussion of subject lines, see pages 113–14.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE As with e-mail, be alert to the practices of addressing and distributing memos in your organization. Consider who should receive or needs to be copied on a memo and in what order—senior managers, for example, take precedence over junior managers. If rank does not apply, alphabetizing recipients by last name is safe.

Some organizations ask writers to initial or sign formal memos that are printed (*hard copy*) to verify that the writer accepts responsibility for a memo's content.

Additional Pages

When memos require more than one page, use a second-page header and always carry at least two lines of the body text over to that page. The header should include either the recipient's name or (if there are too many names to fit) an abbreviated subject line, the page number, and the date. Place the header in the upper left-hand corner or across the page, as shown in Figure M–5.

methods of development

A logical method of development satisfies the readers' need for shape and structure in a document, whether it is an **e-mail**, a **report**, or a Web page. It helps you as a writer move smoothly and logically from the

introduction to a **conclusion**. Choose the method or combination of methods that best suits your subject, **audience**, and **purpose**. Following are the most common methods.

- **Cause-and-effect method of development** begins with either the cause or the effect of an event. This approach can be used to develop a report that offers a solution to a problem, beginning with the problem and moving on to the solution or vice versa.
- **Chronological method of development** emphasizes the time element of a sequence, as in an **incident report** that traces events as they occurred in time.
- **Comparison method of development** is useful when writing about a new topic that is in many ways similar to another topic that is more familiar to your readers.
- **Definition method of development** extends definitions with additional details, examples, comparisons, or other explanatory devices. See also **defining terms**.
- **Division-and-classification method of development** either separates a whole into component parts and discusses each part separately (*division*) or groups parts into categories that clarify the relationship of the parts (*classification*).
- **General and specific methods of development** proceed either from general information to specific details or from specific information to a general conclusion.
- **Order-of-importance method of development** presents information in either decreasing order of importance, as in a **proposal** that begins with the most important point, or increasing order of importance, as in a **presentation** that ends with the most important point.
- **Sequential method of development** emphasizes the order of elements in a process and is particularly useful when writing step-by-step **instructions**.
- **Spatial method of development** describes the physical appearance of an object or area from top to bottom, inside to outside, front to back, and so on.

Rarely does a writer rely on only one of these methods. Documents often blend methods of development. For example, in a report that describes the organization of a company, you might use elements from three methods of development. You could divide the larger topic (the company) into operations (division and classification), arrange the operations according to what you see as their impact within the company (order of importance), and present their manufacturing operations in the order they occur (sequential). As this example illustrates, when **outlining** a document, you may base your major division on one primary method of development appropriate to your purpose and then subordinate other methods to it.

minutes of meetings

Organizations and committees refer to official records of their **meetings** as *minutes*. Because minutes are often used to record decisions and to settle disputes, they must be accurate, complete, and clear. When approved, minutes of meetings are official and can be used as evidence in legal proceedings. A section from the minutes of a meeting is shown in Figure M–6.

Keep your minutes brief and to the point. Except for recording formally presented motions, which must be transcribed word for word, summarize what occurs and paraphrase discussions. To keep the minutes

NORTH TAMPA MEDICAL CENTER

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting
Medical Audit Committee

DATE: June 25, 2015

PRESENT: G. Miller (Chair), C. Bloom, J. Dades, K. Gilley, D. Ingoglia (Secretary), S. Ramirez

ABSENT: D. Rowan, C. Tsien, C. Voronski, R. Fautier, R. Wolf

Dr. Gail Miller called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. Dr. David Ingoglia made a motion that the June 4, 2015, minutes be approved as distributed. The motion was seconded and passed.

The committee discussed and took action on the following topics.

(1) TOPIC: Meeting Time

Discussion: Most convenient time for the committee to meet.
Action taken: The committee decided to meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 12:30 p.m.

FIGURE M–6. Minutes of a Meeting (Partial Section)

concise, follow a set format, and use **headings** for each major point discussed. See also **note-taking**.

Avoid abstractions and generalities; always be specific. Refer to everyone in the same way—a lack of consistency in titles or names may suggest deference to one person at the expense of another. Avoid **adjectives** and **adverbs** that suggest good or bad qualities, as in "Mr. Sturgess's *capable* assistant read the *comprehensive* report to the subcommittee." Minutes should be objective and impartial.

If a member of the committee is to follow up on something and report back to the committee at its next meeting, clearly state the person's name and the responsibility he or she has accepted.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Items to Include in Minutes of Meetings

- ✔ The name of the group or committee holding the meeting
- ✔ The topic of the meeting
- ✔ The kind of meeting (a regular meeting or a special meeting called to discuss a specific subject or problem)
- ✔ The number of members present and, for committees or boards of ten or fewer members, the names of those present and absent
- ✔ The place, time, and date of the meeting
- ✔ A statement that the chair and the secretary were present or the names of any substitutes
- ✔ A statement that the minutes of the previous meeting were approved or revised
- ✔ A list of any reports that were read and approved
- ✔ All the main motions that were made, with statements as to whether they were carried, defeated, or tabled (vote postponed), and the names of those who made and seconded the motions (motions that were withdrawn are not mentioned)
- ✔ A full description of resolutions that were adopted and a simple statement of any that were rejected
- ✔ A record of all ballots with the number of votes cast for and against resolutions
- ✔ The time the meeting was adjourned (officially ended) and the place, time, and date of the next meeting
- ✔ The recording secretary's signature and typed name and, if desired, the signature of the chairperson

mixed constructions

A mixed construction is a sentence in which the elements do not sensibly fit together. The problem may be a **grammar** error, a **logic error**, or both.

- Because the copier wouldn't start, ~~explains why~~ we called a technician.

The original sentence mixes a subordinate **clause** (*Because the copier wouldn't start*) with a **verb** (*explains*) that attempts to incorrectly use the subordinate clause as its subject. The revision correctly uses the **pronoun** *we* as the subject of the main clause. See also **sentence construction**.

modifiers

Modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that expand, limit, or make otherwise more specific the meaning of other elements in a sentence. Although we can create sentences without modifiers, we often need the detail and clarification they provide.

M

WITHOUT MODIFIERS	Production decreased.
WITH MODIFIERS	*Glucose* production decreased *rapidly*.

Most modifiers function as **adjectives** or **adverbs**. Adjectives describe qualities or impose boundaries on the words they modify.

- *noisy* machinery, *ten* files, *this* printer, *a* workstation

An adverb modifies an adjective, another adverb, a **verb**, or an entire **clause**.

- Under test conditions, the brake pad showed *much* less wear than it did under actual conditions.
  [The adverb *much* modifies the adjective *less*.]
- The redesigned brake pad lasted *much* longer.
  [The adverb *much* modifies another adverb, *longer*.]
- The wrecking ball hit the wall of the building *hard*.
  [The adverb *hard* modifies the verb *hit*.]
- *Surprisingly*, the motor failed even after all the durability and performance tests it had passed.
  [The adverb *surprisingly* modifies an entire clause.]

Adverbs are **intensifiers** when they increase the impact of adjectives (*very* fine, *too* high) or adverbs (*very* slowly, *rather* quickly). Be cautious using intensifiers; their overuse can lead to vagueness and a resulting lack of precision.

Stacked (Jammed) Modifiers

Stacked (or jammed) modifiers are strings of modifiers preceding **nouns** that make writing unclear or difficult to read.

- ▸ Your *staffing-level authorization reassessment* plan should result in a major improvement.

The noun *plan* is preceded by three long modifiers, a string that forces the reader to slow down to interpret its meaning. Stacked modifiers often result from the overuse of **buzzwords** or **jargon**. See how breaking up the stacked modifiers makes the example easier to read.

- ▸ Your plan for reassessing the staffing-level authorizations should result in a major improvement.

Misplaced Modifiers

M

A modifier is misplaced when it applies to the wrong word or phrase. A misplaced modifier can cause **ambiguity**.

- ▸ We *almost* lost all of the files.
  [The files were *almost* lost but were not.]
- ▸ We lost *almost* all of the files.
  [Most of the files were in fact lost.]

Note the two meanings possible when the phrase is shifted in the following sentences:

- ▸ The equipment *without the accessories* sold the best.
  [Different types of equipment were available, some with and some without accessories.]
- ▸ The equipment sold the best *without the accessories*.
  [One type of equipment was available, and the accessories were optional.]

To avoid ambiguity, place clauses as close as possible to the words they modify.

REMOTE We sent the brochure to several local firms *that had four-color art*.

CLOSE We sent the brochure *that had four-color art* to several local firms.

Squinting Modifiers

A squinting modifier is one that can be interpreted as modifying either of two sentence elements simultaneously, thereby confusing readers about which is intended.

- We agreed *on the next day* to make the adjustments. [Did they agree *to make the adjustments* on the next day? Or *on the next day*, did they agree to make the adjustments?]

A squinting modifier can sometimes be corrected simply by changing its position, but often it is better to rewrite the sentence.

- We agreed that *on the next day* we would make the adjustments. [The adjustments were to be made *on the next day*.]
- *On the next day*, we agreed that we would make the adjustments. [The agreement was made *on the next day*.]

See also **dangling modifiers**.

mood

M

The grammatical term *mood* refers to the **verb** functions that indicate whether the verb is intended to make a statement, ask a question, give a command, or express a hypothetical possibility.

The *indicative mood* states a fact, gives an opinion, or asks a question.

- The setting is correct. / Is the setting correct?

The *imperative mood* expresses a command, suggestion, request, or plea. In the imperative mood, the implied subject *you* is not expressed. ("*Install* the system today.")

The *subjunctive mood* expresses something that is contrary to fact or that is conditional, hypothetical, or purely imaginative; it can also express a wish, a doubt, or a possibility. In the subjunctive mood, *were* is used instead of *was* in clauses that speculate about the present or future, and the base form (*be*) is used following certain verbs, such as *propose*, *request*, or *insist*. See also progressive **tense**.

- If we *were* to finish the tests today, we would be ahead of schedule.
- The research director insisted that she [I, you, we, they] *be* the project leader.

The most common use of the subjunctive mood is to express clearly that the writer considers a condition to be contrary to fact. If the condition is not considered to be contrary to fact, use the indicative mood.

SUBJUNCTIVE If I *were* president of the firm, I would change several hiring policies.

INDICATIVE Although I *am* president of the firm, I don't control every aspect of its policies.

ESL TIP for Determining Mood

In written and especially in spoken English, the tendency increasingly is to use the indicative mood where the subjunctive traditionally has been used. Note the differences between traditional and contemporary usage in the following examples.

Traditional (formal) use of the subjunctive mood

- I wish he *were* here now.
- If I *were* going to the conference, I would travel with him.
- I requested that she *arrive* on time.

Contemporary (informal) use of the indicative mood

- I wish he *was* here now.
- If I *was* going to the conference, I would travel with him.
- I requested that she *arrives* on time.

In professional writing, it is better to use the more traditional expressions.

Ms. / Miss / Mrs.

Ms. is used in business and public life to address or refer to a woman. Some women may indicate a preference for *Ms*., *Miss*, or *Mrs*., which you should honor. If a woman has an academic or a professional title, use the appropriate form of address (*Doctor*, *Professor*, *Captain*) instead of *Ms*., *Miss*, or *Mrs*. See also **biased language**.

mutual / common

Common is used when two or more persons (or things) share something or possess it jointly.

- We have a *common* desire to make the program succeed.
- The fore and aft guidance assemblies have a *common* power source.

Mutual may also mean "shared" (*mutual* friend, of *mutual* benefit), but it usually implies something given and received reciprocally and is used with reference to only two persons or parties.

- Evans respects Roth, and from my observations the respect is *mutual*.
  [Roth also respects Evans.]

N

narration

Narration is writing that describes a series of events in a prescribed (often chronological) sequence. Much narrative writing explains how something happened: a laboratory procedure, a site visit, an accident, a decision reached at an important meeting. See also **chronological method of development**, **trip reports**, and **incident reports**.

Effective narration rests on two key writing techniques: the careful, accurate sequencing of events and a consistent **point of view** on the part of the narrator. Narrative sequence and essential shifts in the sequence are signaled in three ways: chronology (clock and calendar time), transitional words pertaining to time (*before*, *after*, *next*, *first*, *while*, *then*), and verb tenses that indicate whether something has happened (past **tense**) or is under way (present tense). The point of view indicates the writer's relation to the information being narrated as reflected in the use of **person**. Narration usually expresses a first- or third-person point of view. First-person narration indicates that the writer is a participant, and third-person narration indicates that the writer is writing about what happened to someone or something else.

N

The narrative shown in Figure N–1 reconstructs the chronology of an early-morning accident of Chicago Transit Authority Green Line train run 2. This train struck two signal maintainers who were working near a tower on the section of the Chicago Loop that is above the intersection of Lake and Wells Streets. The Loop is elevated, and one maintainer fell from the structure. The investigators needed to "tell the story" in detail so that any lessons learned could be used to improve safety. To do that, they recount and sequence events as precisely as possible. The verb tenses throughout indicate past action: *approached*, *continued*, *heard*, *removed*, *stopped*.

Although narration often exists in combination with other forms of discourse (**description**, **exposition**, **persuasion**), avoid interrupting a narrative with lengthy explanations or analyses. Explain only what is necessary for readers to follow the events. See **audience**.

The Accident

On the morning of the accident, two night-shift signal maintainers were repairing a switch at tower 18. Between 4:00 and 4:30 a.m., two day-shift maintainers joined them.[1] As the two crews conferred about the progress of the repair, Green Line train run 1 approached the tower. A trainee was operating the train, and a train operator/line instructor[2] was observing. Both crew members on the train later stated that they had not heard the control center's radioed advisory that workers were on the track structure at tower 18. The line instructor said that as the train approached the tower with a *proceed* (green) signal, he observed wayside maintenance personnel from about 150 feet away and told the trainee to stop the train, which he did. One of the maintainers gave the train a hand signal to proceed, and the train continued on its way. Shortly after the train left, the night-shift maintainers also left.

The day-shift maintainers continued to work. Just before the accident, they removed a defective part and started to install a replacement. According to both men, they were squatting over the switch machine. One was facing the center of the track and attaching wires, while the other was facing the Loop with his back to the normal direction of train movements. He was shining a flashlight on the work area.

The accident train approached the tower on the *proceed* signal. One maintainer later said that he remembered being hit by the train, while the other said that he was hit by "something." A train operator/line instructor was operating the train, and a trainee was observing. Both later said that they had not seen any wayside workers. They said that they had heard noise that the student described as a "thump" in the vicinity of the accident and caught a "glimpse" of something.

Both maintainers later stated that they had not seen or heard the train as it approached. After being struck, one of the maintainers fell from the structure. The other fell to the deck of the platform on the outside of the structure. He used his radio to tell the control center that he and another maintainer had been "hit by the train." Emergency medical personnel were dispatched to the scene, and an ambulance took both men to a local hospital.

In the meantime, the accident train continued past the tower and stopped at the next station, Clark and Lake, where the crew members inspected the train from the platform and found no damage. They continued on their way until they heard the radio report that workers had been struck by a train. They stopped their train at the next station and reported to a supervisor.

According to the operator of the accident train, nothing had distracted her from her duties, and she had been facing forward and watching the track before the train arrived at tower 18. The trainee supported her account. Both crew members said that they had not heard the control center's radioed advisory that workers were on the track structure at tower 18.

[1]All times referred to in this report are central standard time.
[2]Line instructors are working train operators who provide on-the-job training to operator trainees.

FIGURE N–1. Narration from an Accident Report
Source: National Transportation Safety Board, "Railroad Accident Brief: Chicago Transit Authority, DCA-02-FR-005, Chicago, Illinois, February 26, 2002." www.ntsb.gov/publictn/2003/RAB0304.htm.

nature

Nature, when used to mean "kind" or "sort," is vague. Avoid this usage in your writing. Say exactly what you mean.

exclusionary clause in

▶ The ~~nature of~~ the contract caused the problem.

needless to say

The phrase *needless to say* sometimes occurs in speech and writing. Eliminate the phrase or replace it with a more descriptive **word choice**.

Service logs indicate that

▶ ~~Needless to say,~~ staff reductions have decreased customer loyalty.

newsletter articles

If your organization publishes a **newsletter**, you may be asked to contribute an article on a subject in your area of expertise. In fact, an article is a good way to promote your work or your department.

N

Before you begin to write, consider the traditional *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why* of journalism ("*Who* did it? *What* was done? *Where* was it done? *When* was it done? *Why* was it done?") and then add *how*, which may be of as much interest to your colleagues as any of the five *w*'s. Next, determine whether the company has an official policy or position on your subject. If it does, adhere to it as you prepare your article. If there is no company policy, determine your management's attitude toward your subject. See also **audience** and **context**.

Review several fairly recent issues of the newsletter and study the **style** and **tone** of the writing and the approach used for various kinds of subjects. Understand those perspectives before you begin to work on your own article. Ask yourself the following questions about your subject: What is its significance to the organization? What is its significance to my coworkers? The answers to those questions should help you establish the style, tone, and approach for your article and also heavily influence your conclusion.

Research for a newsletter article frequently consists of **interviewing for information**. Interview key personnel concerned with your subject. Get all available information and all points of view. Be sure to give maximum credit to the maximum number of people by quoting statements from those involved in projects and naming those who have developed initiatives. See also **quotations**.

Figure N–2 shows an article written for *Connection*, a newsletter produced by Ken Cook Company and distributed to current and prospective clients. This article describes how the company developed a print-on-demand technology called media① off™. Notice that the sidebar at

Online Solution Speeds Video Delivery

You've probably heard about Google's recent purchase of YouTube for $1.65 billion in a stock-for-stock transaction. YouTube is a popular free video sharing web site which lets users upload, view, and share video clips.

In the six short months following its debut in November 2005, YouTube was ranked the tenth most popular website by Alexa, the Amazon.com-owned subsidiary that tracks web traffic. It's estimated that 20 million visitors log on to YouTube each month.

What the YouTube craze has demonstrated is the increasing success and popularity of video content distribution. Leading manufacturers that maintain a commitment to continuous improvement are also developing video technology channels of distribution to provide training programs for their employees, dealers and customers.

> **"Equipment manufacturers & others can now offer video libraries, in addition to printed/downloadable text files, on the online bookstores hosted by Ken Cook Co."**

Ken Cook Co. realizes this challenge and is committed to providing solutions that meet customer needs and keep pace with the latest breakthroughs in technology. Recognizing that video and animation clips are an instrumental element in training, the company has updated its media①off™ literature fulfillment system to handle video files for "one-off" production.

This means that equipment manufacturers and others can now offer video libraries, in addition to printed/downloadable text files on the online bookstores hosted by Ken Cook Co.

Dealers and end users world-wide are now able to download or burn training videos to DVDs on demand.

These files can be used to demonstrate equipment operation, safety awareness, service and maintenance instructions, sales training, as well as marketing and promotional applications.

With the media①off™ video file solution, the costs associated with warehousing training program VHS, CD or DVD kits no longer exist. There's no need to forecast the amount of orders for these materials, pay for duplication up-front, or store an inventory that may go unused.

Companies that use media①off™ simply drop their video files, along with other support files, onto an ftp site. The system automatically identifies and retrieves those files and adds them to the web-based media①off™ bookstore for immediate acquisition. Files can be updated as often as needed—even daily—so up-to-date materials are available 24/7.

Instructors or students/learners can order training kits and materials online at the time of registration and receive them the next day, improving delivery efficiency and reducing wait times.

Dealers also have instant access to training video libraries, allowing them to order materials to review service techniques, view safety practices and deliver educational lessons fundamental to the job, with just a click of the mouse.

Entertainment's online video content distribution, marked by YouTube's overwhelming success, is gaining popularity due to its ability to provide international access, cost effectiveness and maximum customer value.

Similarly, for manufacturers and other businesses, the Ken Cook Co. media①off™ video library solution puts training elements, such as video and animation files, in the hands of end-users world-wide, saving time and eliminating warehousing costs and achieving best-in-class customer satisfaction.

media①off™ functionality now includes the ability to print large system schematics as part of the one-off production process. These schematics have two delivery options including rolled and shipped in tubes or folded and shipped. Schematics and large format images can be printed in sizes ranging all the way up to 500 feet long.

The new Print On Demand (POD) print manuals feature utilizes media①off™ to transform manuals containing oversized & color pages into 8.5" x 11" page sizes with color pages automatically converted to black & white patterns. The conversion also includes converting oversized or large format schematics into segmented 8.5" x 11" pages with a preview layout page. Conversion is performed at the time the order is placed & allows customers to track & manage only one file for both full color & POD publications.

January 2007 www.media1off.com 7

Ken Cook/De Santis Collection

FIGURE N–2. Newsletter Article

N

the right of the page ("Tech Tools") uses visual elements to draw **readers** to the article as well as giving them a sense of its content. By describing this system, the article aims to demonstrate Ken Cook Company's commitment "to providing solutions that meet customer needs and keep pace with the latest breakthroughs in technology."

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Newsletter Articles**

- ✔ Write an intriguing **title** to catch the audience's attention; **rhetorical questions** often work well.
- ✔ Include as many eye-catching **photographs** or **visuals** as appropriate to entice your audience to read the lead **paragraph** of your **introduction**. See also **layout and design**.
- ✔ Fashion a lead (or *lede*), or first paragraph, that will encourage further reading. The first paragraph generally makes the **transition** from the title to the body of the article.
- ✔ Offer a well-developed presentation of your subject to hold the readers' interest all the way to the end of the article.
- ✔ Write a **conclusion** that emphasizes the significance of your subject to your audience and stresses the points you want your readers to retain. See **emphasis**.
- ✔ Follow the steps listed in the "Checklist of the Writing Process" on pages xxi–xxii as you prepare your newsletter article.

newsletters

Newsletters are designed to inform and to create and sustain interest and membership in an organization. They can also be used to sell products and services. The two main types of newsletters are organizational newsletters and subscription newsletters. See also **blogs and forums**.

Types of Newsletters

Organizational newsletters like the one shown in Figure N–3 are sent to employees, clients, or members of an association to keep them informed about issues regarding their company or group, such as the development of new products or policies or the accomplishments of individuals or teams. Stories in organizational newsletters can both enhance the image and foster pride among employees of the organization's products or services. For example, Figure N–3 shows how Ken Cook Company partners with cutting-edge companies to produce high-quality training materials.

February 2008

Ken Cook Co.

Connection

www.kencook.com

Bobcat Operates from Remote Control

An Operator Controls Bobcat via Radio Remote Control System

In this issue:

Bobcat Operates from Remote Control . . . . *Page 1*
From the President . . . . . *Page 2*
The Instructional Design Continuum . . . . *Page 4*
Service Training Increases Competency . . . . *Page 5*
AEM Standardization: The Importance of Style Guides . . . . *Page 6*
Submit Your Expense Reports, OR ELSE . . . . *Page 7*

By Mike Marks, Senior Technical Writer

I thought that I'd seen it all in my 10 years of developing operator training programs for equipment manufacturers. But when I learned what my latest assignment was, I discovered that it was unlike anything I had ever worked on before.

Bobcat Company recently partnered with Ken Cook Co. and Video Arts in Fargo, North Dakota, to create a training curriculum for a full-sized Radio Remote Control Bobcat Skid-Steer Loader.

Introducing an innovative system for the Bobcat Skid-Steer Loader, the company launched its Radio Remote Control System with a transmitter and receiver, for certain loaders with Selectable Joystick Controls (SJC) and the Bobcat All-Wheel Steer (AWS) Loader.

Bobcat recognized that sometimes two people are required for loader operation when using attachments such as planers and wheel saws: one to help guide the placement of the attachment using hand signals, while the other operates the loader. There can also be some applications where operators are exposed to worksite environment discomforts created by the attachments.

With the Loader Radio Remote Control System, this same job can be done with one operator, controlling the loader from a distance, free from worksite discomforts. Though the operator is able to physically see the loader, no one is sitting inside the cab controlling it.

(Continued on page 3)

February 2008 www.media1off.com 1

Ken Cook/De Santis Collection

FIGURE N–3. Company Newsletter (Front Page)

Subscription newsletters are designed to attract and build a readership interested in buying specific products or services or in learning more about a specific subject. Subscribers are buying information, and they expect value for their money. For example, a person with experience in the stock market could create a financial newsletter and charge subscribers a monthly fee for the investing advice in that newsletter; a person who collects movie memorabilia could create an online newsletter that includes stories about ways to find and sell rare movie posters.

Developing Newsletters

Before you begin to develop a newsletter, decide on its specific **purpose** and the specific **audience** you will be targeting; then make sure the newsletter's appearance and editorial choices create a sense of identification among the readership. Newsletters often involve **collaborative writing** in which different individuals work on design, content, and project management. See also **persuasion**. If you are asked to contribute an article to a newsletter, see **newsletter articles**.

You will need to acquire a mailing list (names and addresses of your readers) and decide on the most strategic way to get the newsletter to these readers (whether through postal mail, interoffice mail, e-mail, or Web posting). Because it can be time-consuming and technically problematic to send out hundreds or thousands of online newsletters by yourself, you may also need to subscribe to a list-hosting service.*

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Update your subscriber lists regularly to be sure you are contacting only those who wish to continue receiving your newsletter. You risk damaging your reputation and that of your company if you badger former customers or current clients with unwanted mail or e-mail. Include an opt-out waiver with each newsletter sent, giving subscribers the opportunity to remove themselves from your mailing list. If sending a newsletter electronically, be sure to include opt-out instructions to ensure compliance with laws such as the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003.

Your **research** should include trade journals, industry blogs, business and technology magazines, Web news sites, and other sources to find specific angles for the articles that will appeal to your select audience. Attempt to provide content that your readers will not find elsewhere, for example, by interviewing and profiling customers, association members, or employees. Check your facts meticulously—newsletter readers are often specialists in their fields. Because newsletters are often distributed to branches and clients abroad, see **global communication** and **global graphics**. See also **interviewing for information**.

As shown in Figures N–2 and N–3, a newsletter's format should be simple and consistent, yet visually appealing to your readership. Use the active **voice** and a conversational **tone**. Use **headings** and bullets to break up the text and make the newsletter easy to read. Keep your sentences simple and paragraphs short. See **conciseness** and **layout and design**.

Using word-processing, desktop-publishing, or Web-development software, create newspaper columns and one or two **visuals** per page

*E-mail list-hosting services have their own servers and provide commercial delivery of premium e-mail that often contains graphic and other digital forms used for advertising.

that complement the text. On the front page, identify the organization and include the date, volume and issue numbers, and a contents box. For Web newsletters, follow the principles of good Web design. See also **photographs** and **writing for the Web**.

nominalizations

A nominalization is a **noun** form of a **verb** that is often combined with vague and general (or "weak") verbs like *make*, *do*, *give*, *perform*, and *provide*. Avoid nominalizations when you can use specific verbs that communicate the same idea more directly and concisely.

evaluate

- The staff should ~~perform an evaluation of~~ the new software.

If you use nominalizations solely to make your writing sound more formal, the result will be **affectation**. See also **technical writing style**, **conciseness**, **plain language**, and **voice**.

none

N

None can be either a singular or a plural **pronoun**, depending on the context. See also **agreement**.

- *None* of the material *has* been ordered.
  [Always use a singular **verb** with a singular **noun**—in this case, "material."]
- *None* of the clients *has* been called yet.
  [Use a singular verb even with a plural noun (*clients*) if the intended emphasis is on the idea of *not one*.]
- *None* of the clients *have* been called yet.
  [Use a plural verb if you intend *none* to refer to all clients.]

For **emphasis**, substitute *no one* or *not one* for *none* and use a singular verb.

not one

- We paid the retail price for three of the machines, ~~none~~ of which was worth the money.

nor / or

Nor always follows *neither* in sentences with continuing negation. ("They will *neither* support *nor* approve the plan.") Likewise, *or* follows *either* in sentences. ("The firm will accept *either* a short-term *or* a long-term loan.")

Two or more singular subjects joined by *or* or *nor* usually take a singular **verb**. However, when one subject is singular and one is plural, the verb agrees with the subject nearer to it. See also **conjunctions** and **parallel structure**.

SINGULAR	Neither the *architect* nor the *client was* happy with the design.
PLURAL	Neither the *architect* nor the *clients were* happy with the design.
SINGULAR	Neither the *architects* nor the *client was* happy with the design.

note-taking

N

The purpose of note-taking is to summarize and record information you extract during **research**. The challenge in taking notes is to condense someone else's thoughts into your own words without distorting the original thinking. As you extract information, let your knowledge of the **audience** and the **purpose** of your writing guide you. For taking notes at a meeting, see **minutes of meetings**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Resist copying your source word for word as you take notes; instead, paraphrase the author's idea or concept. If you only change a few words from a source and incorporate that text into your document without giving credit to your source, you will be guilty of **plagiarism**. See also **paraphrasing**. ❖

On occasion, when an expert source states something that is especially precise, striking, or noteworthy, or that reinforces your point, you can justifiably quote the source directly and incorporate it into your document. If you use a direct quotation, enclose the material in **quotation marks** in your notes. In your finished writing, document the source of your quotation. Normally, you will rarely need to quote anything longer than a paragraph. See also **documenting sources** and **quotations**.

When taking notes on abstract ideas, as opposed to factual data, do not sacrifice **clarity** for brevity—notes expressing concepts can lose their meaning if they are too brief. The critical test is whether you can understand the note a week later and recall the significant ideas of the passage. Consider the information in the following paragraph:

> Long before the existence of bacteria was suspected, techniques were in use for combating their influence in, for instance, the decomposition of meat. Salt and heat were known to be effective, and these do in fact kill bacteria or prevent them from multiplying. Salt acts by the osmotic effect of extracting water from the bacterial cell fluid. Bacteria are less easily destroyed by osmotic action than are animal cells because their cell walls are constructed in a totally different way, which makes them much less permeable.

The paragraph says essentially three things:

1. Before the discovery of bacteria, salt and heat were used to combat the effects of bacteria.
2. Salt kills bacteria by extracting water from their cells by osmosis, hence its use in curing meat.
3. Bacteria are less affected by the osmotic effect of salt than are animal cells, because bacterial cell walls are less permeable.

If your readers' needs and your objective involve tracing the origin of the bacterial theory of disease, you might want to note that salt was traditionally used to kill bacteria long before people realized what caused meat to spoil. It might not be necessary to your topic to say anything about the relative permeability of bacterial cell walls.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Taking Notes

✔ Ask yourself the following questions: What information do I need to fulfill my purpose? What are the needs of my audience?

✔ Record only the most important ideas and concepts. Be sure to record all vital names, dates, and definitions.

✔ When in doubt about whether to take a note, consider the difficulty of finding the source again should you want it later.

✔ Use direct or indirect quotations when sources state something that is precise, striking, or noteworthy, or that succinctly reinforces a point you are making.

✔ Photocopy, scan, or download pages and highlight passages that you intend to quote.

✔ Give proper credit. Record the author; title; publisher; place; page number; URL; and date of publication, posting, or retrieval. (On subsequent notes from the same source, include only the author and page number or URL.)

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Taking Notes** (*continued*)

- ✔ Record notes in a way that you find efficient and useful for **outlining**, whether using the latest note-taking software or traditional index cards.
- ✔ Check your notes for accuracy against the original material before moving on to another source.

nouns

DIRECTORY

Types of Nouns 364
Noun Functions 365
Collective Nouns 365
Plural Nouns 366

A noun is a **part of speech** that names a person, a place, a thing, a concept, an action, or a quality.

Types of Nouns

The two basic types of nouns are proper nouns and common nouns. *Proper nouns*, which are capitalized, name specific people, places, and things (*H. G. Wells*, *Boston*, *United Nations*, *Nobel Prize*). See also **capitalization**.

Common nouns, which are not capitalized unless they begin sentences or appear in **titles**, name general classes or categories of persons, places, things, concepts, actions, and qualities (*writer*, *city*, *organization*, *award*). Common nouns include concrete nouns, abstract nouns, collective nouns, count nouns, and mass nouns.

Concrete nouns are common nouns used to identify those things that can be discerned by the five senses (*paper*, *keyboard*, *glue*, *nail*, *grease*).

Abstract nouns are common nouns that name ideas, qualities, or concepts that cannot be discerned by the five senses (*loyalty*, *pride*, *valor*, *peace*, *devotion*).

Collective nouns are common nouns that indicate a group or collection. They are plural in meaning but singular in form (*audience*, *jury*, *brigade*, *staff*, *committee*). (See the subsection Collective Nouns on page 365 for advice on using singular or plural forms with collective nouns.)

Count nouns are concrete nouns that identify things that can be separated into countable units (*desks*, *envelopes*, *printers*, *pencils*, *books*).

Mass nouns are concrete nouns that identify things that cannot be separated into countable units (*water*, *air*, *electricity*, *oil*, *cement*). See also **English as a second language**.

N

Noun Functions

Nouns function as subjects of **verbs**, direct and indirect objects of verbs and **prepositions**, subjective and objective **complements**, or **appositives**.

- ▶ The *metal* failed during the test. [subject]
- ▶ The bricklayer cemented the *blocks* efficiently. [direct object of a verb]
- ▶ The state presented our *department* a safety award. [indirect object]
- ▶ The event occurred within the *year*. [object of a preposition]
- ▶ A dynamo is a *generator*. [subjective complement]
- ▶ The regional manager was appointed *chairperson*. [objective complement]
- ▶ Philip Garcia, the *treasurer*, gave his report last. [appositive]

Words normally used as nouns can also be used as **adjectives** and **adverbs**.

- ▶ It is *company* policy. [adjective]
- ▶ He went *home*. [adverb]

Collective Nouns

When a collective noun refers to a group as a whole, it takes a singular verb and pronoun.

- ▶ The staff *was* divided on the issue and could not reach *its* decision until May 15.

When a collective noun refers to individuals within a group, it takes a plural verb and pronoun.

- ▶ The staff *have returned* to *their* offices after the conference.

A better way to emphasize the individuals on the staff would be to use the phrase *the staff members*.

- ▶ The staff members *have returned* to *their* offices after the conference.

Treat organization names and titles as singular.

- ▶ LRM Associates *has* grown 30 percent in the last three years; *it* will move to a new facility in January.

Plural Nouns

Most nouns form the plural by adding *-s* (*desk/desks*, *pen/pens*). Nouns ending in *ch*, *s*, *sh*, *x*, and *z* form the plural by adding *-es*.

▸ *search/searches*, *glass/glasses*, *wish/wishes*, *six/sixes*, *buzz/buzzes*

Nouns that end in a consonant plus *y* form the plural by changing the *y* to *ies* (*delivery/deliveries*). Some nouns ending in *o* add *-es* to form the plural, but others add only *-s* (*tomato/tomatoes*, *dynamo/dynamos*). Some nouns ending in *f* or *fe* add *-s* to form the plural; others change the *f* or *fe* to *ves*.

▸ cliff/cliffs, cafe/cafes, hoof/hooves, knife/knives

Some nouns require an internal change to form the plural.

▸ woman/women, man/men, mouse/mice, goose/geese

Some nouns do not change in the plural form.

▸ many *fish*, several *deer*, fifty *sheep*

Some nouns remain in the plural form whether singular or plural.

▸ headquarters, means, series, crossroads

Hyphenated and open compound nouns form the plural in the main word.

▸ sons-in-law, high schools, editors in chief

Compound nouns written as one word add *-s* to the end (two *tablespoonfuls*).

If you are unsure of the proper usage, check a dictionary. See **possessive case** for a discussion of how nouns form possessives.

number (grammar)

Number is the grammatical property of **nouns**, **pronouns**, and **verbs** that signifies whether one thing (*singular*) or more than one (*plural*) is being referred to. (See also **agreement**.) Nouns normally form the plural by simply adding *-s* or *-es* to their singular forms.

▸ *Partners* in successful *businesses* are not always personal friends.

Some nouns require an internal change to form the plural.

▸ woman/women, man/men, goose/geese, mouse/mice

All pronouns except *you* change internally to form the plural.

▸ I/we, he/they, she/they, it/they

By adding *-s* or *-es*, most verbs show the singular of the third **person**, present **tense**, indicative **mood**.

▸ he *stands*, she *works*, it *goes*

The verb *be* normally changes form to indicate the plural.

SINGULAR I *am* ready to begin work.

PLURAL We *are* ready to begin work.

numbers

DIRECTORY

Numerals or Words 367
Plurals 368
Measurements 368
Fractions 368
Money 368
Time 369
Dates 369
Addresses 370
Documents 370

The standards for using numbers vary; however, unless you are following an organizational or a professional style manual, observe the following guidelines.

Numerals or Words

Write numbers from zero through ten as words, and write numbers above ten as numerals.

▸ I rehearsed my presentation *three* times.

▸ The association added *152* new members.

Spell out numbers that begin a sentence, however, even if they would otherwise be written as numerals.

▸ *One hundred and fifty-two* new members joined the association.

If spelling out such a number seems awkward, rewrite the sentence so that the number does not appear at the beginning ("We added *152* new members").

Spell out approximate and round numbers.

▶ We've had *more than a thousand* requests this month.

In most writing, spell out small ordinal numbers, which express degree or sequence (*first*, *second*; but *27th*, *42nd*), when they are single words (*our nineteenth year*), or when they modify a century (*the twenty-first century*). However, avoid ordinal numbers in **dates** (use *March 30* or *30 March*, not *March 30th*).

Plurals

Indicate the plural of numerals by adding *-s* (*7s*, *the late 1990s*). Form the plural of a written number (like any noun) by adding *-s* or *-es* or by dropping the *y* and adding *-ies* (*elevens*, *sixes*, *twenties*). See also **apostrophes**.

Measurements

Express units of measurement as numerals (*3 miles*, *45 cubic feet*, *9 meters*). When numbers run together in the same phrase, write one as a numeral and the other as a word.

12 six-foot tables.

▶ The order was for ~~12 6-foot tables.~~

N

Generally give percentages as numerals and write out the word *percent*. ("Approximately *85 percent* of the land has been sold.") However, in a **table**, use a numeral followed by the percent symbol (*85%*).

Fractions

Express fractions as numerals when they are written with whole numbers (*27½ inches*, *4¼ miles*). Spell out fractions when they are expressed without a whole number (*one-fourth*, *seven-eighths*). Always write decimal numbers as numerals (*5.21 meters*).

Money

In general, use numerals to express exact or approximate amounts of money.

▶ We need to charge *$28.95* per unit.

▶ The new system costs *$60,000*.

Use words to express indefinite amounts of money.

▶ The printing system may cost *several thousand dollars*.

Use numerals and words for rounded amounts of money over one million dollars.

- ▶ The contract is worth *$6.8 million*.

Use numerals for more complex or exact amounts.

- ▶ The corporation paid *$2,452,500* in taxes last year.

For amounts under a dollar, ordinarily use numerals and the word *cents* ("The pens cost *75 cents* each"), unless other numerals that require dollar signs appear in the same sentence.

- ▶ The business-card holders cost *$10.49* each, the pens cost *$.75* each, and the pencil cup holders cost *$6.49* each.

ESL TIP for Punctuating Numbers

Some rules for punctuating numbers in English are summarized as follows:

Use a comma to separate numbers with four or more digits into groups of three, starting from the right (*5,289,112,001 atoms*).

Do not use a comma in years, house numbers, ZIP Codes, and page numbers.

- ▶ June *2015*
- ▶ *92401* East Alameda Drive
- ▶ The ZIP Code is *91601-1243*.
- ▶ Page *1204*

Use a period to represent the decimal point (*4.2 percent, $3,742,097.43*).
See also **global communication** and **global graphics**.

N

Time

Divide hours and minutes with **colons** when *a.m.* or *p.m.* follows (*7:30 a.m.*, *11:30 p.m.*). Do not use colons with the 24-hour system (*0730*, *2330*). Spelled-out time is not followed by *a.m.* or *p.m.* (*seven o'clock in the evening*).

Dates

In the United States dates are usually written in a month-day-year sequence (*August 11, 2015*). Never use the strictly numerical form for dates (*8/11/15*) because the date is not immediately clear, especially in **international correspondence**.

Addresses

Spell out numbered streets from one through ten unless space is at a premium (*East Tenth Street*). Write building numbers as numerals. The only exception is the building number *one* (*One East Monument Street*). Write highway numbers as numerals (*U.S. 40*, *Ohio 271*, *I-94*).

Documents

Page numbers are written as numerals in manuscripts (*page 37*). Chapter and volume numbers may appear as numerals or words (*Chapter 2* or *Chapter Two*, *Volume 1* or *Volume One*), but be consistent. Express figure and table numbers as numerals (*Figure 4*, *Table 3*).

Do not follow a word representing a number with a numeral in parentheses that represents the same number. Doing so is redundant.

- Send five ~~(5)~~ copies of the report.

O

objects

Objects are **nouns** or noun equivalents: **pronouns**, **verbals**, and noun **phrases** or **clauses**. The three kinds of objects are direct objects, indirect objects, and objects of **prepositions**. See also **complements**.

A *direct object* answers the question *what?* or *whom?* about a **verb** and its **subject**.

▶ We sent a *full report*. [We sent *what*?]

▶ Michelle e-mailed the *client*. [Michelle e-mailed *whom*?]

An *indirect object* is a noun or noun equivalent that occurs with a direct object after certain kinds of transitive verbs, such as *give*, *wish*, *cause*, and *tell*. The indirect object answers the question *to whom or what?* or *for whom or what?* The indirect object always precedes the direct object.

▶ We sent the *general manager* a full report.
[*Report* is the direct object; the indirect object, *general manager*, answers the question, "We sent a full report *to whom*?"]

The *object of a preposition* is a noun or pronoun that is introduced by a preposition, forming a prepositional phrase.

▶ At the *meeting*, the district managers approved the contract.
[*Meeting* is the object, and *at the meeting* is the prepositional phrase.]

OK / okay

The expression *okay* (also spelled *OK*) is common in informal writing, but it should be avoided in most technical writing.

▶ Mr. Sturgess *approved* ~~gave his okay to~~ the project.

on / onto / upon

On is normally used as a **preposition** meaning “attached to” or “located at.” (“Install the shelf *on* the north wall.”) *On* also stresses a position of rest. (“The victim lay *on* the stretcher.”) *Onto* implies movement to a position on or movement up and on. (“The commuters surged *onto* the platform.”) *Upon* emphasizes movement or a condition. (“The report is due *upon* completion of the project.”)

one

When used as an indefinite **pronoun**, *one* may help you avoid repeating a **noun**. (“We need a new plan, not an old *one*.”) *One* is often redundant in phrases in which it restates the noun, and it may take the proper emphasis away from the **adjective**.

unique.

- The training program was not ~~a unique one.~~

One can also be used in place of a noun or personal pronoun in a statement. (“*One* cannot ignore *one’s* physical condition.”) Using *one* in that way is formal and impersonal; in any but the most formal writing, you should address your reader directly and personally as *you*. (“*You* cannot ignore *your* physical condition.”) See also **point of view**.

one of those . . . who

A dependent **clause** beginning with *who* or *that* and preceded by *one of those* takes a plural **verb**.

- She is *one of those* managers *who are* concerned about their writing.
- This is *one of those* policies *that make* no sense when you examine them closely.

In those two examples, *who* and *that* refer to plural antecedents (*managers* and *policies*) and thus take plural verbs (*are* and *make*). See also **agreement**.

If the phrase *one of those* is preceded by *the only*, however, the verb should be singular.

- She is *the only one of those* managers *who is* concerned about her writing.
  [The verb is singular because its subject, *who*, refers to a singular antecedent, *one*. If the sentence were reversed, it would read, "Of those managers, she is *the only one who is* concerned about her writing."]
- This is *the only one of those* policies *that makes* no sense when you examine it closely.
  [If the sentence were reversed, it would read, "Of those policies, this is *the only one that makes* no sense when you examine it closely."]

only

The word *only* should be placed immediately before the word or phrase it modifies. See also **modifiers**.

- We ~~only~~ lack *only* financial backing.

Be careful with the placement of *only* because it can change the meaning of a sentence.

- *Only* he said that he was tired.
  [He alone said that he was tired.]
- He *only* said that he was tired.
  [He actually was not tired, although he said he was.]
- He said *only* that he was tired.
  [He said nothing except that he was tired.]
- He said that he was *only* tired.
  [He said that he was nothing except tired.]

O

order-of-importance method of development

The order-of-importance **method of development** is a particularly effective and common organizing strategy. This method can use one of two ordering strategies—decreasing order (Figure O–1), which is often best for written documents, and increasing order (Figure O–2), which is especially effective for oral **presentations**.

Memorandum

To:	Tawana Shaw, Director, Human Resources Department
From:	Frank W. Nemitz, Chief, Product Marketing
Date:	November 20, 2015
Subject:	Selection of Manager of the Technical Writing Department

I have assessed the candidates for manager of the Technical Writing Department as you requested, and the following are my evaluations.

Top-Ranked Candidate

The most-qualified candidate is Michelle Bryant, acting manager of the department. In her 12 years in the department, Ms. Bryant has gained wide experience in all facets of its operations. She has maintained a consistently high production record and has demonstrated the skills and knowledge required for the supervisory duties she is now handling. She has continually been rated "outstanding" in all categories in her job-performance appraisals. However, her supervisory experience is limited to her present three-month tenure as acting manager of the department, and she lacks the college degree required by the job description.

Second-Ranked Candidate

Michael Bastick, graphics coordinator, also has strong potential for the position. An able administrator, he has been with the company for seven years. Further, he is enrolled in a management-training course at Metro State University's downtown campus. I have ranked him second because he lacks supervisory experience and because his most recent work as a technical writer has been limited.

Third-Ranked Candidate

Jane Fine has shown herself to be an exceptionally skilled writer in her three years with the Public Relations Department. Despite her obvious potential, she does not yet have the breadth of experience in technical writing that is required to manage the Technical Writing Department. Jane Fine also lacks on-the-job supervisory experience.

FIGURE O–1. Decreasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development

To: Sun-Hee Kim <kim@appliedsciences.com>
From: Harry Mathews <mathews@appliedsciences.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015, 9:29 AM
Subject: Recruiting Qualified Electronics Technicians

As our company continues to expand, and with the planned opening of the Lakeland Facility late next year, we need to increase and refocus our recruiting program to keep our company staffed with qualified electronics technicians. Following is my analysis of possible recruiting options.

Technical School Recruitment
Over the past three years, we have relied on our in-house internship program and on local and regional technical school graduates to fill these positions. Although our in-house internship program provides a qualified pool of employees, technical school enrollments in the area have in the past provided candidates who are already trained. Each year, however, fewer technical school graduates are being produced, and even the most vigorous Career Day recruiting has yielded disappointing results.

Military Veteran Recruitment
In the past, we relied heavily on the recruitment of skilled veterans from all branches of the military. This source of qualified applicants all but disappeared when the military offered attractive reenlistment bonuses for skilled technicians in uniform. As a result, we need to become aggressive in our attempts to reach this group through advertising. I would like to meet with you soon to discuss the details of a more dynamic recruiting program for skilled technicians leaving the military.

I am certain that with the right recruitment campaign, we can find the skilled employees essential to our expanding role in electronics products and consulting.

FIGURE O–2. Increasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development

Decreasing Order

Decreasing order begins with the most important fact or point, then moves to the next most important, and so on, ending with the least important. This order is especially appropriate for a **memo** or other **correspondence** addressed to a busy decision-maker (see Figure O–1), who may be able to reach a decision after considering only the most important points. In a **report** addressed to various **readers**, some of whom may be interested in only the major points and others who may need all the information, decreasing order may be ideal for your **purpose**.

The advantages of decreasing order are that (1) it gets the reader's attention immediately by presenting the most important point first, (2) it makes a strong initial impression, and (3) it ensures that even the most hurried reader will not miss the most important point.

Increasing Order

Increasing order begins from the least important point or fact, then progresses to the next more important, and builds finally to the most important or strongest point.

Increasing order of importance is effective for writing in which (1) you want to save your strongest points until the end or (2) you need to build the ideas point by point to an important **conclusion** (see Figure O–2).

Many oral presentations benefit especially from increasing order because it leaves the **audience** with the strongest points freshest in their minds. The disadvantage of increasing order, especially for written documents, is that it begins weakly, and the reader or listener may become impatient or distracted before reaching your main point. In the example given in Figure O–2, the writer begins with the least productive source of applicants and builds up to the most productive source.

organization

Organization is essential to the success of a **formal report**, a Web page, or an effective **presentation**. Good organization is achieved by **outlining** and by using a logical and appropriate **method of development** that suits your subject, your **audience**, and your **purpose**.

During the organization stage of the writing process, consider a **layout and design** that will highlight structure, hierarchy, and order, and determine the **format** appropriate to your subject and purpose. If you intend to include **visuals** with your writing, consider them as you create your outline, especially if they need to be prepared by someone else while you are writing and revising the draft. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

organizational charts

An organizational chart shows how the various divisions or units of an organization are related to one another. This type of **visual** is useful when you want to give **readers** an overview of an organization or to display the lines of authority within it, as in Figure O–3.

The title of each organizational component (office, section, division) is placed in a separate box. The boxes are then linked to a central authority. If readers need the information, include the name of the person and position title in each box.

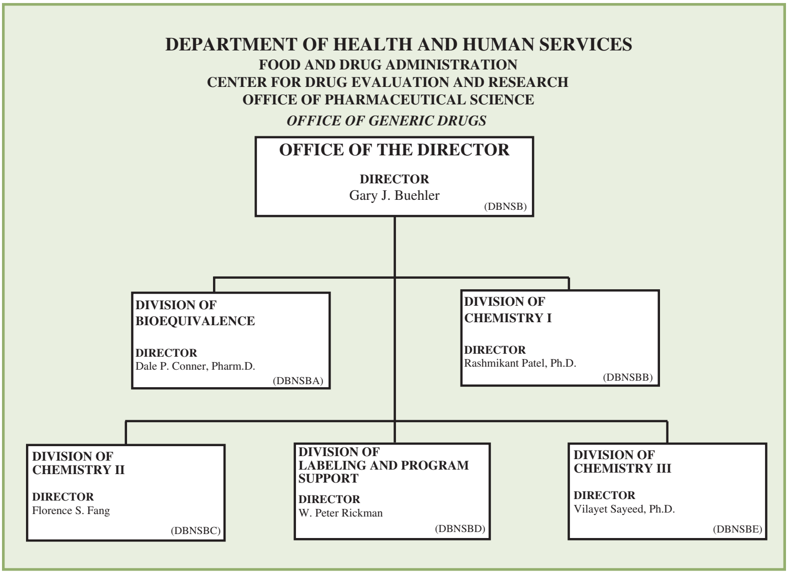


FIGURE O–3. Organizational Chart

outlining

An outline is the skeleton of the document you are going to write; at the least, it should list the main topics and subtopics of your subject in a logical **method of development**.

Advantages of Outlining

An outline provides structure to your writing by ensuring that it has a beginning (**introduction**), a middle (main body), and an end (**conclusion**). Using an outline offers many other benefits.

- Larger and more complex subjects are easier to handle because an outline breaks them into manageable parts.
- Like a road map, an outline indicates a starting point and keeps you moving logically so that you do not lose your way before you arrive at your conclusion.
- Parts of an outline are easily moved around so that you can consider the most effective arrangement of your ideas.
- Creating a good outline frees you from concerns of **organization** while you are **writing a draft**.
- An outline enables you to provide **coherence** and **transition** so that one part flows smoothly into the next without omitting important details.
- **Logic errors** are much easier to detect and correct in an outline than in a draft.
- An outline helps with **collaborative writing** because it enables a team to refine a project's **scope**, divide responsibilities, and maintain focus.

Types of Outlines

Two types of outlines are most common: short topic outlines and lengthy sentence outlines. A *topic outline* consists of short phrases arranged to reflect your primary method of development. A topic outline is especially useful for short documents such as **e-mails**, **letters**, or **memos**. See also **correspondence**.

For a large writing project, create a topic outline first, and then use it as a basis for creating a sentence outline. A *sentence outline* uses a complete sentence for each idea that may become the topic sentence for a paragraph in the rough draft. If most of your notes can be shaped into topic sentences for paragraphs in your rough draft, you can be relatively sure that your document will be well organized. See also **note-taking** and **research**.

Creating an Outline

When you are outlining large and complex subjects with many pieces of information, the first step is to group your research notes into related categories. Sort your notes by major and minor division headings. For example, the major divisions for this discussion of outlining could be as follows:

I. Advantages of outlining
II. Types of outlines
III. Creating an outline

The second step is to establish your minor divisions within each major division. Arrange your minor points using a method of development under their major division and label them with capital letters.

II. Types of outlines
 A. Topic outlines
 B. Sentence outlines
 Division and Classification
III. Creating an outline
 A. Establish major and minor divisions.
 B. Sort notes by major and minor divisions.
 C. Complete the sentence outline.
 Sequential

You will sometimes need more than two levels of headings. If your subject is complicated, you may need three or four levels of headings to better organize all your ideas in proper relationship to one another. In that event, use the following numbering scheme:

I. First-level heading
 A. Second-level heading
  1. Third-level heading
   a. Fourth-level heading

The third step is to mark each of your notes with the appropriate Roman numeral and capital letter. Arrange the notes logically within each minor heading, and mark each with the appropriate, sequential Arabic number. As you do, make sure your organization is logical and your headings have **parallel structure**. For example, all the second-level headings under "III. Creating an outline" are complete sentences in the active **voice**.

Treat **visuals** as an integral part of your outline, and plan approximately where each should appear. Either include a rough sketch of the visual or write "illustration of . . ." at each place. As with other information in an outline, freely move, delete, or add visuals as needed.

The outline samples shown earlier use a combination of numbers and letters to differentiate the various levels of information. You could also use a decimal numbering system, such as the following, for your outline.

1. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING
 1.1 Second-level heading
 1.2 Second-level heading
  1.2.1 Third-level heading

1.2.2 Third-level heading
1.2.2.1 Fourth-level heading
1.2.2.2 Fourth-level heading
1.3 Second-level heading
2. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING

This system should not go beyond the fourth level because the numbers get too cumbersome beyond that point. In many documents, such as **specifications** and **manuals**, the decimal numbering system is carried over from the outline to the final version of the document for ease of cross-referencing sections.

Create your draft by converting your notes into complete sentences and **paragraphs**. If you have a sentence outline, the most difficult part of the writing job is over. However, whether you have a topic or a sentence outline, remember that an outline is flexible; it may need to change as you write the draft, but it should always be your point of departure and return.

DIGITAL TIP

Creating an Outline

The outline feature of your word-processing software enables you to format, update, and rearrange sections automatically using any outlining style. To see this process, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alred handbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Creating an Outline."

outside [of]

In the phrase *outside of*, the word *of* is redundant.

▸ Place the rack outside ~~of~~ the incubator.

Do not use *outside of* to mean "aside from" or "except for."

Except for
▸ ~~Outside of~~ his frequent absences, Jim has a good work record.

over [with]

In the expression *over with*, the word *with* is redundant; such words as *completed* or *finished* often better express the thought.

- Open the test chamber when the experiment is over ~~with.~~ .

- Open the test chamber when the experiment is completed. ~~over with.~~

P

pace

Pace is the speed at which you present ideas to the reader. Your goal should be to achieve a pace that fits your **audience**, **purpose**, and **context**. The more knowledgeable the reader is about the subject, the faster your pace can be. Be careful, though, not to lose control of the pace. In the following example, the first version piles facts on top of each other at a rapid pace. The second version presents the same facts at a controlled pace in two more easily assimilated sentences. In addition, this version achieves a different and more desirable **emphasis**.

RAPID The hospital's generator produces 110 volts at 60 hertz and is powered by a 90-horsepower engine. It is designed to operate under normal conditions of temperature and humidity, for use under emergency conditions, and may be phased with other units of the same type to produce additional power when needed.

CONTROLLED The hospital's generator, which is powered by a 90-horsepower engine, produces 110 volts at 60 hertz under normal conditions of temperature and humidity. Designed especially for use under emergency conditions, this generator may be phased with other units of the same type to produce additional power when needed.

paragraphs

A paragraph performs three functions: (1) It develops the unit of thought stated in the topic sentence; (2) it provides a logical break in the material; and (3) it creates a visual break on the page, which signals a new topic.

Topic Sentence

A topic sentence states the paragraph's main idea; the rest of the paragraph supports and develops that statement with related details. The topic sentence, which is often the first sentence, tells the reader what the paragraph is about.

▸ *The cost of training new employees is high*. In addition to the cost of classroom facilities and instructors, an organization must pay employees their regular salary while they sit in the classroom. For the companies to break even on this investment in their professional employees, those employees must stay in the job for which they have been trained for at least one year.

The topic sentence is usually most effective early in the paragraph, but a paragraph can lead to the topic sentence, which is sometimes done to achieve **emphasis**.

▸ Energy does far more than simply make our daily lives more comfortable and convenient. Suppose someone wanted to stop—and reverse—the economic progress of this nation. What would be the surest and quickest way to do it? Simply block the nation's ability to produce energy! The nation would face a devastating economic crisis. *Our economy, in short, is energy-based.*

On rare occasions, the topic sentence may logically fall in the middle of a paragraph.

▸ . . . [It] is time to insist that science does not progress by carefully designed steps called "experiments," each of which has a well-defined beginning and end. *Science is a continuous and often a disorderly and accidental process*. We shall not do the young psychologist any favor if we agree to reconstruct our practices to fit the pattern demanded by current scientific methodology.

—B. F. Skinner, "A Case History in Scientific Method"

Paragraph Length

A paragraph should be just long enough to deal adequately with the subject of its topic sentence. A new paragraph should begin whenever the subject changes significantly. A series of short, undeveloped paragraphs can indicate poor **organization** by breaking a single idea into several pieces. A series of long paragraphs, however, can fail to provide the reader with manageable subdivisions of thought. Paragraph length should aid the reader's understanding of ideas.

Occasionally, a one-sentence paragraph is acceptable if it is used as a **transition** between longer paragraphs or as a one-sentence **introduction** or **conclusion** in **correspondence**.

Writing Paragraphs

Careful paragraphing reflects the writer's logical organization and helps the reader follow the writer's thoughts. A good working outline makes it easy to group ideas into appropriate paragraphs. (See also **outlining**.)

The following partial topic outline plots the course of the subsequent paragraphs:

TOPIC OUTLINE (PARTIAL)

I. Advantages of Chicago as location for new facility
   A. Transport infrastructure
      1. Rail
      2. Air
      3. Truck
      4. Sea (except in winter)
   B. Labor supply
      1. Engineering and scientific personnel
         a. Similar companies in area
         b. Major universities
      2. Technical and manufacturing personnel
         a. Community college programs
         b. Custom programs

RESULTING PARAGRAPHS

Probably the greatest advantage of Chicago as a location for our new facility is its excellent transport facilities. The city is served by three major railroads. Both domestic and international air-cargo service are available at O'Hare International Airport; Midway Airport's convenient location adds flexibility for domestic air-cargo service. Chicago is a major hub of the trucking industry, and most of the nation's large freight carriers have terminals there. Finally, except in the winter months when the Great Lakes are frozen, Chicago is a seaport, accessible through the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Chicago's second advantage is its abundant labor force. An ample supply of engineering and scientific staff is assured not only by the presence of many companies engaged in activities similar to ours but also by the presence of several major universities in the metropolitan area. Similarly, technicians and manufacturing personnel are in abundant supply. The colleges in the Chicago City College system, as well as half a dozen other two-year colleges in the outlying areas, produce graduates with associate's degrees in a wide variety of technical specialties appropriate to our needs. Moreover, three of the outlying colleges have expressed an interest in developing off-campus courses attuned specifically to our requirements.

Paragraph Unity and Coherence

A good paragraph has **unity** and **coherence** as well as adequate development. *Unity* is singleness of purpose, based on a topic sentence that states the core idea of the paragraph. When every sentence in the paragraph develops the core idea, the paragraph has unity. *Coherence* is holding to one point of view, one attitude, one tense; it is the joining of sentences into a logical pattern. Transitional words tie ideas together and lead to coherence, as shown by the boldfaced italicized words in the following paragraph.

TOPIC SENTENCE *Over the past several months, I have heard complaints about the Merit Award Program.* ***Specifically***, many employees feel that this program should be linked to annual ***salary increases***. They believe that ***salary increases*** would provide a much better incentive than the current $500 to $700 cash awards for exceptional service. ***In addition***, these ***employees believe*** that their supervisors consider the cash awards a satisfactory alternative to salary increases. Although I don't think this practice is widespread, the fact that the ***employees believe*** that it is justifies a reevaluation of the Merit Award Program.

Simple enumeration (*first*, *second*, *then*, *next*, and so on) also provides effective transition within paragraphs. Notice how the boldfaced italicized words and phrases give coherence to the following paragraph.

- ▶ Most adjustable office chairs have nylon tubes that hold metal spindle rods. To keep the chair operational, lubricate the spindle rods occasionally. ***First***, loosen the set screw in the adjustable bell. ***Then*** lift the chair from the base. ***Next***, apply the lubricant to the spindle rod and the nylon washer. ***When you have finished***, replace the chair and tighten the set screw.

parallel structure

Parallel structure requires that sentence elements that are alike in function be alike in grammatical form as well. This structure achieves an economy of words, clarifies meaning, expresses the equality of the ideas, and achieves **emphasis**. Parallel structure assists **readers** because it allows them to anticipate the meaning of a sentence element on the basis of its construction.

Parallel structure can be achieved with words, **phrases**, or **clauses**.

- ▶ If you want to benefit from the jobs training program, you must be *punctual*, *courteous*, and *conscientious*. [parallel words]
- ▶ If you want to benefit from the jobs training program, you must recognize the importance *of punctuality*, *of courtesy*, and *of conscientiousness*. [parallel phrases]

▶ If you want to benefit from the jobs training program, *you must arrive punctually*, *you must behave courteously*, and *you must study conscientiously*. [parallel clauses]

Correlative **conjunctions** (*either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, *not only . . . but also*) should always join elements that use parallel structure. Both parts of the pairs should be followed immediately by the same grammatical form: two similar words, two similar phrases, or two similar clauses.

▶ Viruses carry either *DNA* or *RNA*, never both. [parallel words]

▶ Clearly, neither *serological tests* nor *virus isolation studies* alone would have been adequate. [parallel phrases]

▶ Either *we must increase our production efficiency* or *we must decrease our production goals*. [parallel clauses]

To make a parallel construction clear and effective, it is often best to repeat an **article**, a **pronoun**, a helping **verb**, a **preposition**, a subordinating conjunction, or the mark of an infinitive (*to*).

▶ The association has *a* mission statement and *a* code of ethics. [article]

▶ The software is popular *because* it is compatible across platforms and *because* it is easily customized. [subordinating conjunction]

Parallel structure is especially important in creating **lists**, outlines, **tables of contents**, and **headings** because it lets readers know the relative value of each item in a table of contents and each heading in the body of a document. See also **outlining**.

P

Faulty Parallelism

Faulty parallelism results when joined elements are intended to serve equal grammatical functions but do not have equal grammatical form.

Faulty parallelism sometimes occurs because a writer tries to compare items that are not comparable.

NOT PARALLEL The company offers special college training to help hourly employees move into professional careers like engineering management, software development, service technicians, and sales trainees. [Notice faulty comparison of occupations—*engineering management* and *software development*—to people—*service technicians* and *sales trainees*.]

To avoid faulty parallelism, make certain that each element in a series is similar in form and structure to all others in the same series.

PARALLEL The company offers special college training to help hourly employees move into professional careers like *engineering management*, *software development*, *technical services*, and *sales*.

paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating or rewriting in your own words the essential ideas of another writer. The following example is an original passage explaining the concept of *object blur*. The paraphrased version restates accurately the essential information of the passage in a form appropriate for a **report**.

ORIGINAL One of the major visual cues used by pilots in maintaining precision ground reference during low-level flight is that of object blur. We are acquainted with the object-blur phenomenon experienced when driving an automobile. Objects in the foreground appear to be rushing toward us, while objects in the background appear to recede slightly.

—Wesley E. Woodson and Donald W. Conover, *Human Engineering Guide for Equipment Designers*

PARAPHRASE Object blur refers to the phenomenon by which observers in a moving vehicle report that foreground objects appear to rush at them, while background objects appear to recede slightly (Woodson & Conover, 1964).

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Because paraphrasing does not quote a source word for word, **quotation marks** are not used. However, paraphrased material should be credited because the *ideas* are taken from someone else. See also **note-taking**, **plagiarism**, and **quotations**. ❖

parentheses

Parentheses are used to enclose explanatory or digressive words, phrases, or sentences. Material in parentheses often clarifies or defines the preceding text without altering its meaning.

► She severely bruised her tibia (or shinbone) in the accident.

Parenthetical information may not be essential to a sentence (in fact, parentheses deemphasize the enclosed material), but it may be helpful to some readers.

Parenthetical material does not affect the punctuation of a sentence, and any punctuation (such as a **comma** or **period**) should appear following the closing parenthesis.

▸ She could not fully extend her knee because of a torn meniscus (or cartilage), and she suffered pain from a severely bruised tibia (or shinbone).

When a complete sentence within parentheses stands independently, the ending punctuation is placed inside the final parenthesis.

▸ The project director listed the problems her staff faced. (This was the third time she had complained to the board.)

For some constructions, however, you should consider using **subordination** rather than parentheses.

, which pleased the attending physician,

▸ The early tests showed little damage ~~(the attending physician was pleased),~~ but later scans revealed abdominal trauma.

Parentheses also are used to enclose numerals or letters that indicate sequence.

▸ The following sections deal with (1) preparation, (2) research, (3) organization, (4) writing, and (5) revision.

P

Do not follow spelled-out **numbers** with numerals in parentheses representing the same numbers.

▸ Send five ~~(5)~~ copies of the report.

Use **brackets** to set off a parenthetical item that is already within parentheses.

▸ We should be sure to give Emanuel Foose (and his brother Emilio [1912–1982]) credit for his part in founding the institute.

See also **documenting sources** and **quotations**.

parts of speech

The term *parts of speech* describes the class of words to which a particular word belongs, according to its function in a sentence.

PART OF SPEECH	FUNCTION
noun, **pronoun**	naming / referring
verb	acting / asserting
adjective, **adverb**	describing / modifying
conjunction, **preposition**	joining / linking
interjection	exclaiming

Many words can function as more than one part of speech. See also **functional shift**.

party

In legal language, *party* refers to an individual, a group, or an organization. ("The injured *party* sued my client.") The term *party* is inappropriate in all but legal writing; when you are referring to a person, use the word *person*.

- The person ~~party~~ whose file you requested is here now.

Party is appropriate when it refers to a group. ("Jim arranged a tour of the facility for the members of our *party*.")

per

When *per* is used to mean "for each," "by means of," "through," or "on account of," it is appropriate (*per* gallon, *per* capita, *per* diem). When used to mean "according to" (*per* your request, *per* your order), the expression is **jargon** and should be avoided.

- As we discussed, ~~per our discussion,~~ I will send revised instructions.

P

percent / percentage

The word *percent* is normally used instead of the symbol % ("only 15 *percent*"), except in **tables**, where space is at a premium. *Percentage*, which is never used with **numbers**, indicates a general size ("only a small *percentage*").

periods

A period is a mark of **punctuation** that usually indicates the end of a declarative or an imperative sentence. Periods also indicate omissions when used as **ellipses** and link when used as leaders, as in rows of periods in **tables of contents**. Periods are also used to end questions that are actually polite requests, or instructions to which an affirmative response is assumed. ("Will you call me as soon as he arrives.") See also **sentence construction**.

Periods in Quotations

Use a **comma**, not a period, after a declarative sentence that is quoted in the context of another sentence.

- "There is every chance of success," she stated.

A period is placed inside **quotation marks**. See also **quotations**.

- He stated clearly, "My vote is yes."

Periods with Parentheses

Place a period outside the final parenthesis when a parenthetical element ends a sentence.

- The institute was founded by Harry Denman (1902–1972).

Place a period inside the final parenthesis when a complete sentence stands independently within **parentheses**.

- The project director listed the problems her staff faced. (This was the third time she had complained to the board.)

Other Uses of Periods

Use periods following the numerals in a numbered **list** and following complete sentences in a list.

- 1. Enter your name and PIN.
  2. Enter your address with ZIP Code.
  3. Enter your home telephone number.

Use periods after initials in names (*Wilma T. Grant*, *J. P. Morgan*). Use periods as decimal points with **numbers** (*27.3 degrees Celsius*, *$540.26*, *6.9 percent*). Use periods to indicate certain **abbreviations** (*Ms.*, *Dr.*, *Inc.*). When a sentence ends with an abbreviation that ends with a period, do not add another period. ("Please meet me at 3:30 p.m.")

Period Faults

The incorrect use of a period is sometimes referred to as a *period fault*. When a period is inserted prematurely, the result is a **sentence fragment**.

FRAGMENT After a long day at the office during which we finished the quarterly report. We left hurriedly for home.

SENTENCE After a long day at the office, during which we finished the quarterly report, we left hurriedly for home.

When two independent clauses are joined without any punctuation, the result is a *fused*, or *run-on*, *sentence*. Adding a period between the clauses is one way to correct a run-on sentence.

RUN-ON Bill was late for ten days in a row Ms. Sturgess had to dismiss him.

CORRECT Bill was late for ten days in a row. Ms. Sturgess had to dismiss him.

Other options are to add a comma and a coordinating **conjunction** (*and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor*, *so*, *yet*) between the clauses, to add a **semicolon**, or to add a semicolon with a conjunctive **adverb**, such as *therefore* or *however*, followed by a comma.

person

Person refers to the form of a personal **pronoun** that indicates whether the pronoun represents the speaker, the person spoken to, or the person or thing spoken about. A pronoun representing the speaker is in the *first* person. ("*I* could not find the answer in the manual.") A pronoun that represents the person or people spoken to is in the *second* person. ("*You* will be a good manager.") A pronoun that represents the person or people spoken about is in the *third* person. ("*They* received the news quietly.") The following list shows first-, second-, and third-person pronouns. See also **case**, **number**, and **one**.

PERSON	SINGULAR	PLURAL
First	I, me, my, mine	we, us, our, ours
Second	you, your, yours	you, your, yours
Third	he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its	they, them, their, theirs

persuasion

Persuasive writing attempts to convince an **audience** to adopt the writer's point of view or take a particular action. Workplace writing often uses persuasion to reinforce ideas that readers already have, to convince readers to change their current ideas, or to lobby for a particular suggestion or policy (as in Figure P–1). You may find yourself advocating for safer working conditions, justifying the expense of a new program, or writing a **proposal** for a large purchase. See also **context** and **purpose**.

In persuasive writing, the way you present your ideas is as important as the ideas themselves. You must support your appeal with logic and a sound presentation of facts, statistics, and examples. See also **logic errors**.

A writer also gains credibility, and thus persuasiveness, through the readers' impressions of the document's appearance. For this reason, consider carefully a document's **layout and design**. See also **résumés**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Avoid ambiguity. Do not wander from your main point and, above all, never make false claims. You should also acknowledge any real or potentially conflicting opinions; doing so allows you to anticipate and overcome objections and builds your credibility. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

The **memo** shown in Figure P–1 on the facing page was written to persuade the marketing staff to participate actively in a change to a new computer system. Notice that not everything in this memo is presented in a positive light. Change brings disruption and challenges—and the writer acknowledges that fact.

A persuasive technique that places the focus on your reader's interest and perspective is discussed in the entry **"you" viewpoint**. See also **correspondence**.

P

phenomenon / phenomena

A *phenomenon* is an observable thing, fact, or occurrence ("a natural *phenomenon*"). Its plural form is *phenomena*.

photographs

Photographs are often the best way to show the appearance of an object or record an event or a phenomenon over a period of time. Photographs are useful to investigators in recording the condition of a scene as found, and colors are often essential for images in medical, forensic,

Interoffice Memo

TO: Engineering Staff
FROM: Harold Kawenski, MIS Administrator
DATE: April 23, 2015
SUBJECT: Changeover to the NRT/R4 System

As you all know, the merger with Datacom has resulted in dramatic growth in our workload—a 30 percent increase in our customer support services. To manage this expansion, we will soon install the NRT/R4 server and QCS Enterprise software with Web-based applications. You can contribute to making a smooth transition to the QCS system.

QCS Challenges
The changeover to the QCS system, understandably, will cause some disruption at first. We will need (1) to transfer many of our legacy programs and software applications to the new system and (2) to learn to navigate in the R4 and QCS environments. Once we have made these adjustments, however, I am convinced we will welcome the changes.

QCS Benefits
The QCS system will provide smooth access to up-to-date engineering and product information when we need it. This system will speed processing dramatically and give us access to all relevant company-wide databases. Because we anticipate that our workload will increase another 20 percent in the next several months, a timely conversion to the QCS system will be invaluable.

Training and Support
To cope with the changes, we will o er training sessions next week on our intranet. I have attached a schedule and sign-up form with specific class times. We will also provide a technical-support hotline at extension 4040, which will be available during business hours; e-mail support at qcs-support@conco.com; and online help documentation.

Response Date
Please return your form and e-mail me by Thursday, April 30, with suggestions or questions about the impact of the changeover on your department. I look forward to working with you to make this system a success.

Attachment: Training Schedule and Sign-Up Form

FIGURE P–1. Persuasive Memo

botanical, and other fields. Photographs, however, cannot depict the internal workings of a mechanism or below-the-surface details of objects or structures. Such details are better represented in **drawings**. Photographs are also effective in catching readers' attention and adding personal relevance to such documents as **brochures** and **newsletters**. See also **audience**.

An effective photograph shows important details and indicates the relative size of the subject by including a familiar object—such as a ruler or a person—near the subject being photographed. Figure P–2 shows a photograph of a control device held by a human hand to illustrate its relative size.

For **reports**, treat photographs as you do other **visuals**, giving them figure numbers, call-outs (labels) to identify key features, and captions, if needed. Position the figure number and caption so that readers can view them and the photograph from the same orientation.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Be careful to avoid **plagiarism** by appropriately **documenting sources** for photographs and by obtaining permission from the **copyright** holder if you plan to publish photographs that you do

Ken Cook/De Santis Collection

FIGURE P–2. Photo (of Control Device)

not take yourself. For such photos, you should provide a source line, as shown in this book for Figure P–2. For stock images obtained through services like Getty Images (www.gettyimages.com), you will need to obtain a license and pay a fee, depending on the final use. If you do take your own photographs, be sure to get the full name, contact information, and permission of any persons featured before publishing. ❖

phrases

DIRECTORY

Prepositional Phrases 395
Participial Phrases 396
Infinitive Phrases 397
Gerund Phrases 398
Verb Phrases 398
Noun Phrases 398

A phrase is a meaningful group of words that cannot make a complete statement because it does not contain both a subject and a predicate, as **clauses** do. Phrases, which are based on **nouns**, nonfinite **verb** forms, or verb combinations, provide context within the clause or sentence in which they appear. See also **sentence construction**.

- She reassured her staff *by her calm confidence*. [phrase]

A phrase may function as an **adjective**, an **adverb**, a noun, or a verb.

- The subjects *on the agenda* were all discussed. [adjective]
- We discussed the project *with great enthusiasm*. [adverb]
- *Working hard* is her way of life. [noun]
- The chief engineer *should have been notified*. [verb]

Even though phrases function as adjectives, adverbs, nouns, or verbs, they are normally named for the kind of word around which they are constructed—**preposition**, participle, infinitive, gerund, verb, or noun. A phrase that begins with a preposition is a *prepositional phrase*, a phrase that begins with a participle is a *participial phrase*, and so on. For typical verb phrases and prepositional phrases that can cause difficulty for speakers of **English as a second language**, see **idioms**.

Prepositional Phrases

A preposition is a word that shows relationship and combines with a noun or **pronoun** (its **object**) to form a modifying phrase. A prepositional

P

phrase, then, consists of a preposition plus its object and the object's modifiers.

► *After the meeting*, the district managers adjourned *to the cafeteria*.

Prepositional phrases, because they normally modify nouns or verbs, usually function as adjectives or adverbs. A prepositional phrase may function as an adverb of motion ("Turn the dial four degrees *to the left*") or an adverb of manner ("Answer customers' questions *in a courteous fashion*"). A prepositional phrase may function as an adverb of place and may appear in different places in the sentence.

► *In home and office computer systems*, security is essential.

► Security is essential *in home and office computer systems*.

Prepositional phrases may function as adjectives; when they do, they follow the nouns they modify.

► Food waste *with a high protein content* can be processed into animal food.

Be careful when you use prepositional phrases because separating a prepositional phrase from the noun it modifies can cause **ambiguity**.

AMBIGUOUS *The woman* standing by the security guard *in the gray suit* is our division manager.

CLEAR *The woman in the gray suit* who is standing by the security guard is our division manager.

Watch as well for the overuse of prepositional phrases where **modifiers** would be more economical.

P

OVERUSED The man *with gray hair in the blue suit with pinstripes* is the former president *of the company*.

ECONOMICAL The *gray-haired* man in the *blue pin-striped* suit is the former *company* president.

Participial Phrases

A participle is any form of a verb that is used as an adjective. A participial phrase consists of a participle plus its object and its modifiers.

► The division *having the largest number of patents* will work with NASA.

The relationship between a participial phrase and the rest of the sentence must be clear to the reader. For that reason, every sentence containing a participial phrase must have a noun or pronoun that the participial phrase modifies; if it does not, the result is a dangling participial phrase.

Dangling Participial Phrases. A dangling participial phrase occurs when the noun or pronoun that the participial phrase is meant to modify is not stated but only implied in the sentence. See also **dangling modifiers**.

DANGLING	*Being unhappy with the job*, his efficiency suffered. [His efficiency was not unhappy with the job; what the participial phrase really modifies—*he*—is not stated but merely implied.]
CORRECT	*Being unhappy with the job*, he grew less efficient. [In this version, what that participial phrase modifies—*he*—is explicitly stated.]

Misplaced Participial Phrases. A participial phrase is misplaced when it is too far from the noun or pronoun it is meant to modify and so appears to modify something else. Such an error can make the writer look ridiculous.

MISPLACED	We saw a large warehouse *driving down the highway*.
CORRECT	*Driving down the highway*, we saw a large warehouse.

Infinitive Phrases

An infinitive is the basic form of a verb (*go*, *run*, *talk*) without the restrictions imposed by **person** and **number**. An infinitive is generally preceded by the word *to* (which is usually a preposition but in this use is called the *sign*, or *mark*, of the infinitive). An infinitive phrase consists of the word *to* plus an infinitive and any objects or modifiers.

P

- *To improve as a writer*, you must be willing *to accept criticism*.

Do not confuse a prepositional phrase beginning with *to* with an infinitive phrase. In an infinitive phrase, *to* is followed by a verb; in a prepositional phrase, *to* is followed by a noun or pronoun.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE	We went *to the building site*.
INFINITIVE PHRASE	Our firm tries *to provide a comprehensive training program*.

The implied subject of an introductory infinitive phrase should be the same as the subject of the sentence. If it is not, the phrase is a dangling modifier. In the following example, the implied subject of the infinitive is *you* or *one*, not *practice*.

you must practice.
- ▸ To learn a new language, ~~practice is needed.~~

Gerund Phrases

A gerund is a **verbal** ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun. A gerund phrase consists of a gerund plus any objects or modifiers and always functions as a noun.

SUBJECT	*Preparing a grant proposal* is a difficult task.
DIRECT OBJECT	She liked *chairing the committee.*

Verb Phrases

A verb phrase consists of a main verb and its helping verb.

- ▸ He *is* [helping verb] *working* [main verb] hard this summer.

Words can appear between the helping verb and the main verb of a verb phrase. ("He *is* always *working*.") The main verb is always the last verb in a verb phrase.

Questions often begin with a verb phrase. ("*Will* he *verify* the results?") The adverb *not* may be appended to a helping verb in a verb phrase. ("He *did not work* today.")

Noun Phrases

A noun phrase consists of a noun and its modifiers. ("Have *the two new employees* fill out *these forms*.")

plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's unique ideas without acknowledgment or the use of someone else's exact words without **quotation marks** and appropriate credit. Plagiarism is considered to be the theft of someone else's creative and intellectual property and can result in legal action, academic sanctions, and serious professional consequences. See also **copyright**, **ethics in writing**, and **research**.

Citing Sources

Quoting a passage—including cutting and pasting a passage from an Internet source into your work—is permissible only if you enclose the passage in quotation marks and properly cite the source. For detailed guidance on quoting correctly, see **quotations**. If you intend to publish, reproduce, or distribute material that includes quotations from published works, including Web sites, you may need to obtain written permission from the copyright holders of those works.

Even Web sites that grant permission to copy, distribute, or modify material under the "copyleft" principle, such as Wikipedia, nonetheless caution that you must give appropriate credit to the source from which material is taken (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citing_Wikipedia).

Paraphrasing the words and ideas of another *also requires that you cite your source*, even though you do not enclose paraphrased ideas or materials in quotation marks. (See also **documenting sources**.) Paraphrasing a passage without citing the source is permissible only when the information paraphrased is common knowledge.

Common Knowledge

Common knowledge generally refers to information that is widely known and readily available in handbooks, manuals, atlases, and other references. For example, the "law of supply and demand" is common knowledge and is found in nearly every economics textbook.

Common knowledge also refers to information within a specific field that is generally known and understood by most others in that field—even though it is not widely known by those outside the field.

An indication that something is common knowledge is its appearance in multiple sources without citation. However, when in doubt, cite the source.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** In the workplace, employees often borrow material freely from in-house manuals, reports, and other company documents. Using or **repurposing** such material is neither plagiarism nor a violation of copyright. For information on the use of public domain and government material, see **copyright**. ❖

P

plain language

Plain language is writing that is logically organized and understandable on the first reading. Such writing avoids unnecessary **jargon**, **affectation**, and technical terminology. Even with the best of intentions, however, you cannot always avoid using specialized terms and concepts. Therefore, assess your **audience** carefully to ensure that your language connects with their level of knowledge. Replace jargon and complex legal wording with familiar words or terms when possible.

COMPLEX	The systems integration specialist must be able to visually perceive the entire directional response module.
PLAIN LANGUAGE	The operator must be able to see the entire control panel.

If you are a health-care provider, for example, use the appropriate plain-language equivalent for medical terminology with patients in conversations and written guidelines: *bleeding* instead of *hemorrhaging*; *heart attack* instead of *myocardial infarction*; *cast* instead of *splint*; *stitches* instead of *sutures*. If a plain-language alternative does not exist, define or explain a technical term on its first use and use **visuals** where necessary.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Plain Language**

- ✔ Identify your average reader's level of technical knowledge.
- ✔ Avoid unnecessary jargon and legal language.
- ✔ Avoid confusing terms and constructions.
  - Define necessary **abbreviations** and acronyms.
  - Use the same words consistently for the same things.
  - Do not give an obscure meaning to a word.
- ✔ Use the active **voice** for directness and for identifying the doer of an action.
- ✔ Use the second **person** (*you*/*yours*) or imperative **mood** to write directly to the reader.
- ✔ Write coherent sentences.
  - Aim for one message in each sentence.
  - Break up complex information into smaller, easier-to-understand units.
  - Use **positive writing** and the present **tense** as much as possible.
- ✔ Select word placement carefully.
  - Keep subjects and **objects** close to their **verbs**.
  - Put *only*, *always*, and other conditional words next to the words they modify.

Plain-language principles are especially useful when writing **international correspondence**. For format and visual elements that promote **clarity**, see **layout and design** and **lists**. See also **English as a second language**. For information on plain-language laws and practices, see www.plainlanguage.gov/site/about.cfm and www.plainlanguagenetwork.org.

point of view

Point of view is the writer's relation to the information presented, as reflected in the use of grammatical **person**. The writer usually expresses point of view in first-, second-, or third-person personal **pronouns**. Use of first person indicates that the writer is a participant or an observer. Use of second or third person indicates that the writer is giving directions, **instructions**, or advice, or is writing about other people or something impersonal.

FIRST PERSON	*I* scrolled down to find the settings option.
SECOND PERSON	*You* need to scroll down to find the settings option. [*You* is explicitly stated.] Scroll down to find the settings option. [*You* is understood in such an instruction.]
THIRD PERSON	*He* scrolled down to find the settings option.

Consider the following sentence, revised from an impersonal to a more personal point of view. Although the meaning of the sentence does not change, the revision indicates that people are involved in the communication.

▸ *I regret* ~~It is regrettable~~ that *we cannot accept* the equipment shipped on Friday. ~~is unacceptable.~~

Some people avoid the pronoun *I* in technical writing, but doing so often leads to awkward sentences, with people referring to themselves in the third person as *one* or as *the writer* instead of as *I*.

▸ *I* ~~One~~ can only conclude that the absorption rate is too fast.

However, do not use the personal point of view when an impersonal point of view would be more appropriate or more effective because you need to emphasize the subject matter over the writer or the reader. In the following example, it does not help to personalize the situation; in fact, the impersonal version may be more tactful.

PERSONAL I received objections to my proposal from several of your managers.

IMPERSONAL Several managers have raised objections to the proposal.

Whether you adopt a personal or an impersonal point of view depends on the **purpose** and the **audience** of the document. For example, in an informal **e-mail** to an associate, you would most likely adopt a personal point of view. However, in a **report** to a large group, you would probably emphasize the subject by using an impersonal point of view. See also **plain language**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** In company **correspondence**, using the pronoun *we* may be interpreted as reflecting company policy, whereas *I* clearly reflects personal opinion. Which pronoun to use should be decided according to whether you are speaking for yourself (*I*) or for the company (*we*).

▸ *I* understand your frustration with the approval process, but *we* must meet the new safety regulations. ❖

ESL TIP for Stating an Opinion

In some cultures, stating an opinion in writing is considered impolite or unnecessary, but in the United States, readers expect to see a writer's opinion stated clearly and supported with logical reasoning. The opinion should be followed by specific examples to help the reader understand the writer's point of view. See also **logic errors** and **"you" viewpoint**.

P

positive writing

Presenting positive information as though it were negative is confusing to **readers**.

NEGATIVE If the error does *not* involve data transmission, the backup function will *not* be used.

In this sentence, the reader must reverse two negatives to understand the exception that is being stated. (See also **double negatives**.) The following sentence presents the exception in a positive and straightforward manner. See also **plain language**.

POSITIVE The backup function is used only when the error involves data transmission.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Negative facts or conclusions, however, should be stated negatively; stating a negative fact or conclusion positively is deceptive because it can mislead the reader.

DECEPTIVE In the first quarter of this year, employee exposure to airborne lead averaged within 10 percent of acceptable state health standards.

ACCURATE In the first quarter of this year, employee exposure to airborne lead averaged 10 percent below acceptable state health standards.

See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

Even if what you are saying is negative, do not state it more negatively than necessary.

NEGATIVE We are withholding your shipment because we have not received your payment.

POSITIVE We will forward your shipment as soon as we receive your payment.

See also **correspondence** and **"you" viewpoint**.

possessive case

P

A **noun** or **pronoun** is in the possessive case when it represents a person, place, or thing that possesses something. Possession is generally expressed with an **apostrophe** and an *s* ("the *report's* title"), with a prepositional **phrase** using *of* ("the title *of the report*"), or with the possessive form of a pronoun ("*our* report").

Practices vary for some possessive forms, but the following guidelines are widely used. Above all, be consistent.

Singular Nouns

Most singular nouns show the possessive case with *'s*.

▸ the *hospital's* medical staff — the *witness's* testimony
an *employee's* paycheck — the *bus's* schedule

When pronunciation with *'s* is difficult or when a multisyllable noun ends in a *z* sound, you may use only an apostrophe.

- *New Orleans'* convention hotels

Plural Nouns

Plural nouns that end in *-s* or *-es* show the possessive case with only an apostrophe.

- the *managers'* reports / the *employees'* paychecks / the *companies'* joint project / the *witnesses'* testimony

Plural nouns that do not end in *-s* show the possessive with *'s*.

- *children's* clothing, *women's* resources, *men's* room

Apostrophes are not always used in official names ("*Consumers* Union") or for words that may appear to be possessive nouns but function as **adjectives** ("a *computer peripherals* supplier").

Compound Nouns

Compound nouns form the possessive with *'s* following the final letter.

- the *attorney general's* decision, the *editor-in-chief's* desk, the *pipeline's* diameter

Plurals of some compound expressions are often best expressed with a prepositional phrase ("presentations *of the editors in chief*").

P

Coordinate Nouns

Coordinate nouns show joint possession with *'s* following the last noun.

- *Fischer and Goulet's* partnership was the foundation of their business.

Coordinate nouns show individual possession with *'s* following each noun.

- The difference between *Barker's* and *Washburne's* test results was not statistically significant.

Possessive Pronouns

The possessive pronouns (*its*, *whose*, *his*, *her*, *our*, *your*, *my*, *their*) are also used to show possession and do not require apostrophes. ("Even good systems have *their* flaws.") Only the possessive form of a pronoun should be used with a gerund (a noun formed from an *-ing* **verb**).

- ▶ The safety officer insisted on *our* wearing protective clothing. [*Wearing* is the gerund.]

Possessive pronouns are also used to replace nouns. ("The responsibility was *theirs*.") See also **its / it's**.

Indefinite Pronouns

Some indefinite pronouns (*all*, *any*, *each*, *few*, *most*, *none*, *some*) form the possessive case with the **preposition** *of*.

- ▶ We tested both packages and found bacteria on the surface *of each*.

Other indefinite pronouns (*everyone*, *someone*, *anyone*, *no one*), however, use *'s*.

- ▶ *Everyone's* contribution is welcome.

prefixes

A prefix is a letter or group of letters placed in front of a root word that changes the meaning of the root word. When a prefix ends with a vowel and the root word begins with a vowel, the prefix is often separated from the root word with a **hyphen** (*re-enter*, *pro-active*, *anti-inflammatory*). Some words with the double vowel are written without a hyphen (*cooperate*) and others with or without a hyphen (*re-elect* or *reelect*).

Prefixes, such as *neo-* (derived from a Greek word meaning "new"), are often hyphenated when used with a proper **noun** (*neo-Keynesian*). Such prefixes are not normally hyphenated when used with common nouns, unless the base word begins with the same vowel (*neonatal*, *neo-orthodoxy*).

A hyphen may be necessary to clarify the meaning of a prefix; for example, *reform* means "correct" or "improve," and *re-form* means "change the shape of." When in doubt, check a current **dictionary**.

P

preparation

The preparation stage of the writing process is essential. By determining the needs of your **audience**, your **purpose**, the **context**, and the **scope** of coverage, you understand the information you will need to gather during **research**. See also **collaborative writing** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing to Write**

- ✔ Determine who your readers are and learn certain key facts about them—their knowledge, attitudes, expectations, and needs relative to your subject.
- ✔ Determine the document's primary purpose: What exactly do you want your readers to know, to believe, or to do when they have finished reading your document?
- ✔ Consider the context of your message and how it should affect your writing.
- ✔ Establish the scope of your document—the type and amount of detail you must include—not only by understanding your readers' needs and purpose but also by considering any external constraints, such as word limits for **trade journal articles** or how you might need to compress text, as in **writing for the Web**.
- ✔ Select the medium appropriate to your readers and purpose. See also **selecting the medium**.

prepositions

A preposition is a word that links a **noun** or **pronoun** to another sentence element by expressing such relationships as direction (*to*, *into*, *across*, *toward*), location (*at*, *in*, *on*, *under*, *over*, *beside*, *among*, *by*, *between*, *through*), time (*before*, *after*, *during*, *until*, *since*), or position (*for*, *against*, *with*). Together, the preposition, its **object** (the noun or pronoun), and the object's **modifiers** form a prepositional **phrase** that acts as a modifier.

▸ Answer help-line questions *in a courteous manner*.
[The prepositional phrase *in a courteous manner* modifies the **verb** *answer*.]

The object of a preposition (the word or phrase following the preposition) is always in the objective **case**. When the object is a compound expression, both nouns and pronouns should be in the objective case. For example, the phrase "between you and *me*" is frequently and incorrectly written as "between you and *I*." *Me* is the objective form of the pronoun, and *I* is the subjective form.

Many words that function as prepositions also function as **adverbs**. If the word takes an object and functions as a connective, it is a preposition; if it has no object and functions as a modifier, it is an adverb.

PREPOSITIONS	The thermostat is *behind* the column *in* the conference room.
ADVERBS	The customer lagged *behind*; then he came *in* and sat down.

Certain verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are normally used with certain prepositions (interested *in*, aware *of*, equated *with*, adhere *to*, capable *of*, object *to*, infer *from*). See also **idioms**.

Prepositions at the End of a Sentence

A preposition at the end of a sentence can be an indication that the sentence is awkwardly constructed.

She was at the

▶ ~~The~~ branch office. ~~is where she was at.~~

However, if a preposition falls naturally at the end of a sentence, leave it there. ("I don't remember which file name I saved it *under*.")

Prepositions in Titles

Capitalize prepositions in **titles** when they are the first or last words, or when they contain five or more letters (unless you are following a style that recommends otherwise). See also **capitalization**.

▶ The newspaper column "In My Opinion" included a review of the article "New Concerns About Distance Education." [*In* and *About* are prepositions.]

P

Preposition Errors

Do not use redundant prepositions, such as "off *of*," "in back *of*," "inside *of*," and "at *about*."

EXACT	The client will arrive at ~~about~~ four o'clock.
APPROXIMATE	The client will arrive ~~at~~ about four o'clock.

Avoid unnecessarily adding the preposition *up* to verbs.

to

▶ Call ~~up and~~ see if he is in his office.

Do not omit necessary prepositions.

▶ He was oblivious *to* and not distracted by the view from his office window.

See also **conciseness** and **English as a second language**.

presentations

DIRECTORY

Determining Your Purpose 408
Analyzing Your Audience 409
Gathering Information 409
Structuring the Presentation 409
Using Visuals 412
Writer's Checklist: Using Visuals in a Presentation 414
Delivering a Presentation 414
Writer's Checklist: Preparing for and Delivering a Presentation 416

The steps required to prepare an effective presentation parallel the steps you follow to write a document. As with writing a document, determine your **purpose** and analyze your **audience**. Then gather the facts that will support your point of view or proposal and logically organize that information. Presentations do, however, differ from written documents because your spoken delivery requires as much attention as your content, and your organization and **visuals** must be adapted to an audience that will view your presentation.

P

Determining Your Purpose

Determine the primary purpose of your presentation by asking the following question: What do I want the audience to know, to believe, or to do when I have finished the presentation? Based on the answer to that question, write a purpose statement that answers the *what?* and *why?* questions.

▶ The purpose of my presentation is to convince my company's senior management of the need to hire a full-time social-media marketing coordinator [*what*] so that they will be persuaded to allocate additional funds in the budget for this position in the next fiscal year [*why*].

Analyzing Your Audience

Once you have determined the desired end result of the presentation, ask yourself these questions about your audience so that you can tailor your presentation to their needs.

- What is their level of experience or knowledge about your topic?
- What are their educational levels, ages, and other demographics?
- What is their attitude toward your topic and—based on that attitude—what are their possible concerns, fears, or objections?
- Are there subgroups in the audience with different concerns or needs?
- What questions might audience members ask about this topic?

Gathering Information

Once you have focused the presentation, you need to find the facts and arguments that support your point of view or the action you propose. As you gather information, keep in mind that you should give the audience only what will accomplish your goals; too much detail will overwhelm them and too little will not adequately inform your listeners or support your recommendations. For advice on gathering information, see **research**.

Structuring the Presentation

When structuring the presentation, focus on your audience as listeners. Listeners are freshest at the outset and refocus their attention near the end. Take advantage of that pattern. Give your audience a brief overview of your presentation at the beginning, use the body to develop your ideas, and end with a summary of what you covered and, if appropriate, a call to action. See also **methods of development**.

The Introduction. Include in the **introduction** an opening that focuses your audience's attention, as in the following examples:

► [*Definition of a problem*] "You have to write an important report, and you'd like to incorporate lengthy handwritten notes from several meetings. But hand writing all those pages seems an incredible waste of time! Have I got a solution for you."

► [*An attention-getting statement*] "As many as 70 million Americans have high blood pressure."

► [*A rhetorical question*] "Would you be interested in a full-sized computer keyboard that's waterproof, noiseless, and rolls up like a rubber mat?"

- [*A personal experience*] "On a recent business trip, my rental car's navigation system had me on the wrong highway—and thirty miles in the wrong direction! After I managed to head in the right direction, I realized: we need a mobile alert app."
- [*An appropriate quotation*] "According to researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 'Garlic and its cousin, the onion, confer major health benefits—including fighting cancer, infections, and heart disease.' "

Following your opening, use the introduction to set the stage for your audience by providing an overview of the presentation. Such an overview can include general or background information that will be needed to understand the detailed information in the body of your presentation. It can also preview how you have organized the material.

- This presentation analyzes three high-volume, networked on-demand printers for us to consider purchasing. Based on a comparison of all three, I will recommend the one I believe best meets our needs. To do so, I'll discuss the following five points:

  1. Why we need a networked high-volume printer [*the problem*]
  2. The basics of networked on-demand technology [*general information*]
  3. The criteria I used to compare the three printer models [*comparison*]
  4. The printer models I compared and why [*possible solutions*]
  5. The printer I propose we buy [*proposed solution*]

P

The Body. If your goal is to persuade, present the evidence that will persuade the audience to agree with your conclusions and act on them. If you are discussing a problem, demonstrate that it exists and offer a solution or range of possible solutions. For example, if your introduction stated that the problem for a company is low profits, high costs, or outdated technology, you could use the following approach.

1. Prove your point.
   - Strategically organize the facts and data you need.
   - Present the information using easy-to-understand visuals.
2. Offer solutions.
   - Increase profits by lowering production costs.
   - Cut overhead to reduce costs, or abolish specific programs or product lines.
   - Replace outdated technology, or upgrade existing technology.

3. Anticipate questions ("How much will it cost?") and objections ("We're too busy now—when would we have time to learn the new software?") and incorporate the answers into your presentation.

See **persuasion**.

Transitions. Planned **transitions** should appear between the introduction and the body, between major points in the body, and between the body and the closing. Transitions are simply a sentence or two to let the audience know that you are moving from one topic to the next. They also prevent a choppy presentation and provide the audience with assurance that you know where you are going and how to get there.

▸ Before getting into the specifics of each printer I compared, I'd like to present the benefits of networked, on-demand printers in general. That information will provide you with the background you'll need to compare the differences among the printers and their capabilities discussed in this presentation.

It is also a good idea to pause for a moment after you have delivered a transition between topics to let your listeners shift gears with you. Remember, they do not know your plan.

The Closing. Fulfill the goals of your presentation in the closing. If your purpose is to motivate the listeners to take action, ask them to do what you want them to do; if your purpose is to get your audience to think about something, summarize what you want them to think about. Many presenters make the mistake of not actually closing—they simply quit talking, shuffle papers, and then walk away.

Because your closing is what your audience is most likely to remember, use that time to be strong and persuasive. Consider the following typical closing.

▸ Based on all the data, I believe that the Worthington TechLine 5510 Production Printer best suits our needs. It produces 40 pages per minute *more* than its closest competitor and provides modular systems that can be upgraded to support new applications. The Worthington is also compatible with our current network, and staff training at our site is included with our purchase. Although the initial cost is higher than that for the other two models, the additional capabilities, compatibility with most standard environments, lower maintenance costs, and strong customer-support services make it a better value.

I recommend we allocate the funds necessary for this printer by the fifteenth of this month in order to be well prepared for the production of next quarter's customer publications.

This closing brings the presentation full circle and asks the audience to fulfill the purpose of the presentation—exactly what a **conclusion** should do.

Using Visuals

Well-planned visuals can add interest, focus, and emphasis to your presentation. Charts, graphs, and illustrations can greatly increase audience understanding and retention of information, especially for complex issues and technical information that could otherwise be misunderstood or overlooked.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Be sure to provide credit for any visual taken from a print or an online source. You can include a citation either on an individual visual (such as a slide) or in a list of references or works cited that you distribute to your audience. For information on citing visuals, see **documenting sources**. ❖

You can create and present the visual components of your presentation by using a variety of media—flip charts, whiteboards or chalkboards, slides, or presentation software. See also **layout and design**.

Flip Charts. Flip charts, usually on easels, are ideal for use with smaller groups in a conference room or classroom and work well for **brainstorming** with your audience.

P

Whiteboards or Chalkboards. The whiteboards or chalkboards common to classrooms are convenient for creating sketches and for jotting notes during your presentation. If your presentation requires extensive notes or complex drawings, however, prepare handouts on which the audience can jot notes and which they can keep for future reference.

Presentation Software. Presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Apple Keynote, Prezi, and open-source products, helps you integrate text, audio, images, links, and video content into your presentation. These programs and others that offer various collaborative and file-sharing capabilities constantly evolve and require that you keep current with the latest versions and enhancements. (See **adapting to new technology**.) As you learn the various possibilities of presentation software, keep in mind that you should avoid using too many enhancements, which may distract your audience from your message. Figure P–3 shows well-balanced slides for a presentation based on the sample formal report in Figure F–5.

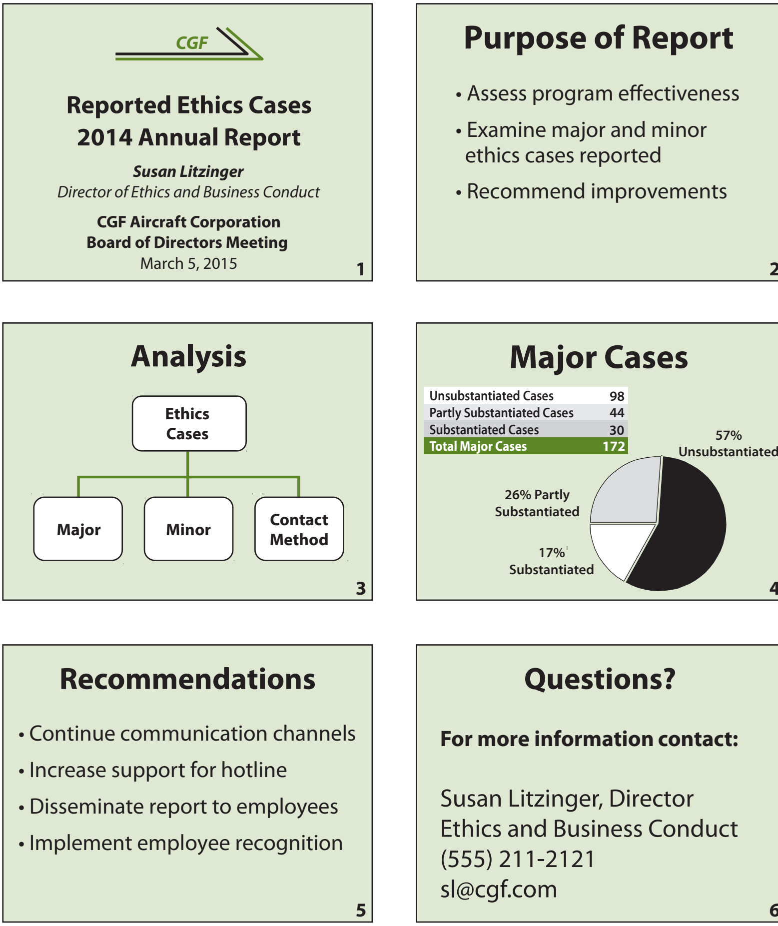


FIGURE P–3. Presentation Slides

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Be sure to anticipate and prepare for potential technical difficulties. Should you encounter a technical snag during the presentation, stay calm and give yourself time to solve the problem. If you cannot solve the problem, move on without the technology. As a precaution, always carry a hard-copy printout of your slides and copies for your audience, and save a backup copy of your digital presentation file.

P

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Visuals in a Presentation

- ✔ Limit each visual to a number of words that can be quickly read by your audience.
- ✔ Use a font size readable to audience members at the back of the room.
- ✔ Limit the number of bulleted or numbered items in **lists** to no more than five or six per visual, and use numbers if sequence is important and bullets if not.
- ✔ Keep lists in **parallel structure** and balanced in content.
- ✔ Make your visuals consistent in font style, size, and spacing.
- ✔ Consider the contrast between your text and the background to ensure the text and images are clear to those in the audience.
- ✔ Use only one or two illustrations per visual (or slide) to avoid clutter and confusion.
- ✔ Use **graphs**, charts, and **infographics** to show data trends.
- ✔ Avoid overloading your presentation with so many visuals that you distract or tax the audience's concentration: One visual for every two minutes is a common guideline.
- ✔ Avoid using sound or visual effects in presentation software that distract from the content or may seem unprofessional.
- ✔ Do not read the text on your visual word for word. Your audience can read the visuals; they look to you to provide the key points in detail.
- ✔ Match your delivery of the content to your visuals. Do not put one visual on the screen and talk about the previous visual or, even worse, the next one.
- ✔ To view a tutorial on creating presentations with PowerPoint and Prezi, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select Tutorials.

P

Delivering a Presentation

Once you have outlined and drafted your presentation and prepared your visuals, you are ready to practice your presentation and delivery techniques. See also **outlining**.

Practice. Familiarize yourself with the sequence of the material—major topics, notes, and visuals—in your outline. Once you feel comfortable with the content, you are ready to practice the presentation (in front of others if possible).

PRACTICE ON YOUR FEET AND OUT LOUD. Try to practice in the room where you will give the presentation. Practicing on-site helps you get the feel of the room: the lighting, the equipment, the arrangement of the chairs, the position of electrical outlets and switches, and so forth. Practice out loud to gauge the length of your presentation, to uncover problems such as awkward transitions, and to eliminate verbal tics (for example, "um," "you know," and "like").

PRACTICE WITH YOUR VISUALS AND TEXT. Integrate your visuals into your practice sessions to help your presentation go more smoothly. Operate the equipment (computer or presentation system) until you are comfortable with it. Decide if you want to use a remote control or wireless mouse or if you want to have someone else advance your slides. Even if things go wrong, being prepared and practiced will give you the confidence and poise to continue.

Delivery Techniques That Work. Your delivery is both aural and visual. In addition to your words and message, your nonverbal communication affects your audience. Be animated—your words have impact and staying power when they are delivered with physical and vocal animation. If you want listeners to share your point of view, show enthusiasm for your topic. The most common delivery techniques include making eye contact; using movement and gestures; and varying voice inflection, projection, and pace.

EYE CONTACT. The best way to establish rapport with your audience is through eye contact. In a large audience, directly address those people who seem most responsive to you in different parts of the room. Doing that helps you establish rapport with your listeners by holding their attention and gives you important visual cues that let you know how your message is being received. Do the listeners seem engaged and actively listening? Based on your observations, you may need to adjust the pace of your presentation.

MOVEMENT. Animate the presentation with physical movement. Take a step or two to one side after you have been talking for a minute or so. That type of movement is most effective at transitional points in your presentation between major topics or after pauses or emphases. Too much movement, however, can be distracting, so try not to pace.

Another way to integrate movement into your presentation is to walk to the screen and point to the visual as you discuss it. Touch the screen with the pointer and then turn back to the audience before beginning to speak (remember the three *t*'s: touch, turn, and talk).

GESTURES. Gestures both animate your presentation and help communicate your message. Most people gesture naturally when they talk;

nervousness, however, can inhibit gesturing during a presentation. Keep one hand free and use that hand to gesture.

VOICE. Your voice can be an effective tool in communicating your sincerity, enthusiasm, and command of your topic. Use it to your advantage to project your credibility. *Vocal inflection* is the rise and fall of your voice at different times, such as the way your voice naturally rises at the end of a question ("You want it *when?*"). Conversational delivery and eye contact promote the feeling among audience members that you are addressing them directly. Use vocal inflection to highlight differences between key and subordinate points in your presentation.

PROJECTION. Most presenters think they are speaking louder than they are. Remember that your presentation is ineffective for anyone in the audience who cannot hear you. If listeners must strain to hear you, they may give up trying to listen. Correct projection problems by practicing out loud with someone listening from the back of the room.

PACE. Be aware of the speed at which you deliver your presentation. If you speak too fast, your words will run together, making it difficult for your audience to follow. If you speak too slowly, your listeners will become impatient and distracted.

Presentation Anxiety. Everyone experiences nervousness before a presentation. Instead of letting fear inhibit you, focus on channeling your nervous energy into a helpful stimulant. Practice will help you, but the best way to master anxiety is to know your topic thoroughly—knowing what you are going to say and how you are going to say it will help you gain confidence and reduce anxiety as you become immersed in your subject.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing for and Delivering a Presentation**

- ✔ Prepare a set of notes that will trigger your memory during the presentation.
- ✔ Make as much eye contact as possible with your audience to establish rapport and maximize opportunities for audience feedback.
- ✔ Animate your delivery by integrating movement, gestures, and vocal inflection into your presentation. However, keep your movements and speech patterns natural.
- ✔ Speak loudly and slowly enough to be heard and understood.
- ✔ Review *Writer's Checklist: Using Visuals in a Presentation* (page 414) as well as this entry's advice on presentation delivery.

For information and tips on communicating with cross-cultural audiences, see **global communication**, **global graphics**, and **international correspondence**.

principal / principle

Principal, meaning "an amount of money on which interest is earned or paid" or "a chief official in a school or court proceeding," is sometimes confused with *principle*, which means "a basic truth or belief."

- The bank will pay 3.5 percent on the *principal*.
- He sent an e-mail to the *principal* of the high school.
- She objected to the idea on *principle*.

Principal is also an adjective, meaning "main" or "primary." ("My *principal* objection is that it will be too expensive.")

process explanation

A process explanation may describe the steps in a process, an operation, or a procedure, such as the steps necessary to design and manufacture a product. The **introduction** often presents a brief overview of the process or lets **readers** know why it is important for them to become familiar with the process you are explaining. Be sure to define terms that readers might not understand and provide **visuals** to clarify the process. See also **defining terms** and **instructions**.

In describing a process, use transitional words and phrases to create unity within **paragraphs**, and select **headings** to provide **transition** from one step to the next. Often documents include process explanations, such as the steps described under the heading "testing procedures" in the laboratory report shown in Figure L–1 on page 309.

progress and activity reports

Progress reports provide details on the tasks completed for major workplace projects, whereas *activity reports* focus on the ongoing work of individual employees. Both are sometimes called *status reports*. Although many organizations use standardized templates and others use

Web-based report forms, the content and structure shown in Figures P–4 and P–5 are typical. See also **reports**.

Progress Reports

A progress report provides information to decision-makers about the status of a project—whether it is on schedule and within budget. Progress reports are often submitted by a contracting company to a client company, as shown in Figure P–4. They are used mainly for projects that involve many steps over a period of time and are issued at regular intervals to describe what has been done and what remains to be done. Progress reports help projects run smoothly by helping managers assign work, adjust schedules, allocate budgets, and order supplies and equipment. All progress reports for a particular project should have the same **format**.

The **introduction** to the first progress report should identify the project, methods used, necessary materials, expenditures, and completion date. Subsequent reports summarize the progress achieved since the preceding report and list the steps that remain to be taken. The body of the progress report should describe the project's status, including details such as schedules and costs, a statement of the work completed, and perhaps an estimate of future progress. The report ends with **conclusions** and recommendations about changes in the schedule, materials, techniques, and other information important to the project.

Activity Reports

Within an organization, employees often submit activity reports to managers on the status of ongoing projects. Managers may combine the activity reports of several individuals or teams into larger activity reports and, in turn, submit those larger reports to their own managers. The activity report shown in Figure P–5 was submitted by a manager (Wayne Tribinski) who supervises 11 employees; the reader of the report (Kathryn Hunter) is Tribinski's manager.

Because the activity report is issued periodically (usually monthly) and contains material familiar to its **readers**, it normally needs no introduction or conclusion, although it may need a brief opening to provide **context**. Although the format varies from company to company, the following sections are typical: Current Projects, Current Problems, Plans for the Next Period, and Current Staffing Levels (for managers).

Hobard Construction Company
9032 Salem Avenue
Lubbock, TX 79409

www.hobardcc.com
(808) 769-0832
Fax: (808) 769-5327

August 14, 2015

Walter M. Wazuski
County Administrator
109 Grand Avenue
Manchester, NH 03103

Dear Mr. Wazuski:

Subject: Progress Report 8 for July 31, 2015

The renovation of the County Courthouse is progressing on schedule and within budget. Although the cost of certain materials is higher than our original bid indicated, we expect to complete the project without exceeding the estimated costs because the speed with which the project is being completed will reduce overall labor expenses.

Costs
Materials used to date have cost $178,600, and labor costs have been $293,000 (including some subcontracted plumbing). Our estimate for the remainder of the materials is $159,000; remaining labor costs should not exceed $400,000.

Work Completed
As of July 31, we finished the installation of the circuit-breaker panels and meters, the level-one service outlets, and all the subfloor wiring. The upgrading of the courtroom, the upgrading of the records-storage room, and the replacement of the air-conditioning units are in the preliminary stages.

Work Scheduled
We have scheduled the upgrading of the courtroom to take place from August 28 to October 9, the upgrading of the records-storage room from October 13 to November 17, and the replacement of the air-conditioning units from November 24 to December 17. We see no difficulty in having the job finished by the scheduled date of December 22.

Sincerely yours,

Tran Nuguélen
ntran@hobardcc.com

FIGURE P–4. Progress Report (Using Letter Format)

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO Kathryn Hunter <khunter@hanleysolutions.com>

CC

Show BCC

FROM Wayne Tribinski

Subject Activity Report for May 2015

Activity Report 05_2015.xls (25 KB) Download

Activity Report for May 2015

Our staff is working on the following projects and issues, as of May 29.

Projects

1. For the *Software Training Mailing Campaign*, we anticipate producing a set of labels for mailing software training information to customers by June 15.
2. The *Search Project* is on hold until the PL/I training has been completed, probably by the end of June.
3. The project to provide a database for the *Information Management System* has been expanded in scope to provide a database for all training activities. We are rescheduling the project to take the new scope into account.

Problems

The *Information Management System* has been delayed. The original schedule was based on the assumption that a systems analyst who was familiar with the system would work on this project. Instead, the project was assigned to a newly hired systems analyst who was inexperienced and required much more learning time than expected.

Bill Michaels, whose activity report is attached, is correcting a problem in the *CNG Software*. This correction may take a week.

Plans for Next Month

- Complete the *Software Training Mailing Campaign*.
- Resume the *Search Project*.
- Restart the project to provide a database on information management with a schedule that reflects its new scope.
- Write a report to justify the addition of two software developers.
- Congratulate publicly the recipients of Meritorious Achievement Awards: Bill Thomasson and Nancy O'Rourke.

Current Staffing Level

Current staff: 11 (including two managers)
Open requisitions: 0

Please direct questions to ITsupport@hanleysolutions.com

FIGURE P–5. Activity Report (Using E-mail Format)

pronoun reference

A **pronoun** should refer clearly to a specific antecedent. Avoid vague and uncertain references.

, which was a big one,

▸ We got the account as a result of our proposal. ~~It was a big one.~~

For **coherence**, place pronouns as close as possible to their antecedents—distance increases the likelihood of **ambiguity**.

, praised for its architechtural design, is .

▸ The office building next to City Hall ~~is praised for its architectural design.~~

A general (or broad) reference or one that has no real antecedent is a problem that often occurs when the word *this* is used by itself.

experience

▸ He deals with personnel problems in his work. This helps him in his personal life.

Another common problem is a hidden reference, which has only an implied antecedent.

▸ A high-lipid, low-carbohydrate diet is "ketogenic" because it

the of ketone bodies

favors ~~their~~ formation.

Do not repeat an antecedent in parentheses following the pronoun. If you feel you must identify the pronoun's antecedent in that way, rewrite the sentence.

AWKWARD The senior partner first met Bob Evans when he (Evans) was a trainee.

IMPROVED Bob Evans was a trainee when the senior partner first met him.

IMPROVED When the senior partner first met him, Bob Evans was a trainee.

For advice on avoiding pronoun-reference problems with gender, see **biased language**.

P

pronouns

DIRECTORY

Case 423
Number 425
Gender 425
Person 426

A pronoun is a word that is used as a substitute for a **noun** (the noun for which a pronoun substitutes is called the *antecedent*). Using pronouns in place of nouns relieves the monotony of repeating the same noun over and over. See also **pronoun reference**.

Personal pronouns refer to the person or people speaking (*I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*; *we*, *us*, *our*, *ours*); the person or people spoken to (*you*, *your*, *yours*); or the person, people, or thing(s) spoken of (*he*, *him*, *his*; *she*, *her*, *hers*; *it*, *its*; *they*, *them*, *their*, *theirs*). See also **person** and **point of view**.

▸ If *their* figures are correct, *ours* must be in error.

Demonstrative pronouns (*this*, *these*, *that*, *those*) indicate or point out the thing being referred to.

▸ *This* is my desk. *These* are my coworkers. *That* will be a difficult job. *Those* are incorrect figures.

Relative pronouns (*who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*) perform a dual function: (1) They take the place of nouns, and (2) they connect and establish the relationship between a dependent **clause** and its main clause.

▸ The department manager decided *who* would be hired.

P

Interrogative pronouns (*who*, *whom*, *what*, *which*) are used to ask questions.

▸ *What* is the trouble?

Indefinite pronouns specify a class or group of persons or things rather than a particular person or thing (*all*, *another*, *any*, *anyone*, *anything*, *both*, *each*, *either*, *everybody*, *few*, *many*, *most*, *much*, *neither*, *nobody*, *none*, *several*, *some*, *such*).

▸ Not *everyone* liked the new procedures; *some* even refused to follow them.

A *reflexive pronoun*, which always ends with the suffix *-self* or *-selves*, indicates that the subject of the sentence acts upon itself. See also **sentence construction**.

▸ The electrician accidentally shocked *herself*.

The reflexive pronouns are *myself*, *yourself*, *himself*, *herself*, *itself*, *oneself*, *ourselves*, *yourselves*, and *themselves*. *Myself* is not a substitute for *I* or *me* as a personal pronoun.

- ▶ Victor and *I* ~~myself~~ completed the report on time.
- ▶ The assignment was given to Ingrid and *me.* ~~myself.~~

Intensive pronouns are identical in form to the reflexive pronouns, but they perform a different function: Intensive pronouns emphasize their antecedents.

- ▶ I *myself* asked the same question.

Reciprocal pronouns (*one another*, *each other*) indicate the relationship of one item to another. *Each other* is commonly used when referring to two persons or things and *one another* when referring to more than two.

- ▶ Lashell and Kara work well with *each other*.
- ▶ The crew members work well with *one another*.

Case

Pronouns have forms to show the subjective, objective, and possessive cases.

SINGULAR	SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	POSSESSIVE
First person	I	me	my, mine
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its
PLURAL	**SUBJECTIVE**	**OBJECTIVE**	**POSSESSIVE**
First person	we	us	our, ours
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	they	them	their, theirs

A pronoun that functions as the subject of a clause or sentence is in the subjective **case** (*I*, *we*, *he*, *she*, *it*, *you*, *they*, *who*). The subjective case is also used when the pronoun follows a linking **verb**.

- ▶ *She* is my boss.
- ▶ My boss is *she*.

A pronoun that functions as the object of a verb or **preposition** is in the objective case (*me*, *us*, *him*, *her*, *it*, *you*, *them*, *whom*).

P

- Ms. Davis hired Tom and *me*. [object of verb]
- Between *you* and *me*, she's wrong. [object of preposition]

A pronoun that expresses ownership is in the **possessive case** (*my*, *mine*, *our*, *ours*, *his*, *her*, *hers*, *its*, *your*, *yours*, *their*, *theirs*, *whose*).

- He took *his* notes with him on the business trip.
- We took *our* notes with us on the business trip.

A pronoun **appositive** takes the case of its antecedent.

- Two systems analysts, Joe and *I*, were selected to represent the company.
  [*Joe and I* is in apposition to the subject, *two systems analysts*, and must therefore be in the subjective case.]
- The manager selected two representatives—Joe and *me*.
  [*Joe and me* is in apposition to *two representatives*, which is the object of the verb, *selected*, and therefore must be in the objective case.]

If you have difficulty determining the case of a compound pronoun, try using the pronoun singly.

- In his letter, Eldon mentioned *him* and *me*.

  In his letter, Eldon mentioned *him*.

  In his letter, Eldon mentioned *me*.
- *They* and *we* must discuss the terms of the merger.

  They must discuss the terms of the merger.

  We must discuss the terms of the merger.

P

When a pronoun modifies a noun, try it without the noun to determine its case.

- [*We* / *Us*] pilots fly our own planes.

  We fly our own planes.

  [You would not write, "*Us* fly our own planes."]
- He addressed his remarks directly to [*we* / *us*] technicians.

  He addressed his remarks directly to *us*.

  [You would not write, "He addressed his remarks directly to *we*."]

ESL TIP for Using Possessive Pronouns

In many languages, possessive pronouns agree in number and gender with the nouns they modify. In English, however, possessive pronouns agree in number and gender with their antecedents (nouns or noun forms). Check your writing carefully for agreement between a possessive pronoun and the word, phrase, or clause to which it refers.

- The *woman* brought *her* brother a cup of coffee. [*her* (pronoun) refers to *woman* (antecedent/noun)]
- *Robert* sent *his* mother flowers on Mother's Day. [*his* (pronoun) refers to *Robert* (antecedent/noun)]
- *The FedEx truck* made *its* final delivery. [*its* (pronoun) refers to *the FedEx truck* (antecedent/noun phrase)]
- *The three judges* made *their* decision. [*their* (pronoun) refers to *the three judges* (antecedent/noun phrase)]

Gender

A pronoun must agree in gender with its antecedent. A problem sometimes occurs because the masculine pronoun has traditionally been used to refer to both sexes. To avoid the sexual bias implied in such usage, use *he or she* or the plural form of the pronoun, *they*.

- *All* ~~Each~~ may stay or go as *they choose.* ~~he chooses.~~

As in this example, when the singular pronoun (*he*) changes to the plural (*they*), the singular indefinite pronoun (*each*) must also change to its plural form (*all*). See also **biased language**.

P

Number

Number is a frequent problem with only a few indefinite pronouns (*each*, *either*, *neither*, and those ending with *-body* or *-one*, such as *anybody*, *anyone*, *everybody*, *everyone*, *nobody*, *no one*, *somebody*, *someone*) that are normally singular and so require singular verbs and are referred to by singular pronouns.

- As *each member arrives* for the meeting, please hand *him or her* a copy of the confidential report. *Everyone* must return the copy before *he or she* leaves. *Everybody* on the committee *understands* that *neither* of our major competitors *is* aware of the new process we have developed.

Person

Third-person personal pronouns usually have antecedents.

▶ Gina presented the report to the members of the board of directors. *She* [Gina] first summarized *it* [the report] for *them* [the directors] and then asked for questions.

First- and second-person personal pronouns do not normally require antecedents.

▶ *I* like my job.

▶ *You* were on vacation at the time.

▶ *We* all worked hard on the project.

proofreading

Proofreading is essential whether you are writing a brief e-mail or a high-stakes résumé. Grammar checkers and spell checkers are important aids to proofreading, but they can make writers overconfident. If a typographical error results in a legitimate English word (for example, *coarse* instead of *course*), the spell checker will not flag the misspelling. You may find some of the tactics discussed in **revision** useful when proofreading; in fact, you may find passages during proofreading that will require further revision.

P

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Proofreading not only demonstrates that you respect readers (who can be distracted, irritated, or misled by errors in writing) but also reflects that you are professional in the way you approach all your work.

Whether the material you proofread is your own writing or that of someone else, consider proofreading in several stages. Although you need to tailor the stages to the specific document and to your own problem areas, the following *Writer's Checklist* should provide a useful starting point. For using Comment and Track Changes in word-processing programs, see *Digital Tip: Incorporating Tracked Changes* (page 504).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Proofreading in Stages

FIRST-STAGE REVIEW

- ✔ Appropriate **format**, as for **reports** or **correspondence**
- ✔ Consistent style, including **headings**, terminology, spacing, and fonts
- ✔ Correct numbering of figures and **tables**

SECOND-STAGE REVIEW

- ✔ Specific **grammar** and **usage** problems
- ✔ Appropriate **punctuation**
- ✔ Correct and consistent **abbreviations** and **capitalization**
- ✔ Correct **spelling** (including names and places)
- ✔ Accurate Web, **e-mail**, or other addresses
- ✔ Accurate data in tables, figures, and **lists**
- ✔ Cut-and-paste errors; for example, a result of moved or deleted text and **numbers**

FINAL-STAGE REVIEW

- ✔ Survey of your overall goals: **audience** needs and **purpose**
- ✔ Appearance of the document (see **layout and design**)
- ✔ Review by a trusted colleague, especially for crucial documents (see **collaborative writing**)

Traditional handwritten proofreaders' marks, shown in Figure P–6, enable writers and editors to easily communicate in the production of publications.

P

DIGITAL TIP

Proofreading for Format Consistency

To check your documents for consistency, use both a "macro" and a "micro" approach. Zooming out in your word-processing software reveals the general appearance of your document and helps you spot any problems with layout or structure. Printing your document and examining it carefully will help you notice inconsistencies in such details as typography, line spacing, and indentation. To see this process in action, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Proofreading for Format Consistency."

MARK/SYMBOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE	CORRECTED TYPE
	Delete	the ~~manager's~~ report	the report
∧	Insert	manager's the ∧ report	the manager's report
stet (stet)	Let stand	the ~~manager's~~ report	the manager's report
≡ (cap)	Capitalize	the monday meeting	the Monday meeting
/ (lc)	Lowercase	the Monday Meeting	the Monday meeting
∼ (tr)	Transpose	the cover lettre	the cover letter
	Close space	a loud speaker	a loudspeaker
#	Insert space	a loudspeaker	a loud speaker
¶	Paragraph	...report. The meeting...	...report. The meeting...
	Run in with previous line or paragraph	...report. The meeting...	...report. The meeting...
— (ital)	Italicize	the New York Times	the *New York Times*
(bf)	Boldface	Use boldface sparingly.	Use **boldface** sparingly.
⊙	Insert period	I wrote the e-mail	I wrote the e-mail.
	Insert comma	However we cannot...	However, we cannot...
=	Insert hyphen	clear cut decision	clear-cut decision
	Insert em dash	Our goal productivity	Our goal—productivity
or :|	Insert colon	We need the following	We need the following:
or ;|	Insert semicolon	we finished we achieved	we finished; we achieved
	Insert quotation marks	He said, I agree.	He said, "I agree."
	Insert apostrophe	the managers report	the manager's report

FIGURE P–6. Proofreaders' Marks

proposals

DIRECTORY

Proposal Strategies 429
Audience and Purpose 429
Project Management 430
Proposal Context and Types 430
Writer's Checklist: Writing Persuasive Proposals 430

Internal Proposals 430
Informal Internal Proposals 431
Formal Internal Proposals 431
External Proposals 433
Solicited Proposals 433
Unsolicited Proposals 434
Sales Proposals 434
Grant Proposals (see entry **grant proposals**)

A proposal is a document written to persuade readers that what is proposed will benefit them by solving a problem or fulfilling a need. When you write a proposal, therefore, you must convince readers that they need what you are proposing, that it is practical and appropriate, and that you are the right person or organization to provide the proposed product or service. See also **persuasion** and **"you" viewpoint**.

Proposal Strategies

For any proposal, support your assertions with relevant facts, statistics, and examples. Your supporting evidence must lead logically to your proposed plan of action or solution. Cite relevant sources of information that provide strong credibility to your argument. Avoid ambiguity, do not wander from your main point, and never make false claims. See **ethics in writing**.

Audience and Purpose. Proposals often require more than one level of approval, so take into account all the readers in your **audience**. Consider especially their levels of technical knowledge of the subject. For example, if your primary reader is an expert on your subject but a supervisor who must also approve the proposal is not, provide an **executive summary** written in nontechnical language for the supervisor. You might also include a **glossary** of terms used in the body of the proposal or an **appendix** that explains highly detailed information in nontechnical language. If your primary reader is not an expert but a supervisor is, write the proposal with the nonexpert in mind and include an appendix that contains the technical details for experts.

Writing a persuasive proposal can be simplified by composing a concise statement of **purpose**—the exact problem or opportunity that your proposal is designed to address and how you plan to persuade your readers to accept what you propose. Composing a purpose statement before outlining and writing your proposal will also help you and any collaborators understand the direction, **scope**, and goals of your proposal.

P

Project Management. Proposal writers are often faced with writing high-quality, persuasive proposals under tight organizational deadlines. Dividing the task into manageable parts is the key to accomplishing your goals, especially when proposals involve substantial **collaborative writing**. For example, you might set deadlines for completing various proposal sections or stages of the writing process. Proposal-management software is popular for companies that manage frequent and extensive proposal-writing projects. Such software allows businesses to automate the more routine tasks while easily tracking multiple versions.

Proposal Context and Types

Proposals are written within a specific **context**. As that entry describes, understanding the context will help you determine the most appropriate writing strategy. In general, to persuade those within your organization to make a change or an improvement or perhaps to fund a project, you would write an *internal proposal*. To persuade those outside your company to agree to a plan or take a course of action, you would write an *external proposal*.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Persuasive Proposals**

- ✔ Analyze your audience carefully to determine how to best meet your readers' needs or requirements.
- ✔ Write a concise purpose statement at the outset to clarify your proposal's goals.
- ✔ Divide the writing task into manageable segments and develop a time line for completing tasks.
- ✔ Review the descriptions of proposal contexts, structure, and types in this entry.
- ✔ Focus on the proposal's benefits to readers and anticipate their questions or objections.
- ✔ Incorporate evidence to support the claims of your proposal.
- ✔ Select an appropriate, visually appealing format (unless one is defined by the **request for proposals**). See **layout and design**.
- ✔ Use a confident, positive **tone** throughout the proposal.

P

Internal Proposals

The purpose of an internal proposal is to suggest a change or an improvement within the writer's organization. It is addressed to a superior within the organization who has the authority to accept or reject the proposal. Internal proposals are typically reviewed by one or more departments for cost, practicality, and potential benefits, so take account of all relevant audience members. Two common types of internal proposals—informal and formal—are often distinguished from each other by the frequency with which they are written and by the degree of change they propose.

Informal Internal Proposals. Informal internal proposals are the most common type of proposal and typically include small spending requests, requests for permission to hire new employees or increase salaries, and requests to attend conferences or purchase new equipment. In writing informal or routine proposals, highlight any key benefits to be realized.

Formal Internal Proposals. Formal internal proposals usually involve requests to commit large sums of money or to recommend large-scale reorganizations. They are usually organized into sections that describe a problem, propose a solution, and offer to implement the suggested recommendation. The body, in turn, is further divided into sections to reflect the subject matter. The proposal may begin with a section describing the background or history of an issue and go on to discuss options for addressing the issue in separate sections.

The *introduction* of your internal proposal should establish that a problem exists and needs a solution. If the audience is not convinced that there is a problem, your proposal will not succeed. After you identify the problem, summarize your proposed solution and indicate its benefits and estimated total cost. Notice how the **introduction** in Figure P–7 states the problem directly and then summarizes the writer's proposed solution.

The *body* of your internal proposal should offer a practical solution to the problem and provide the details necessary to inform and persuade your readers. In the body, describe the problem for which you are offering a solution; the methodology of your proposed solution; details about equipment, materials, and staff; cost breakdowns; and a comprehensive schedule. Figure P–7 provides a section from the body of an internal proposal.

The *conclusion* of your internal proposal should tie everything together, restate your recommendation, and close with a spirit of cooperation (offering to set up a meeting, supply additional information, or provide any other assistance that might be needed). Keep your conclusion brief, as in Figure P–7.

If your proposal cites information that you obtained through **research**, such as published reports, government statistics, or interviews, follow the conclusion with a list of works cited that provides complete publication information for each source.

ABO, Inc.
Interoffice Memo

To: Joan Marlow, Director, Human Resources Division

From: Leslie Galusha, Chief
Employee Benefits Department LG

Date: June 16, 2015

Subject: Proposal to Reduce Employee Health-Care Costs

Health-care and workers' compensation insurance costs at ABO, Inc., have risen 100 percent over the last six years. In 2009, costs were $5,675 per employee per year; in 2015, they have reached $11,560 per employee per year. This doubling of costs mirrors a national trend, with health-care costs anticipated to continue to rise at the same rate for the next ten years. Controlling these escalating expenses will be essential. They are reducing ABO's profit margin because the company currently pays 70 percent of the costs for employee coverage.

Healthy employees bring direct financial benefits to companies in the form of lower employee insurance costs, lower absenteeism rates, and reduced turnover. Regular physical exercise promotes fit, healthy people by reducing the risk of coronary heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, hypertension, and stress-related problems. I propose that to promote regular, vigorous physical exercise for our employees, ABO implement a health-care program that focuses on employee fitness. . . .

Problem of Health-Care Costs
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently estimated that health-care costs in the United States will triple by the year 2022. Corporate expenses for health care are rising at such a fast rate that, if unchecked, in seven years they will significantly erode corporate profits.

According to HHS, people who do not participate in a regular and vigorous exercise program incur double the health-care costs and are hospitalized 30 percent more days than people who exercise regularly. Nonexercisers are also 41 percent more likely to submit medical claims over $10,000 at some point during their careers than are those who exercise regularly.

These figures are further supported by data from independent studies. A model created by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) . . .

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FIGURE P–7. Special-Purpose Internal Proposal (Introduction and Body)

Joan Marlow | 2 | June 16, 2015

Proposed Solutions for ABO
The benefits of regular, vigorous physical activity for employees and companies are compelling. To achieve these benefits at ABO, I propose that we choose from one of two possible options: Build in-house fitness centers at our warehouse facilities, or offer employees several options for membership at a national fitness club. The following analysis compares . . .

Recommendation and Conclusion
I recommend that ABO, Inc., participate in the corporate membership program at AeroFitness Clubs, Inc., by subsidizing employee memberships. This program will show ABO's commitment to the importance of a fit workforce. Club membership allows employees at all five ABO warehouses to participate in the program. The more employees who participate, the greater the long-term savings. . . .

Enrolling employees in the corporate program at AeroFitness would allow them to receive a one-month free trial membership. Those interested in continuing could then join the club and pay half of the one-time membership fee. . . .

Implementing this program will help ABO, Inc., reduce its health-care costs while building stronger employee relations by offering employees a desirable benefit. If this proposal is adopted, I have some additional thoughts about publicizing the program to encourage employee participation. I look forward to discussing the details of this proposal with you and answering any questions you may have.

FIGURE P–7. Special-Purpose Internal Proposal (*continued*) (Conclusion)

External Proposals

External proposals are prepared for clients and customers outside your company. They are either submitted in response to a request for goods and services from another organization (a solicited proposal) or sent to an organization without a prior request (an unsolicited proposal). Grant proposals, a type of external proposal, are usually submitted to non-profit or government organizations to request funding to support research that could benefit the funding organization.

Solicited Proposals. To find the best method of meeting their needs and the most qualified company to help reach that goal, procuring organizations commonly issue a request for proposals (RFP) or an invitation for bids (IFB) that asks competing companies such as yours to bid for a job.

An RFP often defines a need or problem and allows those who respond to propose possible solutions. The procuring organization generally distributes an RFP to several predetermined vendors. The RFP usually outlines the specific requirements for the ideal solution. For example, if an organization needs a new accounting system, it may require the proposed system to create customized reports. The RFP also may define specific formatting requirements for the proposal, such as page length, font type and size, margin widths, **headings**, sections, and appendix items. Some large organizations require that proposals be submitted entirely online with specific requirements. When responding to RFPs, follow their requirements exactly—proposals that do not provide the required information, do not follow the required format or submission protocols, or miss the submittal deadline are usually considered "noncompliant" and immediately rejected.

In contrast to an RFP, an IFB is commonly issued by federal, state, and local government agencies to solicit bids on clearly defined products or services. An IFB is restrictive, binding the bidder to produce an item or a service that meets the exact requirements of the organization issuing the IFB. The goods or services are defined in the IFB by references to performance standards stated in technical specifications. Bidders must be prepared to prove that their product will meet all requirements of the specifications. The procuring organization generally publishes its IFB online, either on its own Web site or on others, such as Federal Business Opportunities at www.fbo.gov. Like RFPs, IFBs usually define specific format requirements; proposals that do not follow the required format can be rejected without review.

Unsolicited Proposals. Unsolicited proposals are those submitted to a company without a prior request for a proposal. Companies often operate for years with a problem they have never recognized (unnecessarily high maintenance costs, for example, or poor inventory-control methods). Many unsolicited proposals are preceded by a letter of inquiry that specifies the problem or unmet need to determine whether there is any potential interest. If you receive a positive response, you would conduct a detailed study of the prospective client's needs to determine whether you can be of help and, if so, exactly how. You would then prepare a formal proposal on the basis of your study.

Sales Proposals. The sales proposal, a major marketing tool for business and industry, is a company's offer to provide specific goods or services to a potential buyer within a specified period of time and for a specified price. The primary purpose of a sales proposal is to demonstrate that the prospective customer's purchase of the seller's products or services will solve a problem, improve operations, or offer other benefits.

Sales proposals vary greatly in length and sophistication. Some are a page or two written by one person; others are many pages written collaboratively by several people; and still others are hundreds of pages written by a proposal-writing team. Many sales proposals note that the offer is valid for a limited period (often 90 days). See also **collaborative writing**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Once submitted, a sales proposal is a legally binding document that promises to offer goods or services within a specified time and for a specified price. ❖

Simple sales proposals typically follow the introduction-body-conclusion pattern. Long sales proposals must accommodate a greater variety of information and are organized to include some or all of the following sections specified in the RFP:

- Cover letter
- Title page
- Executive or project summary
- General description of products
- Detailed solution or rationale
- Cost analysis
- Delivery schedule or work plan
- Site-preparation description
- Training requirements
- Statement of responsibilities
- Description of vendor
- Organizational sales pitch
- Conclusion
- Appendixes

COVER LETTER. A long sales proposal begins with a **cover letter** that expresses appreciation for the opportunity to submit your proposal and for any assistance you may have received in studying the customer's requirements. The letter should acknowledge any previous positive association with the customer. Then it should summarize the recommendations offered in the proposal and express your confidence that they will satisfy the customer's needs. Cover letters often list the documents attached or enclosed to help readers keep the associated documents together. See Figure P–8 for sections from a major sales proposal on page 437.

TITLE PAGE. The title page contains the title of the proposal, the date of submission, the company to which it is being submitted, your company's name, and any symbol or logo that identifies your company.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. An **executive summary**—sometimes called a *project summary*—follows the title page. The executive summary is intended for the decision-maker who will ultimately accept or reject the proposal and should summarize in nontechnical language how you plan to approach the work.

DESCRIPTION. If your proposal offers products as well as services, it should include a general description of the products. In many cases, product descriptions will already exist as company boilerplate; be sure to check your company's files or server for such information before drafting a description from scratch.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** In the workplace, employees often borrow material freely from in-house manuals, reports, and other company documents. Using such boilerplate is neither **plagiarism** nor a violation of **copyright**. See also **repurposing**. ❖

RATIONALE. Following the executive summary and general description of products, explain exactly how you plan to do what you are proposing. This section, called the *detailed solution* or *rationale*, will be read by specialists who can understand and evaluate your plan. It usually begins with a statement of the customer's problem, follows with a statement of the solution, and concludes with a statement of the benefits to the customer. In some proposals, the headings "Problem" and "Solution" are used for this section.

COST ANALYSIS. A cost analysis itemizes the estimated cost of all the products and services that you are offering.

DELIVERY SCHEDULE. The delivery schedule—also called a *work plan*—commits you to a specific timetable for providing those products and services.

SITE PREPARATION. If your recommendations include modifying your customer's physical facilities by moving walls, adding increased electrical capacity, and the like, include a site-preparation description that details the modifications required. In some proposals, the headings "Facilities" and "Equipment" are used for this section.

TRAINING. If the products and services you are proposing require training the customer's employees, specify the required training and its cost.

RESPONSIBILITIES. To prevent misunderstandings about what your and the customer's responsibilities will be, draw up a statement of responsibilities that explains in detail the tasks that are solely your responsibility and those that are solely the customer's responsibility.

VENDOR DESCRIPTION. The description-of-vendor section gives a profile of your company, its history, and its present position in the industry. The description-of-vendor section typically includes a list of people

The Waters Corporation
17 North Waterloo Blvd.
Tampa, Florida 33607
Phone: (813) 919-1213 Fax: (813) 919-4411
www.waters.com

September 10, 2015

Mr. John Yeung, General Manager
Cookson's Retail Stores, Inc.
101 Longuer Street
Savannah, Georgia 31499

Dear Mr. Yeung:

The Waters Corporation appreciates the opportunity to respond to Cookson's Request for Proposals dated July 20, 2015. We thank Mr. Becklight, Director of your Management Information Systems Department, for his invaluable contributions to the study of your operations that we conducted before preparing our proposal.

Our proposal describes a Waters Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System designed to meet Cookson's network and processing needs. It will provide all of your required capabilities, from point-of-sale operations at the store terminals to the host processor. The system uses the proven Retail III modular software, with its point-of-sale applications, and the superior Interactive Terminal, with its advanced capabilities and design. This system is easily installed without extensive customer reprogramming.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (Cover Letter)

Mr. J. Yeung
Page 2
September 10, 2015

The Waters Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System, which is compatible with much of Cookson's present equipment, not only will meet your present requirements but will provide the flexibility to add new features and products. The system's unique hardware modularity, efficient microprocessor design, and flexible programming capability greatly reduce the risk of obsolescence.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this proposal. You may be sure that we will use all the resources available to the Waters Corporation to ensure the successful implementation of the new system.

Sincerely yours,

Janet A. Curtain

Janet A. Curtain
Executive Account Manager
General Merchandise Systems
(jcurtain@waters.com)

Enclosure: Proposal

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Cover Letter)

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Waters 319 Interactive Terminal / 615 Retail Processor System will provide your management with the tools necessary to manage people and equipment more profitably with procedures that will yield more cost-effective business controls for Cookson's.

The equipment and applications proposed for Cookson's were selected through the combined effort of Waters and Cookson's Management Information Systems Director, Mr. Becklight. The architecture of the system will respond to your current requirements and allow for future expansion.

The features and hardware in the system were determined from data acquired through the comprehensive survey we conducted at your stores in July of this year. The total of 71 Interactive Terminals proposed to service your four store locations is based on the number of terminals currently in use and on the average number of transactions processed during normal and peak periods. The planned remodeling of all four stores was also considered, and the suggested terminal placement has been incorporated into the working floor plan. The proposed equipment configuration and software applications have been simulated to determine system performance based on the volumes and anticipated growth rates of the Cookson's stores.

The information from the survey was also used in the cost justification, which was checked and verified by your controller, Mr. Deitering. The cost-effectiveness of the Waters Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System is apparent. Expected savings, such as the projected 46 percent reduction in sales audit expenses, are realistic projections based on Waters's experience with other installations of this type.

Waters has a proven track record of success in the manufacture, installation, and servicing of retail business information systems stretching over decades. The system we propose will extend and strengthen our successful and long-term partnership with Cookson's.

– 1 –

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Executive Summary)

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

GENERAL SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The point-of-sale system that Waters is proposing for Cookson's includes two primary Waters products: the 319 Interactive Terminal and the 615 Retail Processor.

Waters 319 Interactive Terminal
The primary component in the proposed retail system is the Interactive Terminal. It contains a full microprocessor, which gives it the flexibility that Cookson's has been seeking.

The 319 Interactive Terminal provides freedom in sequencing a transaction. Users are not limited to a preset list of available steps or transactions. The terminal program can be adapted to provide unique transaction sets, each designed with a logical sequence of entry and processing to accomplish required tasks. In addition to sales transactions recorded on the selling floor, specialized transactions such as theater-ticket sales and payments can be designed for customer-service areas.

The 319 Interactive Terminal also functions as a credit authorization device, either by using its own floor limits or by transmitting a credit inquiry to the 615 Retail Processor for authorization.

Data-collection formats have been simplified so that transaction editing and formatting are much more easily accomplished. The IS manager has already been provided with documentation on these formats and has outlined all data-processing efforts that will be necessary to transmit the data to your current systems. These projections have been considered in the cost justification.

Waters 615 Retail Processor
The Waters 615 Retail Processor is a minicomputer system designed to support the Waters family of retail terminals. The . . .

[*The proposal next describes the Waters 615 Retail Processor before moving on to the detailed solution section.*]

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (General Description of Products)

PAYROLL APPLICATION

Current Procedure
Your current system of reporting time requires each hourly employee to sign a time sheet; the time sheet is reviewed by the department manager and sent to the Payroll Department on Friday evening. Because the week ends on Saturday, the employee must show the scheduled hours for Saturday and not the actual hours; therefore, the department manager must adjust the reported hours on the time sheet for employees who do not report on the scheduled Saturday or who do not work the number of hours scheduled.

The Payroll Department employs a supervisor and three full-time clerks. To meet deadlines caused by an unbalanced workflow, an additional part-time clerk is used for 20 to 30 hours per week. The average wage for this clerk is $13.00 per hour.

Advantage of Waters's System
The 319 Interactive Terminal can be programmed for entry of payroll data for each employee on Monday morning by department managers, with the data reflecting actual hours worked. This system would eliminate the need for manual batching, controlling, and data input. The Payroll Department estimates conservatively that this work consumes 40 hours per week.

Hours per week	40
Average wage (part-time clerk)	× 13.00
Weekly payroll cost	$520.00
Annual savings	$27,040

Elimination of the manual tasks of tabulating, batching, and controlling can save 0.25 hourly unit. Improved workflow resulting from timely data in the system without data-input processing will allow more efficient use of clerical hours. This would reduce payroll by the 0.50 hourly unit currently required to meet weekly check disbursement.

Eliminate manual tasks	0.25
Improve workflow	0.75
40-hour unit reduction	1.00
Hours per week	40
Average wage (full-time clerk)	15.00
Savings per week	$600.00
Annual savings	$31,200

TOTAL SAVINGS: $58,240

– 5 –

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Detailed Solution)

P

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

COST ANALYSIS

This section of our proposal provides detailed cost information for the Waters 319 Interactive Terminal and the Waters 615 Retail Processor. It then multiplies these major elements by the quantities required at each of your four locations.

319 Interactive Terminal

Equipment	Price	Maint. (1 yr.)
Terminal	$2,895	$167
Journal Printer	425	38
Receipt Printer	425	38
Forms Printer	525	38
Software	220	—
TOTALS	$4,490	$281

[*The cost section goes on to describe other costs to install the system before summarizing the costs.*]

The following table summarizes all costs.

Location	Hardware	Maint. (1 yr.)	Software
Store No. 1	$72,190	$4,975	$3,520
Store No. 2	89,190	6,099	4,400
Store No. 3	76,380	5,256	3,740
Store No. 4	80,650	5,537	3,960
Data Center	63,360	6,679	12,480
Subtotals	$381,770	$28,546	$28,100

TOTAL $438,416

DELIVERY SCHEDULE

Waters normally delivers 319 Interactive Terminals and 615 Retail Processors within 30 days of the date of the contract. Upon Cookson's acceptance of this proposal, Waters will submit a specific timeline for the completion of the installation.

All the software recommended in this proposal is available for immediate delivery. We do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting your tentative delivery schedule.

– 8 –

P

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Cost Analysis and Delivery Schedule)

SITE PREPARATION

Waters will work closely with Cookson's to ensure that each site is properly prepared prior to system installation. Cookson's is responsible for all building alterations and electrical facility changes, including the purchase and installation of communications cables, connecting blocks, and receptacles.

Wiring

For the purpose of future site considerations, Waters's in-house wiring specifications for the system call for two twisted-pair wires and twenty-two shielded gauges. The length of communications cables must not exceed 2,500 feet.

As a guide for the power supply, we suggest that Cookson's consider the following:

1. The branch circuit (limited to 20 amps) should service no equipment other than 319 Interactive Terminals.
2. Each 20-amp branch circuit should support a maximum of three Interactive Terminals.
3. Each branch circuit must have three equal-size conductors—one hot leg, one neutral, and one insulated isolated ground.
4. Hubbell IG 5362 duplex outlets or the equivalent should be used to supply power to each terminal.
5. Server-room wiring will have to be upgraded to support the 615 Retail Processor.

You will receive a copy of Waters's installation and wiring procedures manual, which lists the physical dimensions, service clearance, and weight of the system components in addition to the power, logic, communications cable, and environmental requirements.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Site Preparation)

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

TRAINING

To ensure a successful installation, Waters offers the following training course for your operators.

Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor Operations
Course number: 8256
Length: three days
Tuition: $500

This course provides the student with the skills, knowledge, and practice required to operate an Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System. Online, clustered, and stand-alone environments are covered.

We recommend that students have a department-store background and that they have some knowledge of the system configuration.

– 10 –

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Training)

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

RESPONSIBILITIES

On the basis of its years of experience in installing information-processing systems, Waters believes that a successful installation requires a clear understanding of certain responsibilities.

Waters's Responsibilities
Generally, Waters will provide its users with needed assistance during the installation so that live processing can begin as soon after installation as is practical. The following items describe our specific responsibilities:

- Provide operations documentation for each application that you acquire from Waters.
- Provide forms and other supplies as ordered.
- Provide specifications and technical guidance for proper site planning and installation.
- Provide adviser assistance in the conversion from your present system to the new system.

Cookson's Responsibilities
Cookson's will be responsible for the suggested improvements described earlier, as well as the following:

- Identify an installation coordinator and system operator.
- Provide supervisors and clerical personnel to perform conversion to the system.
- Establish reasonable time schedules for implementation.
- Ensure that the physical site requirements are met.
- Provide personnel to be trained as operators and ensure that other employees are trained as necessary.
- Implement and operate the system.

– 11 –

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Statement of Responsibilities)

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

DESCRIPTION OF VENDOR

The Waters Corporation develops, manufactures, markets, installs, and services total business information-processing systems for selected markets. These markets are primarily in the retail, financial, commercial, industrial, health-care, education, and government sectors.

The Waters total-system concept encompasses one of the broadest hardware and software product lines in the industry. Waters computers range from small business systems to powerful general-purpose processors. Waters computers are supported by a complete spectrum of terminals, peripherals, and data-communication networks, as well as an extensive library of software products. Supplemental services and products include data centers, field service, systems engineering, and educational centers.

The Waters Corporation was founded in 1934 and currently has approximately 26,500 employees. The Waters headquarters is located at 17 North Waterloo Boulevard, Tampa, Florida, with district offices throughout the United States and Canada.

WHY WATERS?

Strong Commitment to the Retail Industry
Waters's commitment to the retail industry is stronger than ever. We are continually striving to provide leadership in the design and implementation of new retail systems and applications that will ensure our users of a logical growth pattern.

Dynamic Research and Development
Waters has spent increasingly large sums on research and development to ensure the availability of products and systems for the future. In 2014, our research-and-development expenditure for advanced systems design and technological innovations reached the $70-million level.

Leading Point-of-Sale Vendor
Waters is a leading point-of-sale vendor, having installed more than 150,000 units. The knowledge and experience that Waters has gained over the years from these installations ensure well-coordinated and effective systems implementations.

– 12 –

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Vendor Description and Organizational Sales Pitch)

The Waters Proposal September 10, 2015

CONCLUSION

Waters welcomes the opportunity to submit this proposal to Cookson's. The Waters Corporation is confident that we have offered the right solution at a competitive price. Based on our hands-on analysis, our proposal takes into account your current and projected workloads and your plans to expand your facilities and operations. Our proposal will also enable Cookson's to minimize future employee costs and to enhance its accounting features.

Waters has a proven track record of success in the manufacture, installation, and servicing of retail business information systems stretching over many decades. We also have a demonstrated record of success in our past business associations with Cookson's. We believe that the system we propose will extend and strengthen this partnership.

Should you require additional information about this proposal, please contact Janet A. Curtain, who will meet with you or arrange for Waters's technical staff to meet with you.

We look forward to your decision and to continued success in our working relationship with Cookson's.

– 13 –

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Conclusion)

P

or subcontractors and the duties they will perform. The **résumés** of key personnel may also be placed here or in an appendix.

SALES PITCH. An organizational sales pitch usually follows the description-of-vendor section and is designed to sell the company and its general capability in the field. The sales pitch promotes the company and concludes the proposal on an upbeat note.

CONCLUSION. Some long sales proposals include a **conclusion** section that summarizes the proposal's salient points, stresses your company's strengths, and includes information about whom the potential client can contact for further information. It may also end with a request for the date the work will begin should the proposal be accepted.

APPENDIXES. Some proposals include **appendixes** made up of statistical analyses, maps, charts, tables, and résumés of the principal staff assigned to the project. Appendixes to proposals should contain only supplemental information; the primary information should appear in the body of the proposal.

pseudo- / quasi-

As a **prefix**, *pseudo-*, meaning "false or counterfeit," is joined to the root word without a **hyphen** unless the root word begins with a capital letter (*pseudo*science, *pseudo*-Newtonian). *Pseudo-* is sometimes confused with *quasi-*, meaning "somewhat" or "partial." Unlike *semi-*, *quasi-* means "resembling something" rather than "half." *Quasi-* is usually hyphenated in combinations (*quasi*-scientific theories). See also **bi- / semi-**.

punctuation

Punctuation helps **readers** understand the meaning and relationships of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Marks of punctuation link, separate, enclose, indicate omissions, terminate, and classify. Most punctuation marks can perform more than one function. See also **sentence construction**.

The use of punctuation is determined by grammatical conventions and the writer's intention. Understanding punctuation is essential for writers because it enables them to communicate with **clarity** and precision. See also **grammar**.

Detailed information on each mark of punctuation is given in its own entry. The following are the 13 marks of punctuation.

apostrophe	'	**parentheses**	( )
brackets	[ ]	**period**	.
colon	:	**question mark**	?
comma	,	**quotation marks**	" "
dash	—	**semicolon**	;
exclamation mark	!	**slash**	/
hyphen	-		

See also **abbreviations**, **capitalization**, **contractions**, **dates**, **ellipses**, **italics**, and **numbers**.

purpose

What do you want your **readers** to know, to believe, or to do when they have read your document? When you answer that question about your **audience**, you have determined the primary purpose, or objective, of your document. Be careful not to state a purpose too broadly. A statement of purpose such as "to explain continuing-education standards" is too general to be helpful during the writing process. In contrast, "to explain to the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) members how to determine if a continuing-education course meets AACN professional standards" is a specific purpose that will help you focus on what you need your document to accomplish. Often the **context** will help you focus your purpose.

The writer's primary purpose is often more complex than simply "to explain" something, as shown in the previous paragraph. To fully understand this complexity, you need to ask yourself not only *why* you are writing the document but also *what* you want to influence your reader to believe or to do after reading it. Suppose a writer for a **newsletter** has been assigned to write an article about cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In answer to the question *what?* the writer could state the purpose as "to emphasize the importance of CPR." To the question *why?* the writer might respond, "to encourage employees to sign up for evening CPR classes." Putting the answers to the two questions together, the writer's purpose might be stated as, "To write a document that will emphasize the importance of CPR and encourage employees to sign up for evening CPR classes." Note that the primary purpose of this document is to persuade the readers of the importance of CPR, and the secondary goal is to motivate them to register for a class. Secondary goals often involve such abstract notions as to motivate, to persuade, to reassure, or to inspire your reader. See also **persuasion**.

If you answer the questions *what?* and *why?* and put the answers into writing as a stated purpose that includes both primary and secondary goals, you will simplify your writing task and more likely achieve your purpose. For a **collaborative writing** project, it is especially important to collectively write a statement of your purpose to ensure that the document achieves its goals. Do not lose sight of that purpose as you become engrossed in the other steps of the writing process. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

Q

question marks

The question mark (?) most often ends a sentence that is a direct question or request.

- ▶ Where did you put the specifications? [direct question]
- ▶ Will you e-mail me if your shipment does not arrive by June 10? [request]

Use a question mark to end a statement that has an interrogative meaning—a statement that is declarative in form but asks a question.

- ▶ The lab report is finished? [question in declarative form]

Question marks may follow a series of separate items within an interrogative sentence.

- ▶ Do you remember the date of the contract? Its terms? Whether you signed it?

Use a question mark to end an interrogative clause within a declarative sentence.

- ▶ It was not until July (or was it August?) that we submitted the report.

Retain the question mark in a title that is being cited, even though the sentence in which it appears has not ended.

- ▶ *Can Quality Be Controlled?* is the title of her book.

Never use a question mark to end a sentence that is an indirect question.

- ▶ He asked me where I put the specifications~~?~~.

When a question is a polite request or an instruction to which an affirmative response is assumed, a question mark is not necessary.

- ▶ Will you call me as soon as he arrives. [polite request]

When used with **quotations**, the placement of the question mark is important. When the writer is asking a question, the question mark belongs outside the **quotation marks**.

▸ Did she actually say, "I don't think the project should continue"?

If the quotation itself is a question, the question mark goes inside the quotation marks.

▸ She asked, "Do we have enough funding?"

If both cases apply—the writer is asking a question and the quotation itself is a question—use a single question mark inside the quotation marks.

▸ Did she ask, "Do we have enough funding?"

questionnaires

A questionnaire is a series of questions on a particular topic sent to a targeted group of individuals in an easy-to-tabulate form. It may be distributed on paper, as an **e-mail** attachment, or as an online digital form. As you prepare a questionnaire, keep in mind your **purpose** and your intended **audience**. See also **interviewing for information** and **research**.

Questionnaires have several advantages over the personal interview as well as several disadvantages.

ADVANTAGES

- A questionnaire allows you to gather information from more people than you could by conducting personal interviews.
- A questionnaire enables you to obtain responses from people who are difficult to reach or who are in various geographic locations.
- When responding to a questionnaire, people have more time to think through their answers than when they are faced with the pressure of composing thoughtful and complete answers to an interviewer in person.
- The questionnaire may yield more objective data than an interview because it reduces the possibility that the interviewer's tone of voice, facial expressions, or mere presence might influence an answer.
- The cost of distributing and tabulating a questionnaire is lower than the cost of conducting numerous personal interviews.

DISADVANTAGES

- The results of a questionnaire may be slanted in favor of those people who have strong opinions on a subject because they are more likely to respond than those with only moderate views.
- The questionnaire does not allow specific follow-up questions to answers; at best, it can be designed to let one question lead logically to another.
- Distributing questionnaires and waiting for replies may take considerably longer than conducting personal interviews.

A sample cover e-mail message with a link to an online questionnaire is shown in Figure Q–1. The e-mail message and questionnaire were sent to employees in a large organization who had participated in a six-month pilot program of flexible working hours.

Selecting the Recipients

Selecting the proper recipients for your questionnaire is crucial if you are to gather representative and usable data. If you wanted to survey the opinions of large groups in the general population—for example, all medical technologists working in private laboratories or all independent garage owners—your task would not be easy. Because you cannot include everybody in your survey, you need to choose a representative cross section. Depending on the topic, you may need to include people from different geographic areas, people of both genders, and people with different educational backgrounds. Only by using a representative sample of your target population can you make a generalized statement based on your findings from the sample. (The best sources of information on sampling techniques are market-research and statistics texts.)

Preparing the Questions

Keep the questionnaire as brief as possible. The longer a questionnaire is, the less likely the recipient will be to complete and return it. Ask questions that are easy to understand; confusing questions will yield confusing results. Ideally, recipients should be able to answer most questions with a "yes" or "no" or by checking or circling a choice among several options. Such answers are easy to tabulate and require minimum effort on the part of the respondent, thus increasing your chances of obtaining a response. For advice on whether to use a paper or digital format, see **forms**. For help with designing online surveys as well as collecting and analyzing the results, visit such sites as surveymonkey.com and surveygizmo.com.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Questions should be neutral; they should not be worded in such a way as to lead respondents to give a particular answer, which can result in inaccurate or skewed data.

LEADING Would you prefer the freedom of a four-day workweek?

NEUTRAL Would you choose to work a four-day workweek, ten hours a day, with every Friday off? ❖

Send Cancel Save Draft Add Attachment Signature Options

TO All Heartland Employees

CC Show BCC

FROM Nelson Barrett

Subject Questionnaire on Flextime Pilot Program

questionnaire.pdf Download

We'd like to hear from you about our recent flextime pilot program. The pilot will run through September 27, 2015, and we want to know how it's affecting you. Your answers will help us decide whether to make the program permanent. All responses will be confidential and given serious consideration.

Please complete and submit the questionnaire by **October 1, 2015**. You can access the questionnaire at the link below:

hhc.com/internal/quest/ftpp.php

If you have any questions, please contact Pam Biggers in Human Resources at pb2@hhc.com.

We will announce our decision October 30, 2015, on the future of the program.

Thanks for your help,

Nelson Barrett

Nelson Barrett, Director
Human Resources Department
Heartland Healthcare
Phone and Fax: 555-328-7878
nb@hhc.com | www.hhc.com

FIGURE Q–1. Questionnaire (Cover E-mail Message)

Questionnaire

Heartland Healthcare **Flexible Working Hours Program**

Questionnaire

1. **What kind of position do you occupy?**
   - ☐ Supervisory
   - ☐ Nonsupervisory

2. **Indicate to the nearest quarter of an hour when you begin work under flextime.**
   - ☐ 7:00 a.m.
   - ☐ 7:15 a.m.
   - ☐ 7:30 a.m.
   - ☐ 7:45 a.m.
   - ☐ 8:00 a.m.
   - ☐ 8:15 a.m.
   - ☐ 8:30 a.m.
   - ☐ 8:45 a.m.
   - ☐ 9:00 a.m.
   - ☐ Other (specify) ______

3. **Where do you live?**
   - ☐ Talbot County
   - ☐ Montgomery County
   - ☐ Greene County
   - ☐ Other (specify) ______

4. **How do you usually travel to work?**
   - ☐ Drive alone
   - ☐ Bus
   - ☐ Train
   - ☐ Bicycle
   - ☐ Walk
   - ☐ Carpool
   - ☐ Motorcycle
   - ☐ Other (specify) ______

5. **How has flextime affected your commuting time?**
   - ☐ Increase: Approximate number of minutes ______
   - ☐ Decrease: Approximate number of minutes ______
   - ☐ No change

6. **If you drive alone or in a carpool, has flextime increased or decreased the amount of time it takes you to find a parking space?**
   - ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

7. **How has flextime affected your productivity?**
   a. Quality of work
   - ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

   b. Accuracy of work
   - ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

   c. Quiet time for uninterrupted work
   - ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

8. **Have you had difficulty contacting coworkers who are on different schedules from yours?**
   - ☐ Yes ☐ No

FIGURE Q–1. Questionnaire (*continued*)

Questionnaire

9. Have you had trouble scheduling meetings within flexible starting and quitting times?

☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Has flextime affected the way you feel about your job?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please answer (a) or (b):

a. Feel better about job

☐ Slightly ☐ Considerably

b. Feel worse about job

☐ Slightly ☐ Considerably

11. How important is it for you to have flexibility in your working hours?

☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not at all

12. Has flextime allowed you more time to be with your family?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

13. If you are responsible for the care of a young child or children, has flextime made it easier or more difficult for you to arrange babysitting or day-care services?

☐ Easier ☐ More difficult ☐ No change ☐ N/A

14. Do you recommend that the flextime program be made permanent?

☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Please describe below any changes you recommend for the program.

Back Submit

Thank you for your assistance.

FIGURE Q–1. Questionnaire (*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Designing a Questionnaire

- ✔ Prepare a **cover letter** (**memo** or e-mail) or an introductory message explaining who you are, the questionnaire's purpose, the date by which you need a response, and how and where to send the completed questionnaire.
- ✔ Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you are using regular mail.
- ✔ Use check-box and other easy-to-answer-and-tabulate questions — avoid or limit questions that force respondents to compose answers.
- ✔ Include a section on the questionnaire for additional comments where the recipient may clarify his or her overall attitude toward the subject.
- ✔ Include questions about the respondent's demographics (such as age, gender, education, occupation) only if such information will be of value in interpreting the answers.
- ✔ State whether the information provided as well as the recipient's identity will be kept confidential.
- ✔ Include your contact information (mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address) and be sure to thank respondents for participating.
- ✔ Consider offering some tangible appreciation — such as a copy of the results or, for a customer questionnaire, a credit toward a future purchase — to those who answer the questionnaire by a specific date.

quid pro quo

Quid pro quo is Latin for "one thing for another" or "this for that" in a relationship between two groups or individuals. The term may be appropriate to business and legal contexts if you are sure your **readers** understand its meaning. ("Before approving the plan, we insisted on a fair *quid pro quo*.") See also **foreign words in English**.

quotation marks

Quotation marks (" ") are used to enclose a direct quotation of spoken or written words. Quotation marks have other special uses, but they should not be used for **emphasis**.

Direct Quotations

Enclose in quotation marks anything that is quoted word for word (a direct quotation) from speech or written material.

▸ The contract was explicit: “Monthly deliverables for the duration of this contract are due by close of business on the last workday of each month.”

Do not enclose indirect quotations—usually introduced by the word *that*—in quotation marks. Indirect quotations are paraphrases of a writer’s or speaker’s words or ideas. See also **paraphrasing**.

▸ The contract stated that deliverables are due the last workday of each month.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** When you use quotation marks to indicate that you are quoting word for word, do not make any changes or omissions inside the quoted material unless you clearly indicate what you have done. For further information on incorporating quoted material and inserting comments, see **plagiarism** and **quotations**. ❖

Use single quotation marks (‘ ’) to enclose a quotation that appears within a quotation.

▸ John said, “Jane told me that she was going to ‘stay with the project if it takes all year.’ ”

Words and Phrases

Use quotation marks to set off special words or terms only to point out that the term is used in context for a unique or special purpose (that is, in the sense of the term *so-called*).

▸ A remarkable chain of events caused the sinking of the “unsinkable” *Titanic* on its maiden voyage.

Slang, colloquial expressions, and attempts at humor, although infrequent in workplace writing, should seldom be set off by quotation marks.

shakedown cruise.

▸ Our first six months amounted to a ~~“shakedown cruise.”~~

Titles of Works

Use quotation marks to enclose **titles** of reports, short stories, articles, essays, single episodes of radio and television programs, and short musical works (including songs). However, do not use quotation marks for titles of books and periodicals, which should appear in **italics**.

▸ “Effects of Government Regulations on Motorcycle Safety” [report] cited “No-Fault Insurance and Motorcycles” [article] published in *American Motorcyclist* [periodical].

Use quotation marks for parts of publications, such as chapters of books and sections within larger works.

- "Microbusiness Economic Trends: Into the Future" [article] appeared in *Small Business Trends* (smallbiztrends.com) [blog].

Some titles are not set off by quotation marks, italics, or underlining, although they are capitalized.

- Professional Writing [college course title], the Constitution, the Bible, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Lands' End Catalog

Punctuation

Commas and **periods** always go inside closing quotation marks.

- "Reading *Computer World* gives me the insider's view," he says, adding, "It's like a conversation with the top experts."

Semicolons and **colons** always go outside closing quotation marks.

- He said, "I will pay the full amount"; this statement surprised us.

All other punctuation follows the logic of the context: If the punctuation is part of the material quoted, it goes inside the quotation marks; if the punctuation is not part of the material quoted, it goes outside the quotation marks.

quotations

Q

Using direct and indirect quotations is an effective way to support a point and strengthen the credibility of your writing. But do not rely too heavily on the use of quotations and avoid quoting anything that is longer than one paragraph.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** When you use a quotation (or an idea of another writer), cite your source properly. If you do not, you will be guilty of **plagiarism**. See also **note-taking** and **research**. ❖

Direct Quotations

A direct quotation is a word-for-word copy of the text of an original source. Choose direct quotations (which can be of a word, a phrase, a sentence, or, occasionally, a paragraph) carefully and use them sparingly. Enclose direct quotations in **quotation marks** and separate them from the rest of the sentence by a **comma** or **colon**. Use the initial capital letter of a quotation if the quoted material originally began with a capital letter.

- The dean of the medical college stated, "We must attract more students to careers in geriatric medicine in order to meet the health-care needs of older Americans."

When dividing a quotation, set off the material that interrupts the quotation with commas, and use quotation marks around each part of the quotation.

- "We must attract more students to careers in geriatric medicine," he said in a recent interview, "in order to meet the health-care needs of older Americans."

Indirect Quotations

An indirect quotation is a paraphrased version of an original text. It is usually introduced by the word *that* and is not set off from the rest of the sentence by punctuation marks. See also **paraphrasing**.

- In an interview, he said *that* recruiting medical students to geriatrics is essential to meeting the health-care demands of older Americans.

Deletions or Omissions

Deletions or omissions from quoted material are indicated by three ellipsis points (. . .) within a sentence and a period plus three ellipsis points (. . . .) at the end of a sentence. See **ellipses**.

- "If monopolies could be made to respond . . . we would be able to enjoy the benefits of . . . large-scale efficiency. . . ."

When a quoted passage begins in the middle of a sentence rather than at the beginning, ellipsis points are not necessary; the fact that the first letter of the quoted material is not capitalized tells the reader that the quotation begins in midsentence.

Q

- Rivero goes on to conclude that "the Research and Development Center is essential to keeping high-tech companies in the state."

In omitting material, be careful to not change the author's original meaning, which would be unethical as well as inaccurate.

Inserting Material into Quotations

When it is necessary to insert a clarifying comment within quoted material, use **brackets**.

- "The industry is an integrated system that serves an extensive [geographic] area, with divisions existing as islands within the larger system's sphere of influence."

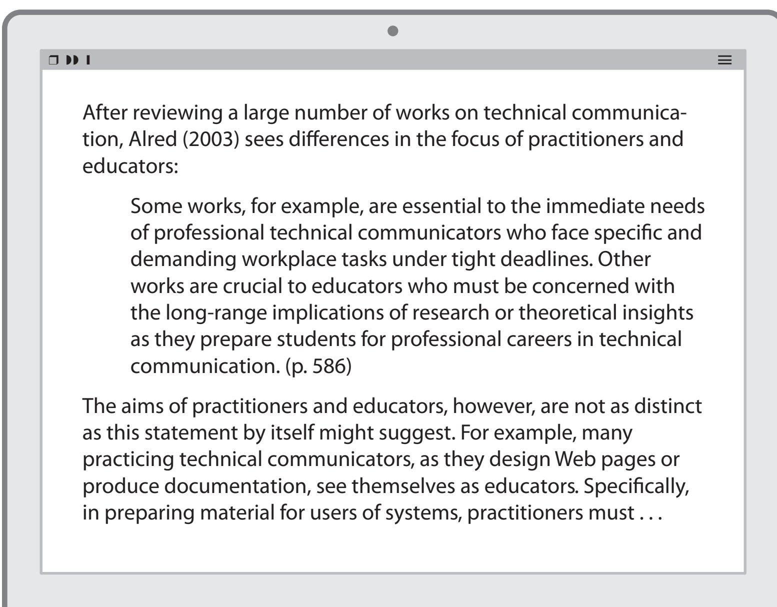
When quoted material contains an obvious error or might be questioned in some other way, insert the expression *sic* (Latin for "thus") in italic type and enclose it in brackets ([*sic*]) following the questionable material to indicate that the writer has quoted the material exactly as it appeared in the original.

- The contract states, "Tinted windows will be installed to protect against son [*sic*] damage."

Incorporating Quotations into Text

Quote word for word only when a source with particular expertise states something that is especially precise, striking, or noteworthy, or that may reinforce a point you are making. Quotations must also logically, grammatically, and syntactically match the rest of the sentence and surrounding text. Notice in Figure Q–2 that the quotation blends with the content of the surrounding text, which uses **transition** to introduce and comment on the quotation.

Depending on the citation system, the style of incorporating quotations varies. For examples of two different styles, see **documenting sources**. Figure Q–2 shows APA style for a long quotation.



After reviewing a large number of works on technical communication, Alred (2003) sees differences in the focus of practitioners and educators:

> Some works, for example, are essential to the immediate needs of professional technical communicators who face specific and demanding workplace tasks under tight deadlines. Other works are crucial to educators who must be concerned with the long-range implications of research or theoretical insights as they prepare students for professional careers in technical communication. (p. 586)

The aims of practitioners and educators, however, are not as distinct as this statement by itself might suggest. For example, many practicing technical communicators, as they design Web pages or produce documentation, see themselves as educators. Specifically, in preparing material for users of systems, practitioners must . . .

FIGURE Q–2. Long Quotation (APA Style)

R

raise / rise

Both *raise* and *rise* mean "move to a higher position." However, *raise* is a transitive **verb** and always takes an **object** ("*raise* crops"), whereas *rise* is an intransitive verb and never takes an object ("heat *rises*").

readers

The first rule of effective writing is to *help your readers*. If you overlook this commitment, your writing will not achieve its **purpose**, either for you or for your business or organization. For meeting the needs of both individual and multiple readers, see **audience**.

really

Really is an **adverb** meaning "actually" or "in fact." Although both *really* and *actually* are often used as **intensifiers** for **emphasis** or sarcasm in speech, avoid such use in formal and professional writing.

- ▸ Did he ~~really~~ finish the report on time?

reason is [because]

Replace the redundant phrase *the reason is because* with *the reason is that* or simply *because*. See also **conciseness**.

reference letters

Writing a reference (or recommendation) letter can range from completing an online form to composing a detailed description (see Figure R–1) of professional accomplishments and personal characteristics for someone

City of Springfield
Legislative Reference Bureau
200 East Main Street
Springfield, AK 99501
(414) 224-5555

January 12, 2015

Mr. Phillip Lester
Human Resources Director
Thompson Enterprises
201 State Street
St. Louis, MO 63102

Dear Mr. Lester:

How long writer has known applicant and the circumstances

As Kerry Hawkin's former employer, I am happy to recommend her for the research position at Thompson Enterprises. I've known Kerry for five years, first as an intern in our office and for two years as a full-time research associate. This past year she has remained in contact as she completed graduate school.

Outstanding characteristics of applicant

Our office is the official research arm for the Springfield City Council, so we approved Kerry as an intern not only because of her outstanding grades but also because the university internship coordinator reported that she possessed excellent research skills. Kerry proved her worth in our office as an intern and was offered a full-time position under my supervision. I found Kerry not only to be a careful researcher but also to be capable of completing her assignments on schedule within tight deadlines. Her well-written reports met the requirements for our work and more. During her employment here, Kerry also proved herself to be a valued colleague.

Recommendation and summary of qualifications

I strongly recommend Kerry for her ability to work independently, to organize her time efficiently, and to write clearly and articulately. I regret that we have no position to offer her at this time. Please let me know if I can provide further information.

Sincerely yours,

Michelle Paul

Michelle Paul, Manager
mpaul@springfield.ak.gov

www.springfield.ak.gov

FIGURE R–1. Reference Letter (Printed on Letterhead Stationery)

R

seeking employment. In Figure R–1, a former employer has written a letter for someone seeking an advanced position as a researcher.

To write an effective letter of recommendation, you must be familiar enough with the applicant's abilities and performance to offer an evaluation. Keep in mind the following:

- Identify yourself by name, title or position, employer, and contact information.
- Explain the circumstances and how long you have known the applicant, as in Figure R–1.
- Respond directly to the inquiry, carefully addressing the specific questions asked.
- Describe specifically the applicant's skills, abilities, knowledge, and character, guided by the person's **résumé** when possible.
- Communicate truthfully and without embellishment.

Mention, providing as much evidence as possible, one or two outstanding characteristics of the applicant. Organize the details in your letter using the decreasing **order-of-importance method of development**. Conclude with a brief summary of the applicant's qualifications and a clear statement of recommendation. See **correspondence** for letter format and general advice.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** When you are asked to serve as a reference or to supply a letter of reference, be aware that applicants have a legal right to examine what you have written about them, unless they sign a waiver. ❖

refusal letters

R

A refusal delivers a negative message (or bad news) in the form of a **letter**, a **memo**, or an **e-mail**. The ideal refusal says "no" in such a way that you not only avoid antagonizing your reader but also maintain goodwill. See also **audience**.

The refusal in Figure R–2 declines an invitation to speak at a meeting, and the stakes for the writer are relatively low; however, the writer wishes to acknowledge the honor of being asked.

When the stakes are high, you must convince your reader that the bad news is *based on reasons that are logical or at least understandable* (see also **correspondence**). Stating a negative message in your opening may cause readers to react too quickly and dismiss your explanation. The following pattern, used in Figure R–3, is an effective way to handle this problem:

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: Javier Lopez <jlopez@tnco.com>

CC:

Show BCC

Subject: Speaking Invitation

Dear Mr. Lopez:

I am honored to have been invited to address your regional meeting in St. Louis on May 17. That you would consider me as a potential contributor to such a gathering of experts is indeed flattering.

Positive context

On checking my schedule, I find that I will be attending the annual meeting of our parent corporation's Board of Directors on that date. Therefore, as much as I would enjoy addressing your members, I must decline.

Review of facts and refusal

I have always admired your organization's contributions to the engineering profession, and I would welcome the opportunity to participate in a future meeting.

Goodwill closing with option

Sincerely,

Ralph P. Morgan

Ralph P. Morgan, Research Director
Watashaw Engineering Company
301 Industrial Lane, Decatur, IL 62525
Phone: (708) 222-3700 wec.com

FIGURE R–2. Refusal with Low Stakes

R

1. *Context*. In the opening, introduce the subject, but do not provide irrelevant information or mislead the reader that good news may follow.
2. *Explanation*. Review the facts or details that lead logically to the bad news, trying to see things from your reader's point of view. See **"you" viewpoint**.
3. *Bad news*. State your refusal or negative message, based on the facts, concisely and without apology.
4. *Goodwill*. In the closing, establish or reestablish a positive relationship by providing an alternative if possible, assure the reader of your high opinion of his or her product or service, offer a friendly remark, or simply wish the reader success.

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: Marsha Coleman <mc2@ntr.com>

CC:

Show BCC

Subject: NTR Check Sorter

Dear Ms. Coleman:

Context

Thank you for your cooperation and your patience with us as we struggled to reach a decision. We believe our long involvement with your company indicates our confidence in your products.

Review of facts

Based on our research, we found that the Winton Check Sorter has all the features that your sorter offers and, in fact, has two additional features that your sorter does not. Most important is a backup function that retains totals in its memory, even if the power fails. The second additional feature is stacked pockets, which are less space-consuming than the linear pockets on your sorter.

Refusal

For these reasons, we have decided to purchase the Winton Check Sorter.

Goodwill close

We were generally impressed with your proposal and your staff. We will certainly consider other NTR products in the future.

Sincerely,

Nancy Nygaard

FIGURE R–3. Refusal with High Stakes

Your opening should provide an appropriate **context** and establish a professional **tone** by, for example, expressing appreciation for a reader's time, effort, or interest.

▶ The Screening Procedures Committee appreciates the time and effort you spent on your proposal for a new security-clearance procedure.

Next, review the circumstances of the situation sympathetically by placing yourself in the reader's position. Clearly detail the reasons you cannot do what the reader wants—even though you have not yet said you cannot do it. A good explanation should ideally detail the reasons for your refusal so thoroughly that the reader will accept the negative message as a logical conclusion, as shown in the following example:

▸ We reviewed the potential effects of implementing your proposed security-clearance procedure company-wide. We not only asked the Security Systems Department to review the data but also surveyed industry practices, sought the views of senior management, and submitted the idea to our legal staff. As a result of this process, we have reached the following conclusions:
  - The cost savings you project are correct only if the procedure could be required throughout the company.
  - The components of your procedure are legal, but most are not widely accepted by our industry.
  - Based on our survey, some components could alienate employees who would perceive them as violating an individual's rights.
  - Enforcing company-wide use would prove costly and impractical.

Do not belabor the negative message—state your refusal quickly, clearly, and as positively as possible.

▸ For those reasons, the committee recommends that divisions continue their current security-screening procedures.

Close your message in a way that reestablishes goodwill—do not repeat the bad news. (Avoid writing "Again, we are sorry we cannot use your idea.") Ideally, provide an alternative, as in the following:

▸ Because some components of your procedure may apply in certain circumstances, we would like to feature your ideas in the next issue of *The Guardian*. I have asked the editor to contact you next week. On behalf of the committee, thank you for the thoughtful proposal.

For responding to a complaint, see **adjustment letters**. For refusing a job offer, see **acceptance / refusal letters**.

R

regarding / with regard to

In regards to and *with regards to* are incorrect **idioms** for *in regard to* and *with regard to*. Both *as regards* and *regarding* are acceptable variants.

regard

▸ In ~~regards~~ to your last question, I think a meeting is a good idea.

Regarding
- ~~With regards to~~ your last question, I think a meeting is a good idea.

regardless

Always use *regardless* instead of the nonstandard *irregardless*, which expresses a **double negative**. The prefix *ir-* renders the base word negative, but *regardless*—meaning "unmindful"—is already negative.

repetition

The deliberate use of repetition to build a sustained effect or to emphasize a feeling or an idea can be a powerful device. See also **emphasis**.

- Similarly, atoms *come and go* in a molecule, but the molecule *remains*; molecules *come and go* in a cell, but the cell *remains*; cells *come and go* in a body, but the body *remains*; persons *come and go* in an organization, but the organization *remains*.
  —Kenneth Boulding, *Beyond Economics*

Repetition of keywords from a previous sentence or paragraph can also be used effectively to achieve **transition**.

- For many years, *oil* has been a major industrial energy source. However, *oil* supplies are limited, and other sources of energy must be developed.

Be consistent in the word or phrase you use to refer to something. In technical writing, it is generally better to repeat a word or use a clear **pronoun reference** (so readers know that you mean the same thing) than to use **synonyms** to avoid repetition. See also **affectation**.

R

SYNONYMS	Several recent *analyses* support our conclusion. These *studies* cast doubt on the feasibility of long-range forecasting. The *reports*, however, are strictly theoretical.
CONSISTENT TERMS	Several recent *studies* support our conclusion. These *studies* cast doubt on the feasibility of long-range forecasting. *They* are, however, strictly theoretical.

Purposeless repetition, however, makes a sentence awkward and hides its key ideas. See also **conciseness**.

- She said that the customer ~~said that he~~ was canceling the order.

reports

A report is an organized presentation of factual information, often aimed at multiple **audiences** that may present the results of an investigation, a trip, or a research project. For any report, assessing the readers' needs is essential. Following is a list of report entries in this book:

feasibility reports 186
formal reports 196
incident reports 255
investigative reports 290
laboratory reports 308
progress and activity reports 417
test reports 544
trip reports 556

Formal reports often present the results of long-term projects or those that involve multiple participants. (See also **collaborative writing**.) Formal reports generally follow a precise format and include such elements as **abstracts** and **executive summaries**. Such projects may be done either for your own organization or as a contractual requirement for another organization. See also **proposals**.

Informal and short reports normally run from a few paragraphs to a few pages and ordinarily include only an **introduction**, a body, a **conclusion**, and (if necessary) recommendations. Because of their brevity, informal reports are customarily written as **correspondence**, including **e-mails**, **letters**, and **memos**.

The introduction of any report announces the subject of the report, states its **purpose**, and gives any essential background information. The body presents a clearly organized account of the report's subject—the results of a test, the status of a project, and other details readers may need. The amount of detail to include depends on your reader's knowledge, your **scope**, and the complexity of the subject.

The conclusion summarizes your findings and interprets their significance for readers. In some reports, a final, separate section gives recommendations; in others, the conclusions and the recommendations are combined into one section. This final section makes suggestions for a course of action based on the data you have presented. See also **persuasion**.

R

repurposing

Repurposing is the copying or converting of existing content, such as written text and **visuals**, from one document or medium into another for a different **purpose**.* For example, if you are preparing a promotional

*The reuse of standard texts or content in technical publications is often referred to as "single-source publishing" or simply "single sourcing." Traditionally, such reuse of standard texts has been referred to as "boilerplate."

brochure, you may be able to reuse material from a product **description** that is currently published on your organization's Web site. The brochure might then be printed or placed on the Web site for downloading. See also **selecting the medium**.

In the workplace, this process saves time because content that often requires substantial effort to develop need not be re-created for each new application. The process of repurposing may be as simple as copying and pasting content from one document into another or as complex as automatically formatting and updating multiple documents, such as brochures and Web sites, through a **content management** system.

Content can be repurposed exactly as it is written only if it fits the **scope**, **audience**, and purpose of the new document. If the content alters these areas, you must adapt that content to fit its new **context**, as described in the following sections.

Repurpose for the Context

Staying focused on the purpose of your new document is critical, especially when repurposing content between different media. If you are writing a sales **proposal**, for example, and you only need to describe the **specifications** for a product, it may be useful to repurpose the specification list from your organization's Web site. However, the purpose of the Web site content may be *to inform* customers about your products, whereas the purpose of a proposal is *to persuade* customers to buy your products. To effectively use the repurposed content in your proposal, you may need to adapt the **tense**, **voice**, **tone**, **grammar**, and **point of view** to make the repurposed content more persuasive and fit within the context of a sales proposal.

Repurpose for the Medium

R

The proper **style** and **format** of content written for a specific medium, such as a brochure or fact sheet, may not work as effectively when repurposed for a different medium, such as a Web site. Solid blocks of text may be easy to read in a brochure, but Web readers often need blocks of text to be separated into bulleted **lists** or very short paragraphs because readers process information differently when reading on a screen. Adapt the **layout and design** of the repurposed content as appropriate to accommodate your reader's needs for the medium. See also **writing for the Web**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** In the workplace, repurposing content within an organization does not violate **copyright** because an organization owns the information it creates and can share it across the company. Likewise, a writer in an organization may use and repurpose material in the public domain and, with proper attribution, content that is licensed under Creative Commons (see http://creativecommons.org/about).

In the classroom, of course, the use of content or someone else's unique ideas without acknowledgment or the use of someone else's exact words without **quotation marks** and appropriate credit is **plagiarism**. ❖

requests for proposals

When a company or another organization needs a task performed or a service provided outside its staff expertise or capabilities, it seeks help from vendors. The company seeking help usually makes its requirements known by issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for vendors to evaluate and decide whether to bid on the project.

Although RFPs lay out an organization's requirements, they usually do not specify how these requirements are to be met.* Potential vendors prepare **proposals** to describe their solutions for meeting an RFP's requirements.

RFP Structure

Like proposals, RFPs vary in length and structure. The scope of information and even the terminology used will vary with the task or service being solicited. The **purpose** and **context** of RFPs also vary because each involves unique legal, budgetary, confidentiality, and administrative considerations.

Information About Your Company. One section should describe your company's mission, goals, size, facility locations, and position in the marketplace, as well as provide your company's contact information. This section parallels the "Description of Vendor" section in proposals (see Figure P–8, page 446).

R

Project Description. Another section, sometimes called "Scope of Work" or "Workscope Description," describes the deliverable (the project or service) you need, with a detailed list of requirements. Requirements can be described in a summary statement, as shown in the following examples:

- The project deliverable will be a questionnaire to be mailed to approximately 400 adults regarding their consumer experiences with various health-care providers. . . .

*A related document is an invitation for bids (IFB). An IFB specifically defines the quantity, type, and specifications for an item that an organization intends to purchase.

▶ The deliverable will be a networked online forms package for approximately 1,200 employees, enabling information to be completed online, stored in a database, routed via e-mail, and printed on paper. The package shall be integrated into the company's current network environment at its headquarters. . . .

The project description may also indicate whether the deliverable must be created new or obtained commercially and adapted to the project's needs, as for software development. This section can also specify other details, such as a project-management plan and any warranty or liability requirements.

Delivery Schedule. For complex projects lasting a month or longer, specify the time allotted for the project and a proposed schedule of tasks.

Proposal Description. An RFP may provide format requirements; number of copies expected; due date; and where, to whom, and how (such as by registered mail or courier service) a proposal should be sent. If an electronic file is required, some firms include an electronic template.

Vendor Qualifications. Most RFPs request a summary of the vendor's experience and may require references from recent customers. Often RFPs request the vendor's professional certifications, number of employees, years in business, quality-control procedures, awards and honors, and the résumés of the principal employees assigned to the project.

Proposal-Evaluation Criteria. The proposal-evaluation section informs vendors of the firm's selection criteria. Vendors may select a firm solely on cost, cost and vendor past performance, or technical expertise. Some firms grade proposals with a point system on a scale of 100 or 1,000 total points, as in the following sample:

▶ Proposal-Evaluation Criteria

CRITERIA	POINTS
Administrative	50
Technical	700
Management	100
Price	100
Presentation and demonstration	50
Total	**1,000**

R

Appendixes. Some RFPs include one or more appendixes or "Attachments" for sample forms and questionnaires, a sample contract, a company's server and workstation configurations, workflow-analysis diagrams, dates and times when vendors can visit the work site before finalizing their proposals, and other essentials too detailed for the body of the RFP.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** If your RFP contains any company-confidential information, you could include a legally binding nondisclosure statement for vendors to sign before you send the full RFP. Many companies also include a guarantee not to open proposals before the due date and never to disclose information in one vendor's proposal to a competing vendor. ❖

research

DIRECTORY

Primary Research 473
Secondary Research 474
Library Research Strategies 474
Web Research Strategies 477
Writer's Checklist: Using Search Engines and Keywords 477
Evaluating Sources 478
Writer's Checklist: Evaluating Print and Online Sources 479

Research is the process of investigation—the discovery of information. To be focused, research must be preceded by **preparation**, especially consideration of your **audience**, **purpose**, and **scope**. Effective **note-taking** is essential for a coherent **organization** that strategically integrates your own ideas, supporting facts, and any well-selected **quotations** into an effective draft and final document. See also **documenting sources**, **outlining**, and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

In an academic setting, your preparatory resources include conversations with your fellow students, instructors, and reference librarians, as well as searches on the Internet. On the job, your main resources are your own knowledge and experience and that of your colleagues. In the workplace, the most important sources of information may also include **test reports**, **laboratory reports**, **questionnaires**, and the like. In this setting, begin by **brainstorming** with colleagues about what sources will be most useful to your topic and how you can find them.

Primary Research

Primary research is the gathering of raw data from such sources as firsthand experience, interviews, direct observation, surveys and questionnaires, experiments, **meetings**, and the like. In fact, direct observation and interaction are often the only ways to obtain certain kinds of information on such topics as human or animal behavior, certain natural phenomena, and the operation of systems and equipment. You can also conduct primary online research by participating in discussion groups and online forums and by e-mailing requests for information to specific audiences. When conducting primary research, focus on keeping accurate, complete records that indicate date, time of day, observation duration, and so on, saving interpretations for a later time. See also **blogs and forums**, **interviewing for information**, and **listening**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** If you conduct research that involves observation or a questionnaire at your university or college, ask your instructor whether your methods or questions are appropriate, whether you may need to file an application with your school's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the best way to obtain permission from your study subjects. ❖

Secondary Research

Secondary research is the gathering of information that has been previously analyzed, assessed, evaluated, compiled, or otherwise organized into accessible form. Sources include books, articles, online documents, audio and video recordings, podcasts, **correspondence**, **minutes of meetings**, **brochures**, and various **reports**. The following two sections—Library Research Strategies and Web Research Strategies—provide methods for finding secondary sources.

Recent periodicals and newspapers—as well as academic (.edu in the U.S.), government (.gov), and frequently updated corporate Web sites—can be good sources of current information and can include the latest published interviews, articles, papers, and conference proceedings. See *Writer's Checklist: Evaluating Print and Online Sources* (page 479).

When a resource seems useful, read it carefully and take notes that include additional questions about your topic. Some of your questions may eventually be answered in other sources; those that remain unanswered can guide you to further research, both primary and secondary. See **paraphrasing** and **plagiarism**.

Library Research Strategies

The library provides organized paths into scholarship and specialized resources—such as subscription-only databases, indexes, catalogs, and directories—that are not accessible through standard Web searches. The first step in using library resources, either in an academic institution or in a workplace, is to develop a search strategy appropriate to the information needed for your topic. Begin by asking a reference librarian for help (in person or by phone, live chat, or e-mail) to find the best print or online resources for your topic—a brief conversation can focus your research and save you time. In addition, use your library's homepage for access to its catalogs and various databases.

Your search strategy depends on the kind of information you are seeking. For example, if you need the latest data offered by government research, check the Web, as described later in this entry. Likewise, if you need a current scholarly article on a topic, search an online database (such as EBSCOhost's Academic Search Premier) subscribed to by your library. For an overview of a subject, you might turn to an encyclopedia; for historical background, your best resources are books, journals, and primary documents (such as a labor contract).

DIGITAL TIP

Storing Search Results

Databases offer various ways to save your results. You may be able to save your searches and note-taking within the database itself by creating a personal account, by sending selected references and full-text articles to an e-mail account, or by exporting them to citation-management software, such as RefWorks, Evernote, or Zotero. These programs allow you to build your own database of references from multiple sources, sort them into folders, and generate **bibliographies** in the format of your choice. Database search tools will vary from library to library, so contact a reference librarian for usage guidance at your library. To view a tutorial on tracking sources with Evernote and Zotero, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Storing Search Results."

Online Catalogs (Locating Library Holdings). An online catalog allows you to search a library's holdings, indicates an item's location and availability, and may allow you to arrange an interlibrary loan.

You can search a library's online catalog by author, title, keyword, or subject. The most common ways of searching for a specific topic are by subject or by keyword. If your search turns up too many results, you can usually narrow it by using the "limit search" or "advanced search" option.

Online Databases and Indexes (Locating Articles). Most libraries subscribe to online databases that are available only through a login to the library's Web site:

- *EBSCOhost's Academic Search Premier*: a large multidisciplinary database, providing full text for nearly 4,500 periodicals, including more than 7,400 abstracted and indexed peer-reviewed journals

- *Gale's Expanded Academic ASAP*: a large database covering general-interest and scholarly journals plus business, law, and health-care publications (many in full text)
- *ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)*: a U.S. Department of Education database providing access to journals and reports in education
- *JSTOR*: a full-text, archival collection of journals in humanities, social sciences, and sciences
- *LexisNexis Academic*: a collection of databases that is particularly strong for news, business, legal, and corporate and financial information (most articles in full text) as well as congressional, statistical, and government resources

These databases, sometimes called *periodical indexes*, are excellent resources for articles published within the last 10 to 20 years. Many include descriptive abstracts and full texts of articles. To find older articles, you may need to consult a print index, such as the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *New York Times Article Archive*, both of which have been digitized and may be available in some libraries.

Reference Works. In addition to articles, books, and online sources, you may want to consult reference works such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and manuals for a brief overview of your subject. Ask your reference librarian to recommend works and bibliographies that are most relevant to your topic. Many are available online and can be accessed through your library's homepage.

ENCYCLOPEDIAS. Encyclopedias are comprehensive collections of articles arranged alphabetically. Some cover a wide range of subjects, while others—such as *The Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Ferguson, 2010)—focus on specific areas. The free online encyclopedia Wikipedia is a useful starting point for your research, but keep in mind that users continually update entries (with varying degrees of expert oversight).

DICTIONARIES. Specialized dictionaries define terms used in a particular field, such as computer science, architecture, or consumer affairs, and they offer detailed definitions of field-specific terms, usually written in straightforward language.

HANDBOOKS AND MANUALS. Handbooks and manuals are typically one-volume compilations of frequently used information in a particular field. They offer brief definitions of terms or concepts, standards for presenting information, procedures for documenting sources, and **visuals** to illustrate principles.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES. Bibliographies list books, periodicals, and other research materials published in areas such as business, medicine, the humanities, and the social sciences.

GENERAL GUIDES. The *Guide to Reference* at www.guidetoreference.org can help you locate reference books, indexes, and other research materials.

OTHER LIBRARY RESOURCES. Many libraries offer special kinds of research information. For example, a library may provide access to data that can be downloaded into statistical packages, such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for manipulation. Others offer GIS (geographic information systems) software that links data to spatial information, allowing the researcher to create detailed maps that show factors such as income, ethnicity, or purchasing habits.

Web Research Strategies

The Web varies widely in its completeness and accuracy, so you need to evaluate Internet sources critically by following the advice in *Writer's Checklist: Evaluating Print and Online Sources* (page 479).

Search Engines. Search engines use words or combinations of words that you specify to locate the documents or files that contain one or more of these words in their titles, descriptions, or text. Common search engines include Google, Bing, and Yahoo! Some search engines have specialized interfaces for searching academic texts (scholar.google.com).

As comprehensive as search engines and directories may seem, none is complete or objective, and they carry only a preselected range of content. Some, for example, may not index PDF files or Usenet newsgroups, and many cannot index databases and other non–HTML-based content. Search engines rank the sites they believe will be relevant to your search based on a number of different criteria. Although search engines vary in what and how they search, you can navigate them all with some basic strategies, described in the following *Writer's Checklist*.

R

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Search Engines and Keywords

✔ Check any search tips available in the engine you use and consider any additional search phrases the search engine may suggest.

✔ Enter precise keywords and phrases that are specific to your topic, such as *nuclear power* rather than only the term *nuclear*, which would also yield listings for *nuclear family*, *nuclear medicine*, and hundreds of other unrelated topics.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Search Engines and Keywords** (*continued*)

- ✔ Try several search engines to get more varied results. Remember that search engines may sell high rankings to advertisers and therefore may not rank as highly the pages most relevant to your search.
- ✔ Consider using a metasearch engine, such as Dogpile (www.dogpile.com), which displays results from multiple search engines.
- ✔ Refine and narrow your terms as you evaluate the results of each search.

Web Subject Directories. A subject directory, such as http://dir.yahoo.com, organizes information by broad subject categories (business, entertainment, health, sports) and related subtopics (marketing, finance, investing). A subject-directory search eventually produces a list of specific sites that contain information about the topics you request. Other directories can help you to conduct selective, scholarly research on the Web:

Infomine	http://infomine.ucr.edu
IPL2	www.ipl.org
The WWW Virtual Library	www.vlib.org

Some directories and sites are devoted to specific subject areas, such as the following resources for researching science and technology topics:

CIO's Resource Centers	www.cio.com (use search function)
National Science Foundation	www.nsf.gov
IEEE Spectrum Online	www.spectrum.ieee.org
LSU Libraries Federal Agency Directory	www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/index.html
FedStats	www.fedstats.gov

R

AOL operates a special contributor-generated directory referred to as an "Open Directory" (http://dmoz.org).

Evaluating Sources

The easiest way to ensure that information is valid is to obtain it from a reputable source. For online sources, be especially concerned about the validity of the information provided. Because anyone can publish on the Web, it is sometimes difficult to determine authorship of a document, and frequently a person's qualifications for speaking on a topic are absent or questionable. The online versions of established, reputable journals in medicine, management, engineering, computer software, and the like, merit the same level of trust as the printed versions. The following domain abbreviations may help you determine an Internet site sponsor, but only a few (such as .edu and .gov) restrict who can register a Web site with a given domain:

.aero	aerospace industry	.pro	professionals
.biz	business	.mil	U.S. military
.com	company or individual	.name	individual
.coop	business cooperative	.net	company or individual
.edu	educational institution	.org	nonprofit organization
.gov	U.S. government	.info	general use

As you move away from established, reputable sites, exercise more caution. Be especially wary of unmoderated Web sites where the author or source cannot be determined. Collectively generated Web sites, such as Wikipedia, often make no guarantee of the validity of information on their sites.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Evaluating Print and Online Sources

Keep in mind the following four criteria when evaluating sources: authority, accuracy, bias, and currency.

FOR ALL SOURCES

- ✔ Is the resource up to date and relevant to your topic? Is it readily available?
- ✔ Who is the intended audience? Is it the mainstream public? A small group of professionals?
- ✔ Who is the author(s)? Is the author(s) an authority on the subject?
- ✔ Does the author(s) provide enough supporting evidence and document sources so that you can verify the information's accuracy?
- ✔ Is the information presented in an objective, unbiased way? Are any biases made clear? Are opinions clearly labeled? Are viewpoints balanced, or are opposing opinions acknowledged?
- ✔ Are the language, tone, and style appropriate and cogent?

FOR A BOOK

- ✔ Does the preface or introduction indicate the author's or book's purpose?
- ✔ Does the table of contents relate to your topic? Does the index contain terms related to your topic?
- ✔ Are the chapters useful? Skim through one chapter that seems related to your topic — notice especially the introduction, headings, and closing.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Evaluating Print and Online Sources** (*continued*)

FOR AN ARTICLE

✔ Is the publisher of the magazine or other periodical well known?

✔ What is the article's purpose? For an academic article, read the abstract; for a newspaper article, read the headline and opening sentences.

✔ Does the article contain informative diagrams or other visuals that indicate its scope?

FOR A WEB SITE

✔ Does a reputable individual, group, or organization sponsor or maintain the site?

✔ Are the purpose and scope of the site clearly stated? Check the "Mission Statement" or "About Us" pages. Does the site carry any disclaimers?

✔ Is the site updated and current? Are the links functional and up to date?

✔ Is the documentation authoritative and credible? Check the links to other sources and cross-check facts at other reputable Web sites, such as academic ones.

✔ Is the site well designed? Is the material well written and error free?

resignation letters

Resignation **letters** (or **memos**), as shown in Figures R–4 and R–5, should be as positive as possible, regardless of the reason you are leaving a job. As in a **refusal letter**, a resignation offers the opportunity to establish a record of positive performance that can benefit your career in the long term.

You usually write a resignation letter to your supervisor or to an appropriate person in the Human Resources Department. Use the following guidelines:

R

- Start on a positive note, regardless of the circumstances under which you are leaving.
- Consider pointing out how you have benefited from working for the company or say something complimentary about the company.
- Comment on something positive about the people with whom you have been associated.
- Explain why you are leaving in an objective, factual tone.
- Avoid angry recriminations because your resignation will remain on file with the company and could haunt you in the future should you need references.

Home address

227 Kenwood Drive
Austin, TX 78719
January 6, 2015

R. W. Johnson, Director of Metallurgy
Hannibal Laboratories
1914 East 6th Street
Austin, TX 78702

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Positive opening

My three years at Hannibal Laboratories have been an invaluable period of learning and professional development. I arrived as a novice, and I believe that today I am a professional—primarily as a result of the personal attention and tutoring I have received from my superiors and the fine example set by both my superiors and my peers.

Reason for leaving

However, the time has come for me to move on to a company that can give me an opportunity to continue my professional development. Therefore, I have accepted a position with Procter & Gamble, where I am scheduled to begin on February 2. Thus, my last day at Hannibal will be January 20. I will be happy to train my replacement during the next two weeks.

Positive closing

Many thanks for the experience I have gained and best wishes for the future.

Sincerely,

J. L. Washburne

J. L. Washburne

FIGURE R–4. Resignation Letter (to Accept a Better Position)

Your letter or memo should give enough notice to allow your employer time to find a replacement. It might be no more than two weeks or it might be enough time to enable you to train your replacement. Some organizations may ask for a notice equivalent to the number of weeks of vacation you receive. Check the policy of your employer before you begin your letter.

The sample resignation letter in Figure R–4 is from an employee who is leaving to take a job offering greater opportunities. The memo of resignation in Figure R–5 is written by an employee who is leaving because

MEMORANDUM

To: T. W. Haney, Vice President, Administration
From: L. R. Rupp LRR
Date: February 13, 2015
Subject: Resignation from Winterhaven, effective March 2, 2015

Positive opening

My five-year stay with the Winterhaven Company has been a pleasant experience, and I believe that it has been mutually beneficial.

Reason for leaving

Because of the recent restructuring of my job, I have accepted a position with another company that will offer me greater advancement opportunities. I am, therefore, submitting my resignation, effective on March 2.

Positive closing

I have enjoyed working with my coworkers at Winterhaven and wish the company success in the future.

FIGURE R–5. Resignation Memo (Under Negative Conditions)

her position has been reclassified and her supervisor has not supported her advancement, but no personal conflict is mentioned. Notice that it opens and closes positively and that the reason for the resignation is stated without apparent anger or bitterness. For strategies concerning negative messages, see **correspondence**.

respective / respectively

Respective is an **adjective** that means "pertaining to two or more things regarded individually." ("The cultures were returned to their *respective* incubators.") *Respectively* is the adverb form of *respective*, meaning "singly, in the order designated."

- The first, second, and third engineering design award winners were Maria Juarez, Dan Wesp, and Simone Luce, *respectively*.

Respective and *respectively* are unnecessary if the meaning of individuality is clear.

▶ ~~The~~ *Each* committee ~~members~~ *member* prepared ~~their respective reports.~~ *a report.*

restrictive and nonrestrictive elements

Modifying **phrases** and **clauses** may be either restrictive or nonrestrictive. A *nonrestrictive phrase or clause* provides additional information about what it modifies, but it does not restrict the meaning of what it modifies. A nonrestrictive phrase or clause can be removed without changing the essential meaning of the sentence. It is a parenthetical element that is set off by **commas** to show its loose relationship with the rest of the sentence.

NONRESTRICTIVE This instrument, *which is called a backscatter gauge*, fires beta particles at an object and counts the particles that bounce back.

A *restrictive phrase or clause* limits, or restricts, the meaning of what it modifies. If it were removed, the essential meaning of the sentence would change. Because a restrictive phrase or clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence, it is never set off by commas.

RESTRICTIVE All employees *wishing to donate blood* may take Thursday afternoon off.
[Removing the restrictive element (in italics) changes the meaning.]

Writers need to distinguish between nonrestrictive and restrictive elements. The same sentence can take on two entirely different meanings, depending on whether a modifying element is set off by commas (because it is nonrestrictive) or is not (because it is restrictive). A slip by the writer can not only mislead **readers** but also embarrass the writer.

MISLEADING He gave a poor performance evaluation to the staff members who protested to the Human Resources Department.
[This suggests he gave the poor evaluation because the staff members had protested.]

ACCURATE He gave a poor performance evaluation to the staff members, who protested to the Human Resources Department.
[This suggests that the staff members protested because of the poor evaluation.]

Use *which* to introduce nonrestrictive clauses and *that* to introduce restrictive clauses.

NONRESTRICTIVE	Web 2.0 technology, *which* allows users to create and share content, differs from the "user as consumer of content" model of Web 1.0.
RESTRICTIVE	Companies *that* diversify usually succeed.

résumés

DIRECTORY

Sample Résumés 485
Analyzing Your Background 485
Returning Job Seekers 495
Organizing Your Résumé (Sections) 496
Digital Formats and Media 500

A résumé is a key component of an effective **job search** and the foundation for your **application cover letter**. Prospective employers use the information in the résumé and application cover letter to screen applicants and select candidates for the interview process. During a job interview, the content of your résumé and application cover letter can provide the interviewer with a guideline for developing specific questions. See also **interviewing for a job**.

Because résumés affect a potential employer's first impression, make sure that yours is well organized, carefully designed, consistently formatted, easy to read, and free of errors. Most important, target your résumé to the specific job so that the employer can easily see that you are a perfect fit. Organize the résumé in a way that highlights your strengths and fits your goals, as suggested by the examples shown in this entry. Your résumé* should be concise, but the length should depend on your credentials, skills, and abilities that are a compelling match to the particular position. **Proofreading** is essential—verify the accuracy of the information and have someone else review it.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Be truthful. The consequences of giving false information in your résumé are serious. Many employers use outside agencies to regularly check references and stated experience, automatically rejecting applicants with résumés that are even slightly inaccurate or embellished. If you are hired based on false information, you may later be dismissed or even face a lawsuit for the deception. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

*A detailed résumé for someone in an academic or a scientific area is often called a *curriculum vitae* (also *vita* or *c.v.*). It may include education, publications, projects, grants, and awards, as well as a full work history. Outside the United States, the term *curriculum vitae* is often used to mean *résumé*.

Sample Résumés

The sample résumés in this entry provide starting points that you can use to tailor your résumé to your own job search. Before you design and write your résumé, look at as many samples as possible, and then organize and format your own to best highlight your strengths, present your professional goals, and make the most persuasive case to your target employers. See also **persuasion**.

- Figure R–6 presents a conventional student résumé in which the student is seeking an entry-level position.
- Figure R–7 shows a résumé with a variation in the design and placement of conventional headings to highlight professional credentials.
- Figure R–8 presents a résumé for a recent graduate with a format that is appropriately nonconventional for the purpose of demonstrating the student's skill in graphic design. This résumé matches the application cover letter in Figure A–8.
- Figure R–9 depicts a résumé that incorporates a tagline and focuses on the applicant's management experience. A *tagline* is a short quotation summarizing your reasons for seeking a certain position. This résumé matches the application letter in Figure A–10.
- Figure R–10 reflects the résumé of a candidate seeking to switch career fields. It uses a job title and immediately states a goal, followed by credentials.
- Figure R–11 illustrates how an applicant can organize a résumé by combining functional and chronological elements.

Analyzing Your Background

In preparing to write your résumé, determine what kind of job you are seeking. Rarely can you construct a one-size-fits-all résumé: Potential employers will all look for something different, and you will gain increasingly diverse experiences as you progress in your career. You may benefit from preparing a few résumés with different emphases, and you may need to create a unique résumé for a single position, using the language of a particular job description as your guide. Review your credentials and consider the following as you gather information:

- Schools you attended, degrees you hold, your major field of study, academic honors you were awarded, your grade point average, selected academic projects that reflect your best work; continuing education; conferences or seminars you have attended

Ana María López

Campus Address	Home (after June 2015)
148 University Drive	Laurel, Pennsylvania 17322
Bloomington, Indiana 47405	(717) 399-2712
(812) 652-4781	LinkedIn.com/in/amlopez
aml@iu.edu	aml@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene, expected June 2015
Indiana University

Licensure: August 2014
Grade Point Average: 3.88 out of possible 4.0
ADA Guzman Honors
Minor: Management Information Systems

DENTAL EXPERIENCE

Northpoint Dental Associates, Bloomington, Indiana, 2014
Dental Assistant, Summer and Fall Quarters
Developed office and laboratory management system.

Rodriguez Dental Associates, Bloomington, Indiana, 2013
Dental Assistant Intern
Prepared patients for exams; processed X-rays; maintained patient treatment records.
Associate Editor, *Community Health Newsletter*, 2012–2013
Wrote articles on good dental health practices; researched community health needs for editor; edited submissions.

COMPUTER PROFICIENCIES

Software: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Lotus
Hardware: Macintosh, IBM-PC
Medical: Magnus Patient Database System, Dentrix

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

Smile Power Student Volunteer (Summer 2012, 2013): Helped provide dental care, supplies, and education about disease prevention to underserved populations in rural Louisiana and Mississippi.

R

FIGURE R–6. Student Résumé (for an Entry-Level Position)

CHRIS RENAULT, RN, ACLS, BSN

LinkedIn.com/in/chrisrenaultrn
Phoenix, AZ 67903 • (555) 555-5555 • chrisrenault@somedomain.com

Reliable, compassionate, and competent RN seeking medical-surgical position

Dedicated Registered Nurse routinely praised for strengths in patient relations; clinical knowledge; collaboration with interdisciplinary health-care teams; chart accuracy; and ability to treat assorted illnesses, injuries, and medical emergencies.

Education & Nursing Credentials

UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX– Phoenix, AZ

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), 2015 — Graduated summa cum laude (GPA: 3.9)

Associate Degree in Nursing (AN), 2012 — Graduated cum laude (GPA: 3.5)

LICENSURE & CERTIFICATIONS

RN License (AZ), 4/2013 • **ACLS**, 1/2014 • **IV Practice**, 8/2014 • **CPR**, 8/2014

AFFILIATIONS

ANA (Arizona Nurses Association) • **ANA** (American Nursing Association)

Professional Experience–Clinical Rotations

- Earned excellent marks on evaluations throughout clinical rotations in diverse practice areas. Participated in activities including patient assessment, treatment, medication disbursement, and surgical preparation as a member of the health-care team.
- Preceptor Comments: "*Chris has an excellent ability to interact with patients and their families, showing a high degree of empathy, medical knowledge, and concern for quality and continuity of patient care.*"

ROTATIONS SUMMARY

Surgery/Internal Medicine	ABC Hospital: Core Telemetry/Medical-Surgical
Emergency Medicine	ABC Hospital: Emergency Department
Cardiology	GHI Medical Center: Cardiac Telemetry
Oncology	ABC General Hospital: Oncology Department
Long-Term Care	XYZ Skilled-Care Unit
Orthopedics	ABC Hospital: Orthopedic Center
Pediatrics	DEF Hospital: Pediatrics Unit
Rehabilitative Medicine	ABC Hospital: Health Rehabilitation Center

Volunteerism

Active Volunteer, The American Cancer Society, Scottsdale, AZ Chapter, 2012 to Present

Participant, *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer* walks, 2014, 2015

FIGURE R–7. Résumé (Highlighting Professional Credentials)

JG

CREATIVE GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Digital, Print, and Web skills with Marketing, Museum, and Client Experience in Fast-Paced Settings

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Designer • Dyer/Khan, Los Angeles, California
Summer 2013, Summer 2014
Assistant Designer in a versatile design studio. Responsible for design, layout, comps, mechanicals, and project management.
Clients: Paramount Pictures, Mattel Electronics, and Motown Records.

Photo Editor • Paramount Pictures Corporation, Los Angeles, California
Summer 2012
Photo Editor for merchandising department. Established art files for movie and television properties. Edited images used in merchandising. Maintained archive and database.

Production Assistant • Grafis, Los Angeles, California
Summer 2011
Production Assistant at fast-paced design firm. Assisted with comps, mechanicals, and miscellaneous studio work.
Clients: ABC-TV, A&M Records, and Ortho Products Division.

Joshua S. Goodman
LinkedIn.com/in/joshuasgoodman
412-555-1212
jgoodman@gmail.com
www.gooddesign.com

EDUCATION

RCS School of Design
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
BFA in Graphic Design — May 2015

Graphic Design
Corporate Identity
Industrial Design
Graphic Imaging Processes
Color Theory
Computer Graphics
Typography
Serigraphy
Photography
Video Production

SKILLS

Adobe Creative Cloud and Creative Suite (esp. Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign), JavaScript, QuarkXPress, MapEdit (Image Mapping), Micromedia Dreamweaver, Adobe Flash Professional, Microsoft Access/Excel, XML, HTML, iGrafx, CorelDRAW

ACTIVITIES

Museum Docent and Design Assistant, Lee Collection
Member, Pittsburgh Graphic Design Society

R

FIGURE R–8. Recent Graduate Résumé (for Graphic Design Job)

ROBERT MANDILLO
Dayton, OH 45424 • 555.555.1212 • mandillo@somedomain.com
Connect on LinkedIn: LinkedIn.com/in/robertmandillomba
Design Portfolio: www.robertmandillomba.com

QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

Quality-driven mechanical engineering manager whose tenure with Exhibit Design Lab has been distinguished by exemplary-rated performance and proven results. Developer of next-generation exhibit design solutions that have led to increased leads and sales. Qualifications reinforced by strong aptitudes in reliability engineering, system troubleshooting, and Lean Six Sigma principles.

EXPERIENCE

MANAGER, EXHIBIT DESIGN LAB — May 2008–Present
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, OH

- Managed production of 1,200+ exhibit designs throughout tenure, supervising a team of 11 technicians in support of engineering exhibit design and production.
- Coordinate all phases of exhibit installations from initial concept and development of technical drawings to construction, installation, and fabrication of models.
- Ensure the attainment of manufacturing goals and compliance with safety standards.
- Negotiate with vendors and procure materials and supplies for exhibit design support.

SUPERVISOR, GRAPHICS ILLUSTRATORS — June 2005–April 2008
Henderson Advertising Agency, Cincinnati, OH

- Led team to create original design themes, layouts, and graphics for marketing materials, television commercials, videos, and Web sites.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised a team of five illustrators and four drafting mechanics.
- Established strong vendor-partner relationships, competitive rates, and detailed schedules that elevated quality and increased turnaround time.

FIGURE R–9. Résumé (Applicant with Management Experience) (*continued*)

R

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration (MBA), 2014
University of Dayton (Dayton, OH)

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (BSME), 2005
Edison State College (Wooster, OH)

AFFILIATIONS

American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)
National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE)

SKILLS

Rapid Prototyping • SolidWorks • Product Development • Machining • Product Design • CAD Manufacturing • Engineering • Simulations • Plastics • Sheet Metal • LabVIEW Procurement & Supply-Chain Management • Pressure Vessel Internals • R&D

FIGURE R–9. Résumé (Applicant with Management Experience) (*continued*)

Linda H. Granger

lhg.granger@gmail.com
(206) 577-8869 / (206) 656-3324

Sun Valley Heights, VA 20109
LinkedIn.com/ni/lhgranger

Information Technology / Security Specialist

Seeking to build an exciting career in law enforcement with a focus on the application of Information Technology (IT) / Information Security (INFOSEC).

- Application Design / System Analysis
- Testing / Implementation / Integration
- Program / Project Development
- Business Policies / Procedures
- Customer / Client Service
- Dynamic Team Building / Leadership

Education

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Sun Valley University, VA, May 2014

Internship / Professional Experience

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), Arlington, VA *June–Sept. 2014*
Volunteer — Computer, Financial, Intelligence Division

- Accepted into highly selective, competitive FLETC College Intern Summer Program
- Analyzed, evaluated, assessed performance or operating methodology of forensic software
- Assisted law-enforcement staff and instructors with office support in efforts to advance the mission of the FLETC
- Participated in and observed basic-training classes and activities designed to develop and promote the growth of future law-enforcement candidates

Board of Education, Forrest Hills, VA *Sept. 2012–June 2014*
Instructor / Substitute Teacher

- Provided an educational foundation designed to enable K–12 students to develop confidence, self-direction, and a lifelong interest in learning
- Fostered the development of communication, citizenship, and personal growth

Award / Recognition

SUPERB ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT – FORENSIC DATA HUB
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center

FIGURE R–10. Résumé (Experienced Applicant Seeking Career Change)

R

CAROL ANN WALKER

1436 West Elm St. • Sometown, PA 00000 • (555) 555-5555
caw@somedomain.com • LI: LinkedIn.com/in/carolannwalker
Twitter Handle: @carolannwalker

Award-Winning Financial Analyst

- Senior financial analyst offering proven success enhancing P&L scenarios by millions of dollars.
- Excellent analytical capabilities, with an expert foundation in statistics, financial modeling, and complex financial/business/variance analysis.
- Backed by solid credentials, industry honors, and a history of delivering goal-surpassing results.

Financial Analyst of the Year, 2014

Recipient of national award from the Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR)

Areas of Expertise

- Financial Analysis & Planning
- Forecasting & Trend Projection
- Trend/Variance Analysis
- Comparative Analysis
- Asset-Capacity Planning
- Economic Profit/EVA
- Business Valuation/Due Diligence
- SEC & Financial Reporting
- Risk Assessment
- Auditing/Accounting

Professional Experience

KERFHEIMER CORPORATION, Sometown, PA 2005 to Present

Senior Financial Analyst, 12/2008 to Present
Financial Analyst, 11/2005 to 12/2008

Promoted to lead team of 15 analysts in the management of financial/SEC reporting and analysis for publicly traded, $2.3 billion company and its four subsidiary entities. Develop financial/statistical models used to project and maximize corporate financial performance; provide ad-hoc financial analysis; and support nationwide sales team by providing financial metrics, trends, and forecasts

Key Accomplishments

- Developed long-range funding requirements crucial to firm's subsequent capture of $52 million in government and military contracts.
- Secured more than $100 million through private and government research grants.

FIGURE R–11. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements)

R

CAROL ANN WALKER

Résumé • Page Two

1436 West Elm St. • Sometown, PA 00000 • (555) 555-5555
caw@somedomain.com • LI: LinkedIn.com/in/carolannwalker
Twitter Handle: @carolannwalker

Professional Experience (*continued*)

- Facilitated a 15 percent decrease in company's long-term debt during several major building expansions by developing computer models for capital acquisition.
- Designed model that saved 65 percent in proposal-preparation time. Cited by executive VP of sales for efforts that shortened the sales cycle, which helped displace the competition.
- Partnered with department managers to provide budget planning and profitability/cost-per-unit (CPU) analysis, including income, balance sheet, and cash-flow statements.
- Jointly led large-scale systems conversion to Hyperion, including personal upload of database in Essbase. Completed initiative on time and with no interruptions to business operations.

FIRST BANK, INC., Sometown, PA 2000 to 2005

Planning Analyst, 9/2000 to 11/2005
Compiled and distributed weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual closings/financial reports. Prepared depreciation forecasts, actual-vs.-projected financial statements, key-matrix reports, tax-reporting packages, auditor packages, and balance-sheet reviews.

Key Accomplishments

- Devised strategies to secure $6.2 million credit line at 2 percent below market rate.
- Positioned bank for continued growth by conducting business-unit analysis and cost/benefit studies to determine optimal investment strategies.
- Analyzed financial performance for consistency to plans and forecasts, investigated trends and variances, and alerted senior management to areas requiring action.
- Prepared and presented financial analysis on impacts of foreign currencies, inflationary factors, product-mix changes, merger and acquisition (M&A) activity, and capacity/fixed-cost structures.
- Achieved an average 14 percent return on all investments. Applied critical thinking and sound financial and strategic analysis in all funding options research.

FIGURE R–11. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements) (*continued*)

R

CAROL ANN WALKER

Résumé • Page Three

1436 West Elm St. • Sometown, PA 00000 • (555) 555-5555
caw@somedomain.com • LI: LinkedIn.com/in/carolannwalker
Twitter Handle: @carolannwalker

Education

THE WHARTON SCHOOL of the UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia, PA

Ph.D. in Finance, 5/2013

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, Milwaukee, WI

M.S. in Business Administration ("Executive Curriculum"), 5/2000

INDIANA UNIVERSITY, Bloomington, IN

B.S. in Business Administration, Emphasis in Finance, 5/1998

Affiliations

- Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR), Member, 2000 to Present
- Association for Corporate Financial Planning (ACFP), Senior Member, 2002 to Present

Portfolio of Financial Plans Available on Request

FIGURE R–11. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements) (*continued*)

R

- Jobs you have held, your principal and secondary duties in each job, when and how long you held each job, promotions you received, skills you developed in your jobs that a potential employer may value and seek in the ideal candidate, and projects or accomplishments that reflect important contributions
- Other experiences and skills you have developed that would be of value in the kind of job you are seeking; extracurricular activities that have contributed to your learning experience; leadership assignments you have accepted; interpersonal and communication skills you have developed; speeches, public presentations, or classes

you have given; collaborative work you have performed; publications you have contributed to; computer skills you have acquired or specialized programs you are proficient in using; languages you speak; notable awards or other types of recognition you have received

Use this information to brainstorm further details and personal attributes. Then, based on all the details, decide which to include in your résumé and how you can most effectively present your qualifications.

Returning Job Seekers

If you are returning to the workplace after an absence, most career experts say that it is important to acknowledge the gap in your career. This is particularly true if, for example, you are re-entering the workforce because you have devoted a full-time period to care for children or dependent adults. Do not undervalue such work. Although unpaid, it often provides experience that develops important time-management, problem-solving, organizational, and interpersonal skills. Although gaps in employment can be explained in the application cover letter, the following examples illustrate how you might reflect such experiences in a résumé. These samples would be especially appropriate for an applicant seeking employment in a field related to child or health care.

- **Primary Child-Care Provider, 2012–2014** Provided full-time care to three preschool children at home. Facilitated early learning activities; taught basic academic skills, nutrition, arts, and swimming. Organized schedules and events, managed the household, and served as Neighborhood-Watch Captain.
- **Home Caregiver, 2012–2014** Provided 60 hours per week in-home care for Alzheimer's patient. Coordinated health-care and medical appointments, developed and supervised exercise programs, completed and processed complex medical forms, administered medications, organized and maintained budgets, and managed home environment.

R

If you have performed volunteer work during such a period, list that experience. Volunteer work often results in the same experience as does full-time, paid work, a fact that your résumé should reflect, as in the following example:

- **School Association Coordinator, 2012–2014** Managed special activities of the high school Parent-Teacher Association. Planned and coordinated meetings, scheduled events, and supervised fund-drive operations. Raised $70,000 toward refurbishing the school auditorium.

Organizing Your Résumé (Sections)

The following résumé sections and section headings are typical and, depending on the subject matter, may use alternative terminology as shown in the following list. The sections you choose to include in your résumé and the order in which you list them should depend on your experience, your goals, the employer's needs, and any standard practices in your profession.

- Heading (name and contact information)
- Job Objective vs. Headline
- Qualifications Summary (Professional Profile, Key Attributes)
- Education (Academic Background, Certifications)
- Employment Experience (Career History, Career Chronology)
- Related Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (Professional Affiliations, Volunteer Work, Networking Assets)
- Honors and Activities (Awards, Recognition, Notable Contributions, Volunteer Work, Publications, or Affiliations)
- References and Portfolios

There really is no right or wrong way to organize your résumé, and any number of organizational patterns can be effective. For example, whether you place "education" before "employment experience" depends on the job you are seeking. Organize your information in the sequence that emphasizes the credentials that will strengthen your résumé the most. A recent graduate without much work experience should list education first. A candidate with many years of job experience, including jobs directly related to the target position, may decide to list employment experience first. When you list information in the education and employment sections, use a reverse chronological sequence: List the most recent employer or credential first, the next most recent experience second, and so on.

Heading. At the top of your résumé, include your name, address, the best number where you can be reached, professional **e-mail** address, and links to social-media sites where you have a professional presence. Make sure that your name stands out on the page. If you are in transition and have both a school address and a permanent home address, you may include both underneath your name (see Figure R–6). You can omit your street address, but include city, state, and ZIP Code.

Job Objective vs. Headline. Your résumé needs a clear career focus. Hiring managers spend mere seconds for the initial résumé review, so your career goal should be immediately evident. Job objectives and résumé headlines (or *taglines*) both introduce the material and help the reader quickly understand your goal. An objective is a narrative statement about the type of job that interests you, and it can include your career level and credentials. A headline is similar to a newspaper headline and is meant to quickly grab the employer's attention. A headline contains a brief description of your job target and one or two of your strongest qualifications. A headline can provide visual impact, especially if it appears as a banner near the top of your résumé (see Figure R–7). The following examples illustrate the difference between objectives and headlines.

SAMPLE OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

- A computer-science position aimed at solving online security vulnerabilities.
- A position involving meeting the concerns of women, such as family planning, career counseling, or crisis management.
- A programming internship requiring software-development and debugging skills.

SAMPLE JOB TITLE AND HEADLINE COMBINATIONS

- FINANCIAL SERVICES / BANKING PROFESSIONAL
  "Ensuring the Financial Success of Customers, Clients, and Communities"
- MECHANICAL ENGINEER
  "Developing Innovative, Efficient, Environmentally Friendly Energy Solutions"
- FIREFIGHTER / EMT
  "Prevention, Mitigation, Response" or "Protecting Life, Property, and the Environment"

R

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE If you include an objective on your résumé, avoid using clichés, such as "seeking a challenging opportunity with potential for advancement" and other overused statements.

Qualifications Summary. Include a brief summary of your qualifications to persuade hiring managers to select you for an interview. Sometimes called a *professional profile*, *summary statement*, or *career summary*, a qualifications summary can include skills, expertise, experience, or personal qualities that make you especially well suited to the position. You may give this section a unique heading or simply use a job title, as shown in Figures R–8 and R–11.

Education. List the school(s) you have attended, the degree(s) you received and the dates you received them, your major field(s) of study, and any academic honors you have earned. Most career-development professionals recommend that you should include your grade point average (GPA) only if it is 3.0 or higher. Omit your GPA if you earned your degree long ago and are focusing on experience rather than education. List individual courses if they are unusually impressive, if they provide the opportunity to include keywords, if they are relevant to your career goals, or if your résumé is otherwise sparse (see Figure R–6). Consider including any special skills developed or projects completed in your course work. Mention high school only if you do not possess higher education or if you want to call attention to special high school achievements, awards, projects, programs, internships, or study abroad.

Employment Experience. Organize your employment experience in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent job and working backward under a single heading. You can also organize your experience functionally by clustering similar types of jobs into several sections with specific section headings, such as "Management," "Leadership," "Administration," or "Logistics."

Depending on the situation, one type of arrangement might be more persuasive than the other. For example, if you are applying for an accounting job but have no employment experience in accounting, simply list past and present jobs in reverse chronological order (most recent to least recent). If you are applying for a supervisory position and have had three supervisory jobs in addition to two nonsupervisory positions, you could create a section heading called "Supervisory Experience" and list the three supervisory jobs, followed by another section labeled "General Experience" to include the nonsupervisory jobs.

In general, consider the following guidelines when working on the "Experience" section of your résumé:

- Include jobs or internships when they relate directly to the position you are seeking. Including such experiences can make a résumé more persuasive if they have helped you develop relevant skills.
- Include extracurricular experiences, such as taking on a leadership position in a college organization or directing a community-service project, if they demonstrate the skills valued by a potential employer.
- List military service as a job, even though the occupational specialties may not be directly applicable to the positions for which you are applying. Give the dates served, the duty specialty, and the rank at discharge. Discuss military duties if they relate to the job you are seeking, and translate military terminology to be easily understood by hiring managers.

- For each job or experience, list both the job title and the employer name. Throughout each section, consistently begin with either the job or the company name, depending on which will likely be more impressive to potential employers.
- Under each job or experience, provide a concise description of your accomplishments. By listing your accomplishments and quantifying them with numbers, percentages, or monetary value, you will let the employer know what separates you from the competition. That said, do not omit job duties entirely from your résumé; employers still want to see the scope of what you were responsible for. A good strategy for effectively organizing both duties and responsibilities is to create a brief paragraph outlining your responsibilities, followed by a bulleted list of your strongest accomplishments in the position.
- Focus as much as possible on your achievements in your work history. ("Increased employee retention rate by 16 percent by developing a training program.") Employers will picture themselves as benefiting from the same types of accomplishments.
- Use action verbs ("managed," "supervised," "developed," "achieved," and "analyzed"). Be consistent when using past or present tense. Even though the résumé is about you, do not use "I" (for example, instead of "I was promoted to Section Leader," use "Promoted to Section Leader").

Related Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities. Employers are interested in hiring applicants with a variety of skills or the ability to learn new ones quickly. Depending on the position, you might list items such as fluency in foreign languages, writing and editing abilities, specialized technical knowledge, or computer skills (including knowledge of specific languages, software, and hardware).

Honors and Activities. List any honors and unique activities near the end of your résumé, unless they are exceptionally notable or would be more persuasive for a particular objective. Include items such as student or community activities, professional or club memberships, awards received, and published works. Do not duplicate information given in other categories, and include only information that supports your employment objective. Use a heading for this section that fits its contents, such as "Activities," "Honors," "Professional Affiliations," "Memberships," and "Publications."

R

References and Portfolios. Avoid specifying on your résumé that references are available unless that is standard practice in your profession or your résumé is sparse. Employers assume that a well-prepared job seeker will provide a list of professional references. Create a separate list of references in the same format design and layout as your résumé, and be ready to provide this page to prospective employers during the interview. Always seek permission from anyone you list as a reference and notify each person in advance when you provide the information to a prospective employer.

A portfolio is a collection of samples in a binder or on a Web site of your most impressive work and accomplishments. The portfolio can include successful documents you have produced, letters of praise from employers, copies of awards and certificates, and samples of your work. If you have developed a portfolio, you can include the phrase "Portfolio available on request" in your résumé. If portfolios are standard in your profession, you might even include a small section that outlines the contents of your portfolio.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Avoid listing your desired salary on the résumé. On the one hand, you may price yourself out of a job you want if the salary you list is higher than a potential employer is willing to pay. On the other hand, if you list a low salary, you may not get the best possible offer.

Digital Formats and Media

Once you have developed a strong résumé, consider adapting it for multiple media and digital formats.

E-mail-Attached Résumés. An employer may request that you submit a résumé attached to an e-mail. If a file-format preference is not specified, send the résumé in Adobe PDF or MS Word format. Then attach the file and treat the e-mail-message body as your cover letter.

Applicant Tracking System Résumés. When you submit your résumé via e-mail or to an employer's Web site, it may be added to an electronic applicant tracking system (ATS). These systems parse, store, manage, and rank résumés based on criteria specified by the hiring manager. Although these systems vary, some guidelines are universal:

- Avoid fancy graphics and icons because they will not be readable.
- Choose common titles for headers, such as "Professional Experience" and "Education."
- Incorporate keywords that are relevant to your career field in descriptions, but avoid a separate "Keyword" section that wastes valuable space.
- Use a consistent format in the placement of employer names and job titles.

In general, when developing your résumé for an ATS, try thinking like a computer and focus on logic and consistency.

Plain-Text Résumés. Some employers request ASCII or plain-text résumés via e-mail or their Web site, enabling the file to be easily added to résumé databases. ASCII résumés allow employers to read the file no matter what type of software they are using. You can copy and paste a plain-text résumé directly into the body of an e-mail message. To create an ASCII résumé, look for an option to "Save as" plain-text in your word-processing program. After you save as a text file with a .txt extension, re-open the file in a text editor (such as Notepad for PCs or Text Wrangler for Macs) and clean up the file as needed. For more, visit resumepower.com/ascii-resumes.html.

Scannable Résumés. A scannable-résumé format is a paper document that you mail to the employer. After it is received, the document will be scanned into an automated program and then downloaded into the company's searchable database. For such résumés, avoid decorative fonts, underlining, shading, letters that touch each other, or other features that will not scan easily. Before sending, scan the résumé yourself to make sure that it is legible.

Web-Posted Résumés. You can use a personal Web site to post your résumé and display other items that portray your value as a candidate, such as awards and samples of your work. You can list a link to your Web site in your candidate documents and correspondence with prospective employers. For such Web sites, keep the following in mind:

- Follow the general advice for **writing for the Web**, and view your résumé and materials on several browsers.
- Consider building a multipage site for displaying a work portfolio, publications, reference letters, and other related materials.
- Provide just below your name a series of internal page links to such important categories as "experience" and "education."
- Do not include your phone number or home address on the Web site—include an e-mail "contact link" that prospective employers and recruiters can use to reach you.
- Do not advertise that you are actively seeking a job if you are currently employed; if your employer learns about your search, your job could be in jeopardy.
- Post copies of your résumé in various file formats so that employers can select the best format for their needs.

If you do not have your own Web site, you can upload your files to an online cloud storage service, such as Dropbox (www.dropbox.com), and send employers the link to your folder.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE When applying for a position within the U.S. government, America's largest employer, make sure your résumé's content and style are suitable for a federal application. Protocol for your federal résumé varies depending on the specific agency you are targeting, but your résumé must address how your qualifications match the requirements outlined in the vacancy announcement. Kathyrn Troutman provides excellent resources for preparing federal résumés (visit www.resume-place.com/services/federal-resume-writing). See also **job search**.

revision

When you revise your draft, read and evaluate it primarily from the point of view of your **audience**. In fact, revising requires a different frame of mind than **writing a draft**. To achieve that frame of mind, experienced writers have developed the following tactics:

- Allow a "cooling period" between writing the draft and revision in order to evaluate the draft objectively.
- Print your draft and mark up the paper copy; it is often difficult to revise on-screen.
- Read your draft aloud—often, hearing the text will enable you to spot problems that need improvement.
- Revise in passes by reading through your draft several times, each time searching for and correcting a different set of problems.

When you can no longer spot improvements, you may wish to give the draft to a colleague for review—especially for projects that are crucial for you or your organization as well as for collaborative projects, as described in **collaborative writing**.

R

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Revising Your Draft

✔ *Completeness.* Does the document achieve its primary **purpose**? Will it fulfill the readers' needs? Your writing should give readers exactly what they need but not overwhelm them.

✔ *Appropriate introduction and conclusion.* Check to see that your **introduction** frames the rest of the document and that your **conclusion**

(continued)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Revising Your Draft** *(continued)*

ties the main ideas together. Both should account for revisions to the content of the document.

- ✔ *Accuracy*. Look for any factual inaccuracies that may have crept into your draft.
- ✔ *Unity and coherence*. Check to see that sentences and ideas are closely tied together (**coherence**) and contribute directly to the main idea expressed in the topic sentence of each **paragraph** (**unity**). Provide **transitions** where they are missing and strengthen those that are weak.
- ✔ *Consistency*. Make sure that **layout and design** and **visuals** are consistent. Refer to the same items with the same terms throughout a document.
- ✔ *Conciseness*. Prune unnecessary words, phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs. See **conciseness**. Use the search-and-replace command to find and revise wordy phrases, such as *that is*, *there are*, *the fact that*, and *to be*, and unnecessary helping **verbs**, such as *will*.
- ✔ *Awkwardness*. Look for **awkwardness** in **sentence construction**—especially any **garbled sentences**.
- ✔ *Ethical writing*. Check for **ethics in writing** and eliminate **biased language**.
- ✔ *Active voice*. Use the active **voice** unless the passive voice is more appropriate.
- ✔ *Word choice*. Check **word choice** and eliminate **affectation**, **clichés**, **vague words**, and unnecessary **intensifiers**. Check for unclear **pronoun references**.
- ✔ *Jargon*. If you have any doubt that all your readers will understand any **jargon** or special terms you have used, eliminate or define those words or terms.
- ✔ *Grammar*. Check your draft for grammatical errors. Because **grammar** checkers are not always accurate, treat their recommendations only as suggestions.
- ✔ *Typographical errors*. Check your final draft for typographical errors both with your spell checker and with thorough **proofreading** because spell checkers do not catch all errors.

DIGITAL TIP

Incorporating Tracked Changes

When colleagues review your document, they can "track" changes and insert comments within the document itself. Tracking and commenting vary with types and versions of word-processing programs, but in most programs you can view the document with all reviewers' edits and comments highlighted, or see the document as it would look if you accepted any changes made. To view this process, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Incorporating Tracked Changes."

rhetorical questions

A rhetorical question does not require a specific answer because it is intended to make an **audience** think about the subject from a different perspective. The answer to a rhetorical question such as "Is space exploration worth the cost?" may not be a simple yes or no; it might be a detailed explanation of the pros and cons of the value of space exploration.

Rhetorical questions can serve as effective **titles** or openings. The writer or speaker may answer such questions in a **presentation**, **newsletter article**, or blog. (See **blogs and forums**.) However, rhetorical questions should be used judiciously in other, more formal documents. A rhetorical question, for example, would not be appropriate for the title of a **report** or an **e-mail** addressed to a manager who needs to quickly understand the subject and purpose of the document or message.

run-on sentences

A run-on sentence, sometimes called a *fused sentence*, is two or more sentences without punctuation to separate them. The term is also sometimes applied to a pair of independent **clauses** separated by only a **comma**, although this variation is usually called a **comma splice**. See also **sentence construction** and **sentence faults**.

Run-on sentences can be corrected, as shown in the following examples, by (1) making two sentences, (2) joining the two clauses with a **semicolon** (if they are closely related), (3) joining the two clauses with a comma and a coordinating **conjunction**, or (4) subordinating one clause to the other.

. *Some*
- The client suggested several solutions ~~some~~ are impractical. [1]

;
- The client suggested several solutions some are impractical. [2]

, *but*
- The client suggested several solutions some are impractical. [3]

, *although*
- The client suggested several solutions some are impractical. [4]

R

S

salary negotiations (*see* interviewing for a job)

scope

Scope is the depth and breadth of detail you include in a document as defined by your audience's needs, your **purpose**, and the **context**. (See also **audience**.) For example, if you write a **trip report** about a routine visit to a company facility, your readers may need to know only the basic details and any unusual findings. However, if you prepare a trip report about a visit to a division that has experienced problems and your purpose is to suggest ways to solve those problems, your report will contain many more details, observations, and even recommendations.

You should determine the scope of a document during the **preparation** stage of the writing process, even though you may refine it later. Defining your scope will expedite your **research** and can help determine team members' responsibilities in **collaborative writing**.

Your scope will also be affected by the type of document you are writing, as well as the medium you select for your message. For example, funding organizations often prescribe the general content and length for **proposals**, and some organizations set limits for the length of **memos**, **e-mails**, and digital postings. See **selecting the medium** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

selecting the medium

Selecting the most appropriate medium (or *channel*) for communicating in the workplace depends on a wide range of factors related to your **audience**, **purpose**, and **context**. Those factors include the following:

- The audience's preferences and expectations
- The organization's practices and policies
- How widely information needs to be distributed

- The urgency of the communication
- The sensitivity or confidentiality required
- Your own most effective communication style

As this list suggests, choosing the best medium may involve personal considerations as well as the essential functions of the medium. If you need to collaborate with someone to solve a problem, for example, you may find e-mail exchanges less effective than a phone call or face-to-face meeting. If you need precise wording or a record of a complex or sensitive message, however, a written medium is often essential.

Many of the following media and forms of communication overlap and evolve as technology develops. Understanding their basic functions will help you select the most appropriate medium for your needs. See Figure S–1 for a table summarizing the media discussed in this entry. See also **adapting to new technologies**.

E-mail

E-mail (or *email*) functions in the workplace as a primary medium to communicate and share files with colleagues, clients, and customers. Although e-mail may function as informal notes, e-mail messages should follow the writing strategy and style described in **correspondence**. All e-mail requires special review because recipients can easily forward messages and attachments to others and because e-mail messages are subject to legal disclosure.

Memos

Memos are appropriate for internal communication among members of the same organization; they use a standard header and are sent on paper or as attachments to e-mails. Memos can be used to instruct employees, announce policies, report results, disseminate information, and delegate responsibilities. Printed memos may be used in manufacturing or service industries, for example, where employees do not have easy access to e-mail.

Letters

Business **letters** with handwritten signatures are often appropriate for formal communications with professional associates or customers outside an organization. Letters printed on organizational letterhead stationery communicate formality, respect, and authority. Letters are often used for job applications, for recommendations, and in other official and social contexts.

Medium	Use
E-mail	Primary informal or formal medium for communicating and file sharing with colleagues, clients, and customers.
Memos	Internal correspondence for announcements, instructions, reports within an organization.
Letters	Letterhead correspondence for formal communications with professional associates outside an organization.
Text and Instant Messages	*Text messages* for exchanges between people on the move or in nontraditional work spaces; *instant messages* for real-time exchanges among coworkers, customers, and suppliers.
Phone Calls and Voice Messages	*Phone calls* for substantial interaction on complex or sensitive issues; *voice-mail messages* for clear and brief notes.
Faxes	Faxed documents, often with handwritten additions, for viewing in their original form.
Meetings and Conference Calls	*Individual and group in-person meetings* for establishing rapport, solving problems, and reaching decisions; *conference calls* for saving travel costs.
Web Conferences and Videoconferences	*Web conferences* for multiple participants through their computers, often using Web video applications; *formal videoconferences* with high-end equipment for participants at multiple locations using shared visuals or demonstrations.
Web Networking and Promotion	*Intranet sites* for file and idea sharing within organizations; *public Web sites* for providing product and client access; *social-media sites* for enhancing individual and organization brand identity.

FIGURE S–1. Choosing the Appropriate Medium

Text and Instant Messages

Text messaging, or *texting*, refers to the exchange of brief written messages between mobile phones. Text messaging is effective for simple messages communicated between people on the move or in nontraditional work spaces.

Instant messaging (IM) on a computer or handheld device may be an efficient way to communicate in real time with coworkers, suppliers, and customers who need near-instant, brief written exchanges between two or more participants. Instant messaging requires that recipients are ready and available to participate in an immediate exchange of messages.

Phone Calls and Voice Messages

Phone calls are best used for exchanges that require substantial interaction and the ability of participants to interpret each other's tone of voice. They are useful for discussing sensitive issues and resolving misunderstandings, although they do not provide the visual cues possible during face-to-face meetings. Be careful when using a cell phone in public places, and follow appropriate etiquette and organizational policies. See "Web Conferences and Videoconferences" on page 510.

Should you need to leave a voice-mail message, it should be clear and brief. ("I got your package, so you don't need to call the distributor" or "I'd like to discuss options for the new system, so call when you get a chance.") For complicated messages, use another medium, such as e-mail.

Faxes

A fax is used when a document like a drawing or signed contract must be viewed in its original form. Faxing is used when scanning is not an option or when a faxed document is requested. Fax machines can be located in shared areas, so let the intended recipient know before you send confidential or sensitive information. Use a cover sheet that includes at least the name of the recipient and the number of pages in the document to ensure full receipt. Although faxes can be replaced with scanned documents sent as e-mail attachments, faxing is often more convenient for submitting forms and for sending sensitive material over the Internet without encryption. In some countries, faxes are legally required for documents and contracts with signatures.

Meetings and Conference Calls

In-person **meetings** with individuals are most appropriate with an associate or a client with whom you intend to develop an important, long-term relationship. A face-to-face meeting may also be useful to help establish rapport, interview someone on a complex topic, solve a technical problem, or handle a controversial issue.

Group or committee meetings may be best for brainstorming, collaborating with various experts on a complex topic, and reaching decisions. A teleconference (or *conference call*) among three or more participants is an inexpensive alternative to face-to-face meetings requiring travel. Conference calls work best when the person coordinating the call works from an agenda shared by all the participants and directs the discussion as if chairing an in-person meeting. For advice on how to record discussions and decisions, see **minutes of meetings**.

Web Conferences and Videoconferences

Multiple participants can be connected through downloaded applications. Web conferences may be enhanced with phone connections and video applications, like Skype, GoToMeeting, or Webex. These conferences may be used for committee meetings when participants are geographically separated, for small groups working on a specific problem, for numerous participants in training, or for educational seminars (referred to as *webinars*).

More formal videoconferences with high-end equipment often require professional services. They work best with participants who are at ease in front of the camera, and such conferences should be carefully planned with technical support staff available.

Web Networking and Promotion

A company intranet Web site is ideal for sharing documents and files—including announcements and policies and procedures—within an organization. An intranet site can serve not only as a home base for resources like company directories and **newsletters** but also as a place where ideas can be developed through, for example, discussion boards and wikis.

A company public Web site can provide sales and product information as well as information about an organization and opportunities to foster contacts with customers and clients. Such sites may include new-product announcements, **press releases**, **FAQs**, **manuals**, product or service reviews, **blogs and forums**, employment opportunities, and **requests for proposals**. See also **writing for the Web**.

Using **social media** sites can help individuals and organizations cultivate professional contacts and promote products and services. Networks for professionals, such as LinkedIn, aim to connect individuals and groups with common interests. Organizations may use social-networking sites like Facebook to market their products and services as well as to enhance their brand identity. See also **job search**.

S

semicolons

The semicolon (;) links independent **clauses** or other sentence elements of equal weight and grammatical rank when they are not joined by a **comma** and a **conjunction**. The semicolon indicates a greater pause between clauses than does a comma but not as great a pause as a **period**.

Independent clauses joined by a semicolon should balance or contrast with each other, and the relationship between the two statements should be so clear that further explanation is not necessary.

▸ The new Web site was a success; every division reported increased online sales.

Do not use a semicolon between a dependent clause and its main clause.

▸ No one applied for the position; even though it was heavily advertised.

With Strong Connectives

In complicated sentences, a semicolon may be used before transitional words or **phrases** (*that is*, *for example*, *namely*) that introduce examples or further explanation. See also **transition**.

▸ The press understands Commissioner Curran's position on the issue; *that is*, local funds should not be used for the highway project.

A semicolon should also be used before conjunctive **adverbs** (*therefore*, *moreover*, *consequently*, *furthermore*, *indeed*, *in fact*, *however*) that connect independent clauses.

▸ The test results are not complete; *therefore*, I cannot make a recommendation.
[The semicolon in the example shows that *therefore* belongs to the second clause.]

For Clarity in Long Sentences

Use a semicolon between two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor*, *so*, *yet*) if the clauses are long and contain other **punctuation**.

▸ In most cases, these individuals are executives, bankers, or lawyers; *but* they do not, as the press seems to believe, simply push the button of their economic power to affect local politics.

A semicolon may also be used if any items in a series contain commas.

▸ Among those present were John Howard, President of the Omega Paper Company; Carol Delgado, President of Environex Corporation; and Larry Stanley, President of Stanley Papers.

Use **parentheses** or **dashes**, not semicolons, to enclose a parenthetical element that contains commas.

- ▸ All affected job classifications *(*receptionist, secretary, transcriptionist, and clerk*)* will be upgraded this month.

Use a **colon**, not a semicolon, as a mark of anticipation or enumeration.

- ▸ Three decontamination methods are under consideration~~;~~: a zeolite-resin system, an evaporation system, and a filtration system.

The semicolon always appears outside closing **quotation marks**.

- ▸ The attorney said, "You must be accurate"*;* her client replied, "I will."

sentence construction

DIRECTORY

Subjects 512
Predicates 513
Sentence Types 514
  Structure 514
  Intention 515
  Stylistic Use 515
Constructing Effective Sentences 515

A sentence is the most fundamental and versatile tool available to writers. Sentences generally flow from a subject to a **verb** to any **objects**, **complements**, or **modifiers**, but they can be ordered in a variety of ways to achieve **emphasis**. When shifting word order for emphasis, however, be aware that word order can make a great difference in the meaning of a sentence.

- ▸ He was *only* the service technician. [suggests importance]
- ▸ He was the *only* service technician. [defines the number]

The most basic components of sentences are subjects and predicates.

S

Subjects

The *subject* of a sentence is a **noun** or **pronoun** (and its modifiers) about which the predicate of the sentence makes a statement. Although a subject may appear anywhere in a sentence, it most often appears at the beginning. ("*The wiring* is defective.") Grammatically, a subject must agree with its verb in **number**.

- ▸ *These departments have* much in common.
- ▸ *This department has* several functions.

The subject is the actor in sentences using the active **voice**.

▶ *The Webmaster reported* an increase in site visits for May.

A *compound subject* has two or more substantives (nouns or noun equivalents) as the subject of one verb.

▶ *The doctor* and *the nurse* agreed on a treatment plan.

ESL TIP for Understanding the Subject of a Sentence

In English, every sentence, except commands, must have an explicit subject.

▶ *Paul* worked fast. ~~Established~~ He established the parameters for the project.

In commands, the subject *you* is understood and is used only for emphasis.

▶ (*You*) Meet me at the airport at 6:30 tomorrow morning.

▶ (*You*) Do your homework, young man. [parent to child]

If you move the subject from its normal position (subject-verb-object), English often requires you to replace the subject with an expletive (*there*, *it*). In this construction, the verb agrees with the subject that follows it.

▶ *There are* two files on the desk. [The subject is *files*.]

▶ *It is* presumptuous for me to speak for Jim. [The subject is *to speak for Jim*.]

Time, distance, weather, temperature, and environmental expressions use *it* as their subject.

▶ *It* is ten o'clock.

▶ *It* is ten miles down the road.

▶ *It* seldom snows in Florida.

▶ *It* is very hot in Jorge's office.

Predicates

The *predicate* is the part of a sentence that makes an assertion about the subject and completes the thought of the sentence.

▶ Bill *has piloted the corporate jet*.

The *simple predicate* is the verb and any helping verbs (*has piloted*). The *complete predicate* is the verb and any modifiers, objects, or complements (*has piloted the corporate jet*). A *compound predicate* consists of two or more verbs with the same subject.

► The company *tried* but *did not succeed* in that field.

Such constructions help achieve **conciseness** in writing. A *predicate nominative* is a noun construction that follows a linking verb and renames the subject.

► She is my *attorney*. [noun]

► His excuse was *that he had been sick*. [noun clause]

Sentence Types

Sentences may be classified according to *structure* (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex); *intention* (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory); and *stylistic use* (loose, periodic, minor).

Structure. A *simple sentence* consists of one independent clause. At its most basic, a simple sentence contains only a subject and a predicate.

► The power [subject] failed [predicate].

A *compound sentence* consists of two or more independent clauses connected by a comma and a coordinating **conjunction**, by a **semicolon**, or by a semicolon and a conjunctive **adverb**.

► Drilling is the only way to collect samples of the layers of sediment below the ocean floor, *but* it is not the only way to gather information about these strata. [comma and coordinating conjunction]

► The chemical composition of seawater bears little resemblance to that of river water; the various elements are present in entirely different proportions. [semicolon]

► It was 500 miles to the site; *therefore*, we made arrangements to fly. [semicolon and conjunctive adverb]

S

A *complex sentence* contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause that expresses a subordinate idea.

► The generator will shut off automatically [independent clause] if the temperature rises above a specified point [dependent clause].

A *compound-complex sentence* consists of two or more independent clauses plus at least one dependent clause.

► Productivity is central to controlling inflation [independent clause]; when productivity rises [dependent clause], employers can raise wages without raising prices [independent clause].

Intention. A *declarative sentence* conveys information or makes a factual statement. ("The motor powers the conveyor belt.") An *interrogative sentence* asks a direct question. ("Does the conveyor belt run constantly?") An *imperative sentence* issues a command. ("Restart in SAFE mode.") An *exclamatory sentence* is an emphatic expression of feeling, fact, or opinion. It is a declarative sentence that is stated with great feeling. ("The files were deleted!")

Stylistic Use. A *loose sentence* makes its major point at the beginning and then adds subordinate phrases and clauses that develop or modify that major point. A loose sentence could end at one or more points before it actually does end, as the periods in brackets illustrate in the following sentence:

- ▶ It went up[.], a great ball of fire about a mile in diameter[.], an elemental force freed from its bonds[.] after being chained for billions of years.

A *periodic sentence* delays its main ideas until the end by presenting subordinate ideas or modifiers first.

- ▶ During the last century, the attitude of the American citizen toward automation underwent a profound change.

A *minor sentence* is an incomplete sentence that makes sense in its context because the missing element is clearly implied by the preceding sentence.

- ▶ In view of these facts, is the service contract really useful? *Or economical?*

Constructing Effective Sentences

The subject-verb-object pattern is effective because it is most familiar to **readers**. In "The company increased profits," we know the subject (*company*) and the object (*profits*) by their positions relative to the verb (*increased*).

An *inverted sentence* places the elements in unexpected order, thus emphasizing the point by attracting the readers' attention.

- ▶ A better job I never had. [direct object-subject-verb]
- ▶ More optimistic I have never been. [subjective complement-subject-linking verb]
- ▶ A poor image we presented. [direct object-subject-verb]

Use uncomplicated sentences to state complex ideas. If readers have to cope with a complicated sentence in addition to a complex idea, they are likely to become confused. Just as simpler sentences make complex ideas more digestible, a complex sentence construction makes a series of simple ideas smoother and less choppy.

Avoid loading sentences with a number of thoughts carelessly tacked together. Such sentences are monotonous and hard to read because all the ideas seem to be of equal importance. Rather, distinguish the relative importance of sentence elements with **subordination**. See also **garbled sentences**.

LOADED We started the program three years ago, only three members were on staff, and each member was responsible for a separate state, but it was not an efficient operation.

IMPROVED When we started the program three years ago, only three members were on staff, each responsible for a separate state; however, that arrangement was not efficient.

Express coordinate or equivalent ideas in similar form. The structure of the sentence helps readers grasp the similarity of its components, as illustrated in **parallel structure**.

ESL TIP for Understanding the Requirements of a Sentence

- A sentence must start with a capital letter.
- A sentence must end with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark.
- A sentence must have a subject.
- A sentence must have a verb.
- A sentence must conform to subject-verb-object word order (or inverted word order for questions or emphasis).
- A sentence must express an idea that can stand on its own (called the *main*, or *independent*, *clause*).

S

sentence faults

A number of problems can create sentence faults, including faulty **subordination**, **clauses** with no subjects, rambling sentences, omitted **verbs**, and illogical assertions.

Faulty subordination occurs when a grammatically subordinate element contains the main idea of the sentence or when a subordinate element is so long or detailed that it obscures the main idea. Both of the following sentences are logical, depending on what the writer intends as the main idea and as the subordinate element.

► Although the new filing system saves money, many of the staff are unhappy with it.
[If the main point is that *many of the staff are unhappy*, this sentence is correct.]

► The new filing system saves money, although many of the staff are unhappy with it.
[If the main point is that *the new filing system saves money*, this sentence is correct.]

In the following example, the subordinate element overwhelms the main point.

FAULTY Because the noise level in the assembly area on a typical shift is as loud as a smoke detector's alarm ten feet away, employees often develop hearing problems.

IMPROVED Employees in the assembly area often develop hearing problems because the noise level on a typical shift is as loud as a smoke detector's alarm ten feet away.

Missing subjects occur when writers inappropriately assume a subject that they do not state in the clause. See also **sentence fragments**.

INCOMPLETE Your application program can request to end the session after the next command.
[Your application program can request *who* or *what* to end the session?]

COMPLETE Your application program can request *the host program* to end the session after the next command.

Rambling sentences contain more information than the reader can comfortably absorb. The obvious remedy for a rambling sentence is to divide it into two or more sentences. (See also **run-on sentences**.) When you do that, put the main message of the rambling sentence into the first of the revised sentences.

RAMBLING The payment to which a subcontractor is entitled should be made promptly in order that in the event of a subsequent contractual dispute we, as general contractors, may not be held in default of our contract by virtue of nonpayment.

DIRECT Pay subcontractors promptly. Then if a contractual dispute occurs, we cannot be held in default of our contract because of nonpayment.

S

Missing verbs produce some sentence faults.

written
► I never have ^ and probably never will write the annual report.

Faulty logic results when a predicate makes an illogical assertion about its subject. "Mr. Wilson's *job* is a sales representative" is not logical, but "*Mr. Wilson* is a sales representative" is logical. "Jim's *height* is six feet tall" is not logical, but "*Jim* is six feet tall" is logical. See also **logic errors**.

sentence fragments

A sentence fragment is an incomplete grammatical unit that is punctuated as a sentence.

FRAGMENT And quit his job.

SENTENCE He quit his job.

A sentence fragment lacks either a subject or a **verb** or is a subordinate **clause** or **phrase**. Sentence fragments are often introduced by relative **pronouns** (*who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*) or subordinating **conjunctions** (such as *although*, *because*, *if*, *when*, and *while*).

, although

▸ The new manager updated several personnel procedures~~. Although~~ she didn't clear them with Human Resources.

A sentence must contain a finite verb; **verbals** (nonfinite) do not function as verbs. The following sentence fragments use verbals (*providing*, *to work*) that cannot function as finite verbs.

FRAGMENT *Providing* all employees with disability insurance.

SENTENCE The company *provides* all employees with disability insurance.

FRAGMENT *To work* a 40-hour week.

SENTENCE Most of our employees *must work* a 40-hour week.

S

Explanatory phrases beginning with *such as*, *for example*, and similar terms often lead writers to create sentence fragments.

, such as

▸ The staff wants additional benefits~~. For example,~~ the use of company cars.

A hopelessly snarled fragment simply must be rewritten. To rewrite such a fragment, pull the main points out of the fragment, list them in the proper sequence, and then rewrite the sentence as illustrated in **garbled sentences**. See also **sentence construction** and **sentence faults**.

sentence variety

Sentences can vary in length, structure, and complexity. As you revise, vary your sentences so that they do not become tiresomely alike. See also **sentence construction**.

Sentence Length

A series of sentences of the same length is monotonous, so varying sentence length makes writing less tedious to the **reader**. For example, avoid stringing together a number of short independent **clauses**. Either connect them with subordinating connectives, thereby making some dependent clauses, or make some clauses into separate sentences.

STRING The river is 63 miles long, and it averages 50 yards in width, and its depth averages 8 feet.

IMPROVED The river, which is 63 miles long and averages 50 yards in width, has an average depth of 8 feet.

IMPROVED The river is 63 miles long. It averages 50 yards in width and 8 feet in depth.

You can often effectively combine short sentences by converting **verbs** into **adjectives**.

- The *failed* digital shift indicator ~~failed. It~~ was pulled from the market.

Although too many short sentences make your writing sound choppy and immature, a short sentence can be effective following a long one.

- During the past two decades, many changes have occurred in American life—the extent, durability, and significance of which no one has yet measured. *No one can.*

In general, short sentences are good for emphatic, memorable statements. Long sentences are good for detailed explanations and support. Nothing is inherently wrong with a long sentence, or even with a complicated one, as long as its meaning is clear and direct. Sentence length becomes an element of style when varied for **emphasis** or contrast; a conspicuously short or long sentence can be used to good effect.

S

Word Order

When a series of sentences all begin in exactly the same way (usually with an **article** and a **noun**), the result is likely to be monotonous. You can make your sentences more interesting by occasionally starting with a modifying word, **phrase**, or clause.

▶ *To salvage the project*, she presented alternatives when existing policies failed to produce results. [modifying phrase]

However, overuse of this technique can itself be monotonous, so use it in moderation.

Inverted word order can be an effective way to achieve variety, but be careful not to create an awkward construction.

AWKWARD So good sales have never been.

EFFECTIVE Never have sales been so good.

For variety, you can alter normal sentence order by inserting a phrase or clause.

▶ Titanium fills the gap, *both in weight and in strength*, between aluminum and steel.

The technique of inserting a phrase or clause is good for achieving emphasis, providing detail, breaking monotony, and regulating **pace**.

Loose and Periodic Sentences

A loose sentence makes its major point at the beginning and then adds subordinate phrases and clauses that develop or modify the point. A loose sentence could end at one or more points before it actually ends, as the periods in brackets illustrate in the following example:

▶ It went up[.], a great ball of fire about a mile in diameter[.], an elemental force freed from its bonds[.] after being chained for billions of years.

A periodic sentence delays its main idea until the end by presenting modifiers or subordinate ideas first, thus holding the readers' interest until the end.

▶ During the last century, the attitude of Americans toward technology underwent a profound change.

Experiment with shifts from loose sentences to periodic sentences in your own writing, especially during **revision**. Avoid the monotony of a long series of loose sentences, particularly a series containing coordinate clauses joined by **conjunctions**. Using **subordination** not only provides emphasis but also makes your sentences more interesting.

sequential method of development

The sequential, or *step-by-step*, **method of development** is especially effective for explaining a process or describing a mechanism in operation. (See **process explanation**.) It is also the logical method for writing **instructions**, as shown in Figure I–7 (page 269).

The main advantage of the sequential method of development is that it is easy to follow because the steps correspond to the process or operation being described. The disadvantages are that it can become monotonous and does not lend itself well to achieving **emphasis**.

Most methods of development have elements of sequence to a greater or lesser extent. The **chronological method of development**, for example, is also sequential: To describe a trip chronologically, from beginning to end, is also to describe it sequentially. The **cause-and-effect method of development** may contain certain elements of sequence. For example, a report of the causes leading to an accident (the effect) might describe those causes in the order they occurred (or their sequence).

service

When used as a **verb**, *service* means "keep up or maintain" as well as "repair." ("Our company will *service* your equipment.") If you mean "provide a more general benefit," use *serve*.

- Our company *serves* ~~services~~ the northwest area of the state.

set / sit

Sit is an intransitive **verb**; it does not, therefore, require an **object**. ("I *sit* by a window in the office.") Its past **tense** is *sat*. ("We *sat* around the conference table.") *Set* is usually a transitive verb, meaning "put or place," "establish," or "harden." Its past tense is *set*.

- Please *set* the supplies on the shelf.
- The jeweler *set* the stone carefully.
- Can we *set* a date for the meeting?
- The high temperature *sets* the epoxy quickly.

Set is occasionally an intransitive verb.

- The new adhesive *sets* in five minutes.

shall / will

Although traditionally *shall* was used to express the future **tense** with *I* and *we*, *will* is generally accepted with all persons. *Shall* is commonly used today only in questions requesting an opinion or a preference ("*Shall* we go?") rather than a prediction ("*Will* we go?"). It is also used in statements expressing determination ("I *shall* return!") or in formal regulations that express a requirement ("Applicants *shall* provide a proof of certification").

slashes

The slash (/)—also called *slant line*, *diagonal*, *virgule*, *bar*, and *solidus*—both separates and shows omission. The slash can indicate alternatives or combinations.

- Our telephone numbers are (800) 549-2278/2235.
- Repair the on/off switch on the meter.

The slash often indicates omitted words and letters.

- miles/hour (miles per hour); w/o (without)

In fractions and mathematical expressions, the slash separates the numerator from the denominator (3/4 for three-fourths; *x/y* for *x* over *y*).

Although the slash is used informally with **dates** (*5/9/15*), avoid this form in technical writing, especially in **international correspondence**.

The forward slash often separates items in URL (uniform resource locator) addresses for sites on the Internet (*macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*). The backward slash is used to separate parts of file names (*c:\myfiles\reports\annual15.doc*).

so / so that / such

Avoid *so* as a substitute for *because*. See also **as / because / since**.

- *Because she* ~~She~~ reads faster, ~~so~~ she finished before I did.

Do not replace the phrase *so that* with *so* or *such that*.

- The report should be written *so that* ~~such that~~ it can be widely understood.

Such, an **adjective** meaning "of this or that kind," should never be used as a **pronoun**.

▸ Our company provides on-site child care, but I do not anticipate using ~~such.~~ *it.*

social media

Social media refers to Web sites—such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube—that allow the creation of online communities through which individuals and organizations with common interests can create content, interact, and share information. Accessed primarily through Web browsers or mobile devices, social-media platforms often incorporate **instant messaging** and **e-mail** components, and many have **blogs and forums** that allow for comments, links to other Web sites, and the collection of information that is of interest to its community.

Organizations use social media to connect with their clients, share information about their products, and reach new customers. Social media can help organizations promote goodwill, resolve problems, and obtain near-instant feedback on their products and services through conversations with and among their online communities. For those who are self-employed or beginning a **job search**, social media can both act as a networking tool and provide a way to learn about an organization and its community of users.

Choosing the Appropriate Platform

When choosing which social-media platform to join, consider what you or your organization hopes to accomplish and which community reaches more of the organization's target customers or contacts. (See also **selecting the medium**.) A manufacturing company might seek a platform that focuses on users of products similar to those it produces; a service-oriented company might select a platform that allows its users to request and receive immediate assistance. An independent contractor might choose several platforms for different purposes, advertising on one used by many clients while participating in another that allows the contractor to build a professional network.

Two main components of such platforms are the most useful in the workplace: status updates and networking connections. *Status updates* allow individuals or organizations to post brief announcements and responses to questions and have those posts immediately disseminated and responded to by others. *Networking connections* allow one individual or organization to link their company and products to another individual or organization. By doing so, the two entities become "connected" in the social-media community, allowing their posts to be intertwined into a type of ongoing conversation. Figure S–2 provides an overview of three popular social-media platforms of interest to businesses and professionals and shows how each uses status updates and networking connections to support its community.

Before selecting a specific social-media platform, understand that conversations within social media are impossible to control or pause. You must be willing to respond to the inquiries and comments, positive and negative, of other community members. Consider as well the time commitment that your selection may demand—users of many social-media platforms have expectations of quick and ongoing responses and updates. Finally, before joining a social-media platform, understand that your communications within that platform might have a wider audience than you intend.

LinkedIn	Offers individuals opportunities to connect with others and to create a professional network or community.
	Provides a profile page that acts much like a **résumé** by highlighting an individual's work, education, skills, and experiences.
	Allows community members to participate in profession-specific discussion boards, as well as post and respond to employment ads.
	Allows people to "follow" specific businesses and organizations.
Facebook	Enables businesses to broaden their brand recognition and to interact with current and new customers.
	Provides insight about potential employees, vendors, and business associates.
	Assigns each individual or business a "wall" that can be used to post status updates, pictures, videos, or links to other Web sites.
	Allows users to "friend" or "like" other users, connecting the accounts and allowing interaction between each user.
Twitter	Allows users to "follow" a company or individual who can keep clients and others aware of an organization's or individual's activities.
	Limits every message or "status update" to 140 characters; businesses and individuals can post timely updates or critical announcements.
	Allows organizations to enter near-synchronous conversations with their clients and customers.

FIGURE S–2. Comparison of Social-Media Platforms

Writing Style and Privacy Considerations

For writing style, follow both the practices of your organization and the requirements of the selected social-media platform. Some organizations have very strict guidelines for who can contribute to social-media–based conversations and how those contributions must be designed and worded. Pay close attention to the **context**, **purpose**, and **audience** of your message, ensuring that your message is clear, precise, and free of grammatical errors. See **proofreading**.

Posts in a social-media platform are immediately and often widely shared among other community participants and potentially on other unassociated Web sites. For this reason, consider both the benefit of your post to your immediate audience and the potential implications of that post to those outside the membership in your social-media community. Although many platforms are considered "informal" and used primarily for personal communications, the ability of writing to be shared throughout a given network demands that you consider how your contributions represent you professionally. Organizations often review social-media platforms as part of the employment process. Other organizations employ services to monitor what is said about them online. Many organizations have policies that prohibit employees from discussing the workplace even within a personal social-media account.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Judicious Use of Social Media

- ✔ *Always consider the purpose and suitability of your contributions.* Avoid contributions that publicly discuss topics better suited for one-on-one communication or that are considered divisive. Consider whether your contribution provides information that your audience would find appropriate and useful.
- ✔ *Understand the availability of your social-media contributions.* Consider your posts to be available to everyone and how someone, such as your employer or school, might view your "status update" or shared picture.
- ✔ *Follow your employer's policies regarding social media*. Attempting to circumnavigate policies, by using a mobile device to access a blocked site, for example, could result in severe penalties or even termination.
- ✔ *Never use personal social-media accounts while at work or in a class.* Remember that most contributions are recorded with the date and time of the post, allowing others to know when you were using the site.
- ✔ *Never comment about a job, an employer, a customer, or an instructor.* Consider everything that you contribute to a social-media platform as available to the organization or individuals that you might be writing about. Avoid comments on workplace relationships.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Judicious Use of Social Media** (*continued*)

✔ *Carefully consider "friend" requests.* Before establishing a connection, consider your organization's policy, your professional relationship, and any potential current or future conflicts of interest.

✔ *Monitor what is said or shared about you.* Be aware of posts about you, and work with your connections to maintain a public persona that best represents you in a positive light.

Consider also the information in the "Ethics Note" on page 52 as you compose your message.

some / somewhat

When *some* functions as an indefinite **pronoun** for a plural count **noun** or as an indefinite **adjective** modifying a plural count noun, use a plural **verb**.

- ▸ *Some* of us *are* prepared to work overtime.
- ▸ *Some* people *are* more productive than others.

Some is singular, however, when used with mass nouns.

- ▸ *Some* sand *has* trickled through the crack.

When *some* is used as an adjective or a pronoun meaning "an undetermined quantity" or "certain unspecified persons," it should be replaced by the **adverb** *somewhat*, which means "to some extent."

- ▸ His writing has improved *somewhat.* ~~some.~~

S

some time / sometime / sometimes

Some time refers to a duration of time. ("We waited for *some time* before making the decision.") *Sometime* refers to an unknown or unspecified time. ("We will visit with you *sometime*.") *Sometimes* refers to occasional occurrences at unspecified times. ("He *sometimes* visits the branch offices.")

spatial method of development

The spatial **method of development** describes an object or a process according to the physical arrangement of its features. Depending on the subject, you describe its features from bottom to top, side to side, east to west, outside to inside, and so on. Descriptions of this kind rely mainly on dimension (height, width, length), direction (up, down, north, south), shape (rectangular, square, semicircular), and proportion (one-half, two-thirds). Features are described in relation to one another or to their surroundings, as illustrated in Figure S–3, which provides installation requirements for drinking fountains that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Such descriptions often benefit from **visuals**, such as **drawings**, that can provide overviews and details, as is the case in Figure S–3.

Drinking Fountains and Water Coolers—Spout Height and Knee Clearance

In addition to clearances discussed in the text, the following knee clearance is required underneath the fountain: 27 inches (685 mm) minimum from the floor to the underside of the fountain, which extends 8 inches (205 mm) minimum measured from the front edge underneath the fountain back toward the wall; if a minimum 9 inches (230 mm) of toe clearance is provided, a maximum of 6 inches (150 mm) of the 48 inches (1,220 mm) of clear floor space required at the fixture may extend into the top space.

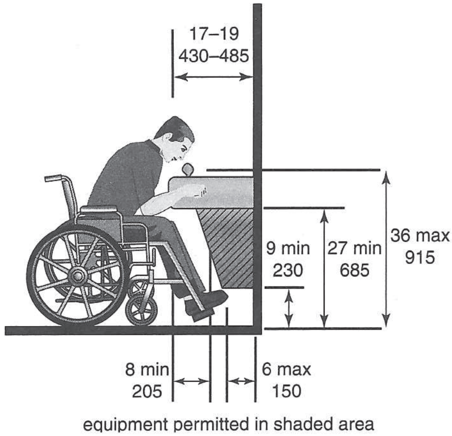


Figure 27a. Drinking Fountains and Water Coolers—Spout Height and Knee Clearance

FIGURE S–3. Spatial Description with Precise Measurements
Source: access-board.gov/ufas-html/fig27a.html. Accessed May 10, 2012.

S

The spatial method of development might be used for descriptions of warehouse inventory; **proposals** for landscape work; construction-site **progress and activity reports**; and, in combination with a step-by-step sequence, many types of **instructions**.

specifications

A specification is a detailed statement that prescribes the materials, dimensions, and quality of something to be built, installed, or manufactured.

The two broad categories of specifications—industrial and government—must each state its requirements in sufficient detail so that a contractor can construct or design the requested item within the stringent requirements of the specifications. Careful **research** and **preparation** are especially important before you begin to write, as is careful **revision** after you have completed the draft. See also **ambiguity**, **clarity**, and **plain language**.

Industrial Specifications

Industrial specifications are used, for example, in software development, in which there are no engineering drawings or other means of documentation. An industrial specification is a permanent record that documents the item being developed so that it can be maintained by someone other than the person who designed it and so that it provides detailed technical information about the item to all who need it (engineers, technical writers, technical instructors, and so on).

The industrial specification describes a planned project, a newly completed project, or an old project. The specification for each type of project must contain detailed technical descriptions of all aspects of the project: what was done and how it was done, as well as what is required to use the item, how it is used, what its function is, who would use it, and so on.

Government Specifications

Government agencies are required by law to contract for equipment strictly according to definitions provided in formal specifications. A government specification is a precise definition of exactly what the contractor is to provide. In addition to a technical description of the item to be purchased, the specification normally includes an estimated cost; an estimated delivery date; and standards for the design, manufacture, quality, testing, training of government employees, governing codes, inspection, and delivery of the item.

Government specifications contain details on the scope of the project and they list the documents the contractor is required to furnish with the device; required product characteristics and functional performance of the device; required tests, test equipment, and test procedures; required preparations for delivery; notes; and **appendixes**. These specifications appear in **requests for proposals**, which prescribe the content and deadline for **grant proposals** submitted by vendors bidding on a project.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Specifications

- ✔ Chunk information into short paragraphs, each with one requirement or subset of a requirement.
- ✔ Group related chunks into **lists** or **tables** so that readers can locate specific topics.
- ✔ Aim for short sentences in subject-verb-object order.
- ✔ Use the active **voice**, present **tense**, and imperative **mood**.
- ✔ Define relevant technical terms in a **glossary**.
- ✔ Use consistent terminology — the same term for the same idea; do not use **synonyms**.
- ✔ Be specific about requirements. Qualifiers like *large, many,* and *frequently* are not measureable or testable.
- ✔ Be precise in **word choice** when stating requirements:
  - Use "shall" and "must" for mandatory requirements.
  - Use "will" for how things operate or where they are located ("The auxiliary generator will remain at its current location at the site").
  - Use "should" for flexible requirements.
- ✔ Use **visuals** where needed and appropriate.

spelling

Because spelling errors in your documents can confuse readers and damage your credibility, careful **proofreading** is essential. The use of a spell checker is crucial; however, it will not catch all mistakes. A spell checker or an auto-correct function cannot detect a spelling error if the error results in a valid word; for example, if you mean *to* but inadvertently type *too*, the spell checker will not detect the error. If you are unsure about the spelling of a word, do not rely on guesswork or a spell checker — consult a **dictionary**.

strata / stratum

Strata is the plural form of *stratum*, meaning "a layer of material."

- The land's *strata* are exposed by erosion.
- Each *stratum* is clearly visible in the cliff.

style

A dictionary definition of *style* is "the way in which something is said or done, as distinguished from its substance." Writers' styles are determined by the way writers think and transfer their thoughts to paper—the way they use words, sentences, images, **figures of speech**, and so on.

A writer's style is the way his or her language functions in particular situations. For example, an **e-mail** to a friend would be relaxed, even chatty, in **tone**, whereas a job **application cover letter** would be more restrained and formal. Obviously, the style appropriate to one situation would not be appropriate to the other. In both situations, the **audience**, the **purpose**, and the **context** determine the manner or style the writer adopts. Beyond an individual's personal style, various kinds of writing have distinct stylistic traits, such as **technical writing style**.

Standard English can be divided into two broad categories of style—formal and informal—according to how it functions in certain situations. Understanding the distinction between formal and informal writing styles helps writers use the appropriate style. However, no clear-cut line divides the two categories and some writing may call for a combination of the two. See also **English, varieties of**.

Formal Writing Style

S

A formal writing style can perhaps best be defined by pointing to certain material that is clearly formal, such as scholarly and scientific articles in professional journals, lectures read at meetings of professional societies, and legal documents. Material written in a formal style is usually the work of a specialist writing to other specialists or writing that embodies laws or regulations. As a result, the vocabulary is specialized and precise. The writer's tone is impersonal and objective because the subject matter looms larger in the writing than does the author's personality. (See **point of view**.) A formal writing style does not use **contractions**, slang, or dialect. Because the material generally examines complex ideas, the **sentence construction** also may be complex.

Formal writing need not be dull and lifeless. By using such techniques as the active **voice** whenever possible, **sentence variety**, and **subordination**, a writer can make formal writing lively and interesting, especially if the subject matter is inherently interesting to **readers**. In the following example, a physicist uses a concept that is taken for granted (distance) to show how definitions are important in science.

> ▶ Distance is such a basic concept in our understanding of the world that it is easy to underestimate the depth of its subtlety. With the surprising effects that special and general relativity have had on our notions of space and time, and the new features arising from string theory, we are led to be a bit more careful even in our definition of distance. The most meaningful definitions in physics are those that are operational—that is, definitions that provide a means, at least in principle, for measuring whatever is being defined. After all, no matter how abstract a concept is, having an operational definition allows us to boil down its meaning to an experimental procedure for measuring its value.
>
> —Brian Greene, *The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory*

Whether you should use a formal style in a particular instance depends on your readers and purpose. When writers attempt to force a formal style where it should not be used, their writing is likely to fall victim to **affectation**, **awkwardness**, and **gobbledygook**. See also **jargon**.

Informal Writing Style

An informal writing style is a relaxed and colloquial way of writing standard English. It is the style found in most personal e-mail and in some business **correspondence**, blogs, and promotional writing. (See also **blogs and forums**.) There is less distance between the writer and the reader because the tone is more personal than in formal writing. Consider the following passage, written in an informal style, from a nonfiction book on statistics.

> ▶ After a few months of reading risk statistics, I had a curious experience one morning, an epiphany of sorts. At the time, however, I felt more like Alice in Wonderland after taking a sip of the "Drink Me" potion. When I opened my eyes in bed and began to contemplate my day, I began to see it not in terms of what I had to accomplish but in terms of the risks that I would encounter. The world suddenly started looking different.
>
> —John F. Ross, *The Polar Bear Strategy: Reflections on Risk in Modern Life*

As this example illustrates, the vocabulary of an informal writing style is made up of generally familiar rather than unfamiliar words and expressions, although slang and dialect are usually avoided. An informal style approximates the cadence and structure of spoken English while conforming to the grammatical conventions of written English.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Writers who consciously attempt to create a distinctive style usually defeat their purpose. Attempting to impress readers with a flashy writing style can lead to affectation; attempting to impress them with scientific objectivity can produce a style that is dull and lifeless. Technical writing need be neither affected nor dull. It can and should be simple, clear, direct, even interesting—the key is to master basic writing skills and always to keep your readers in mind. What will be both informative and interesting to your readers? When that question is uppermost in your mind as you apply the steps of the writing process, you will achieve an interesting and informative writing style. See "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Developing an Effective Style**

- ✔ Use the active voice — not exclusively but as much as possible without allowing your writing to become awkward or illogical.
- ✔ Use **parallel structure** whenever a sentence or **list** presents two or more thoughts of equal importance.
- ✔ Vary sentence structure to avoid a monotonous style.
- ✔ Avoid stating positive thoughts in negative terms (write "40 percent responded" instead of "60 percent failed to respond"). See also **ethics in writing**, **plain language**, and **positive writing**.
- ✔ Concentrate on achieving the proper balance between **emphasis** and subordination.

Style guides, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style* and the Associated Press *Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*, provide specific and sometimes varied advice for handling issues of usage, style, and formats for citations, correspondence, and documents.

S

subordination

Subordination is the use of sentence structure to show the appropriate relationship between ideas of unequal importance.

- ▸ Envirex Systems now employs 500 people. It was founded just three years ago.
  [The two ideas are equally important.]
- ▸ Envirex Systems, *which now employs 500 people*, was founded just three years ago.

[The number of employees is subordinated; the founding date is emphasized.]

- ▶ Envirex Systems, *which was founded just three years ago*, now employs 500 people.
  [The founding date is subordinated; the number of employees is emphasized.]

Subordination allows you to emphasize your main idea by putting less important ideas in subordinate **clauses** or **phrases**.

DEPENDENT CLAUSE	The research report, *which covered 86 pages*, was carefully documented.
PHRASE	The research report, *covering 86 pages*, was carefully documented.
SINGLE MODIFIER	The *86-page* research report was carefully documented.

Subordinating **conjunctions** (*because*, *if*, *while*, *when*, *although*) achieve subordination effectively.

- ▶ A buildup of deposits is impossible *because* the pipes are flushed with water every day.

You may use a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*) to concede that an opposite or a balancing fact is true; however, a subordinating conjunction can often make the point more smoothly.

- ▶ *Although* their lab is well funded, ours is better equipped for DNA testing.

The relationship between a conditional statement and a statement of consequences is clearer if the condition is expressed as a subordinate clause.

- ▶ *Because* the tests were delayed, the surgery was postponed.

Relative **pronouns** (*who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*) can be used effectively in subordinate clauses.

- ▶ OnlinePro, *which* protects computers from malicious programs, makes your system "invisible" to hackers.

S

Avoid subordinate constructions that overlap and depend on the preceding construction. Overlapping can make the relationship between a relative pronoun and its antecedent less clear.

OVERLAPPING Shock, *which* often accompanies severe injuries and infections, is a failure of the circulation, *which* is marked by a fall in blood pressure *that* initially affects the skin

	(*which* explains pallor) and later the vital organs such as the kidneys and brain.
CLEAR	Shock often accompanies severe injuries and infections. Marked by a fall in blood pressure, it is a failure of the circulation, initially to the skin (thus producing pallor) and later to the vital organs like the kidneys and the brain.

Effective subordination can be used to achieve **conciseness**, **emphasis**, and **sentence variety**.

suffixes

A suffix is a letter or letters added to the end of a word to change its meaning in some way. Suffixes can change the part of speech of a word.

NO SUFFIX	The proposal was *thorough*. [**adjective**]
SUFFIX	The *thoroughness* is obvious. [**noun**]
SUFFIX	The proposal *thoroughly* described the problem. [**adverb**]

The suffix *-like* is sometimes added to nouns to make them into adjectives. The resulting compound word is hyphenated only if it is unusual or might not immediately be clear (childlike, lifelike, *but* dictionary-like, Einstein-like). See **hyphens**.

surveys (*see* questionnaires)

synonyms

S

A synonym is a word that means nearly the same thing as another word does (*seller*, *vendor*, *supplier*). The dictionary definitions of synonyms are similar, but the connotations may differ. For example, a *seller* may be the same thing as a *supplier*, but the word *supplier* does not suggest a retail transaction as strongly as *seller* does.

Do not try to impress your **readers** by finding fancy or obscure synonyms in a **thesaurus**; the result is likely to be **affectation**. See also **connotation / denotation** and **antonyms**.

syntax

Syntax refers to the way words, phrases, and clauses are combined to form sentences. In English, the most common structure is the subject-verb-object pattern. For more information about the word order of sentences, see **sentence construction**, **sentence faults**, **sentence fragments**, and **sentence variety**.

T

tables

A table organizes numerical and verbal data, such as statistics, into parallel rows and columns that allow **readers** to make precise item-to-item comparisons. Overall data trends, however, are more easily conveyed in **graphs** and other **visuals**.

Table Elements

Tables typically include the elements shown in Figure T–1.

Table Number. Table numbers should be placed above tables and assigned sequentially throughout the document.

Table Title. The title (or *caption*), which is normally placed just above the table, should describe concisely what the table represents.

Box Head. The box head contains the column headings, which should be brief but descriptive. Units of measurement should be either specified as part of the heading or enclosed in parentheses beneath it. Standard **abbreviations** and symbols are acceptable. Avoid vertical or diagonal lettering, if possible.

Stub. The stub, the left vertical column of a table, lists the items about which information is given in the body of the table.

Body. The body comprises the data below the column headings and to the right of the stub. Within the body, arrange columns so that the items to be compared appear in adjacent rows and columns. Align the numerical data in columns for ease of comparison, as shown in Figure T–1. Where no information exists for a specific item, substitute a row of dots or a dash to acknowledge the gap.

Rules. Rules are the lines (or *borders*) that separate the table into its various parts. Tables should include top and bottom borders. Tables often include right and left borders, although they may be open at the sides, as shown in Figure T–1. Generally, include a horizontal rule

Table 1. Estimated Emissions from Electric Power Generation (tons per gigawatthour)

Fuel	Sulphur Dioxide	Nitrogen Oxides	Parti-culate Matter	Carbon Dioxide	Volatile Organic Compounds
Eastern coal	1.74	2.90	0.10	1,000	0.06
Western coal	0.81	2.20	0.06	1,039	0.09
Gas	0.003	0.57	0.02	640	0.05
Biomass	0.06	1.25	0.11	0*	0.61
Oil	0.51	0.63	0.02	840	0.03
Wind	0	0	0	0	0
Geothermal	0	0	0	0	0
Hydro	0	0	0	0	0
Solar	0	0	0	0	0
Nuclear	0	0	0	0	0

*Net emissions.

Source: Department of Energy

Table number
Table title
Box head
Column headings
Stub
Body
Rule
Footnote
Source line

FIGURE T–1. Elements of a Table

between the column headings and the body of the table. Separate the columns with vertical rules within a table only when they aid clarity.

Footnotes. Footnotes are used for explanations of individual items in the table. Symbols (such as * and †) or lowercase letters (sometimes in parentheses) rather than numbers are ordinarily used to indicate table footnotes. Otherwise, numbers might be mistaken for numerical data or could be confused with the numbering system for text footnotes. See also **documenting sources**.

Source Line. The source line identifies where the data originated. When a source line is appropriate, it appears below the table. Many organizations place the source line below the footnotes. See also **copyright** and **plagiarism**.

Continuing Tables. When a table must be divided so that it can be continued on another page, repeat the column headings and the table number and title on the new page with a "continued" label (for example, "Table 3. [title], *continued*").

Informal Tables

To list relatively few items that would be easier for the reader to grasp in tabular form than in running text, you can use an informal table, as long as you introduce it properly, as shown in Figure T–2. Although informal tables do not need titles or table numbers to identify them,

Dear Customer:
To order replacement parts, use the following part numbers and prices:

Part	*Part Number*	*Price ($)*
Diverter valve	2-912	12.50
Gasket kit	2-776	0.95
Adapter	3-212	0.90

FIGURE T–2. Informal Table

they do require column headings that accurately describe the information listed.

tables of contents

A table of contents lists all the major sections of a long document or Web site in their order of appearance. Tables of contents allow **readers** to locate specific information quickly and easily by referencing section page numbers in printed documents or portable document format (PDF) files or by clicking hyperlinks in Web content.

When creating a table of contents, use the major **headings** and subheadings of your document exactly as they appear in the text, as shown in the entry **formal reports**. (See the table of contents in Figure F–5 and related Digital Tip on page 197.) In print documents, the table of contents is placed in the front matter following the title page and **abstract**, and it precedes the list of tables or figures, the foreword, and the preface. On large or complex Web sites, the table of contents typically appears at the top of the first page.

T

technical manuals (*see* manuals)

technical writing style

The goal of technical writing is to enable **readers** to use a technology or understand a process or concept. Because the subject matter is more important than the writer's voice, technical writing style uses an objective, not a subjective, **tone**. The writing **style** is direct and utilitarian, emphasizing exactness and **clarity** rather than elegance or allusiveness. A technical writer uses figurative language only when a **figure of speech** would facilitate understanding.

Technical writing is often—but not always—aimed at readers who are not experts in the subject, such as consumers or employees learning to operate unfamiliar equipment. Because such **audiences** are inexperienced and the procedures described may involve hazardous material or equipment, clarity becomes an ethical as well as a stylistic concern. (See also **ethics in writing**.) Figure T–3 is an excerpt from a technical **manual** that instructs eye-care specialists about operating testing equipment. As the figure illustrates, **visuals** as well as **layout and design** enhance clarity, providing the reader with both text and visual information.

Technical writing style uses a technical vocabulary appropriate for the reader, as Figure T–3 shows (*monocular electrode*, *saccade*), but it avoids **affectation**. Good technical writing also avoids overusing the passive **voice**. See also **instructions**, **organization**, **plain language**, and **process explanation**.

MONOCULAR RECORDING

A monocular electrode configuration might be useful to measure the horizontal eye movement of each eye separately. This configuration is commonly used during the voluntary saccade tests.

1. Place electrodes at the inner canthi of both eyes (**A and B**, Figure 51).
2. Place electrodes at the outer canthi of both eyes (**C and D**).
3. Place the last electrode anywhere on the forehead (**E**).
4. Plug the electrodes into the jacks described in Figure 52 on the following page.

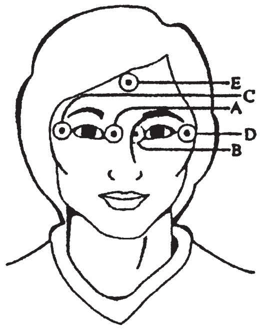


Figure 51

With this configuration, the Channel A display moves upward when the patient's left eye moves nasally and moves downward when the patient's left eye moves temporally. The Channel B display moves upward when the patient's right eye moves temporally and moves downward when the patient's right eye moves nasally.

NOTE: *During all testing, the Nystar Plus identifies and eliminates eye blinks without vertical electrode recordings.*

FIGURE T–3. Technical Writing Style

T

telegraphic style

Telegraphic style condenses writing by omitting **articles**, **pronouns**, **conjunctions**, and **transitions**. Although **conciseness** is important, especially in **instructions**, writers sometimes try to achieve conciseness by omitting necessary words and thus producing misunderstandings. Compare the following two passages and notice how much clearer the revised version reads (the added words are italicized).

TELEGRAPHIC Take following action when treating serious burns. Remove loose clothing on or near burn. Wash area around burn. Cover injury with clean dressing. Secure dressing with tape. Separate fingers/toes with gauze/cloth to prevent sticking. Do not apply medication unless doctor prescribes.

CLEAR Take *the* following action when treating *a* serious burn. Remove *any* loose clothing on or near *the* burn. Wash *the* area around *the* burn and cover *the* injury with *a* clean dressing. *Then* secure *the* dressing with tape. Separate *the* fingers *or* toes with gauze *or* cloth to prevent *them from* sticking *together*. Do not apply medication unless *a* doctor prescribes *it*.

Telegraphic style can also produce **ambiguity**, as the following example from a crane operator manual demonstrates.

AMBIGUOUS Grasp knob and adjust lever before raising boom. [Does this sentence mean that the reader should *adjust the lever* or also *grasp an "adjust lever"*?]

CLEAR Grasp *the* knob and adjust *the* lever before raising *the* boom.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Although you may save yourself work by writing telegraphically, you may produce serious misunderstandings and your readers will have to work that much harder to decipher your meaning. Professional courtesy requires that you help your **reader**. Even in **text messaging**, you need to make sure your reader understands your meaning.

tenant / tenet

A *tenant* is a person who holds or temporarily occupies a property owned by another person. ("The *tenant* was upset by the rent increase.") A *tenet* is an opinion or principle held by a person, an organization, or a system. ("Competition is a central *tenet* of capitalism.")

tense

DIRECTORY

Past Tense 541
Past Perfect Tense 542
Present Tense 542
Present Perfect Tense 542
Future Tense 542
Future Perfect Tense 542
Shift in Tense 543

Tense is the grammatical term for **verb** forms that indicate time distinctions. The six tenses in English are past, past perfect, present, present perfect, future, and future perfect. Each tense also has a corresponding progressive form.

TENSE	BASIC FORM	PROGRESSIVE FORM
Past	I began	I was beginning
Past perfect	I had begun	I had been beginning
Present	I begin	I am beginning
Present perfect	I have begun	I have been beginning
Future	I will begin	I will be beginning
Future perfect	I will have begun	I will have been beginning

Perfect tenses allow you to express a prior action or condition that continues in a present, past, or future time.

PRESENT PERFECT I *have begun* to compile the survey results and will continue for the rest of the month.

PAST PERFECT I *had begun* to read the manual when the fire alarm sounded.

FUTURE PERFECT I *will have begun* this project by the time funds are allocated.

Progressive tenses allow you to describe some ongoing action or condition in the present, past, or future.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE I *am beginning* to be concerned that we will not meet the deadline.

PAST PROGRESSIVE I *was beginning* to think we would not finish by the deadline.

FUTURE PROGRESSIVE I *will be requesting* a leave of absence when this project is finished.

Past Tense

The simple past tense indicates that an action took place in its entirety in the past. The past tense is usually formed by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the root form of the verb. ("We *closed* the office early yesterday.")

Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense (also called *pluperfect*) indicates that one past event preceded another. It is formed by combining the helping verb *had* with the past-participle form of the main verb. ("He *had finished* by the time I arrived.")

Present Tense

The simple present tense represents action occurring in the present, without any indication of time duration. ("I *ride* the train.")

A general truth is always expressed in the present tense. ("Time *heals* all wounds.") The present tense can be used to present actions or conditions that have no time restrictions. ("Water *boils* at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.") Similarly, the present tense can be used to indicate habitual action. ("I *pass* the coffee shop every day.") The present tense is also used for the "historical present," as in newspaper headlines ("FDA *Approves* New Cancer Drug") or as in references to an author's opinion or a work's contents—even though it was written in the past.

▸ In her 1979 article, Carolyn Miller *argues* that technical writing possesses significant "humanistic value."

Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense describes something from the recent past that has a bearing on the present—a period of time before the present but after the simple past. The present perfect tense is formed by combining a form of the helping verb *have* with the past-participle form of the main verb. ("We *have finished* the draft and can now revise it.")

Future Tense

The simple future tense indicates a time that will occur after the present. It uses the helping verb *will* (or *shall*) plus the main verb. ("I *will finish* the job tomorrow.") Do not use the future tense needlessly; doing so merely adds complexity.

T

▸ This system *is* ~~will be~~ explained on page 3.

▸ When you press this button, the hoist *moves* ~~will move~~ the plate into position.

Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense indicates action that will have been completed at the time of or before another future action. It combines *will have* and the past participle of the main verb. ("She *will have driven* 1,400 miles by the time she returns.")

Shift in Tense

Be consistent in your use of tense. The only legitimate shift in tense records a real change in time. Illogical shifts in tense will only confuse your **readers**.

cleaned

▶ Before he installed the circuit, the technician ~~cleans~~ the contacts.

ESL TIP for Using the Progressive Form

The progressive form of the verb is composed of two features: a form of the helping verb *be* and the *-ing* form of the base verb.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	I *am updating* the Web site.
PAST PROGRESSIVE	I *was updating* the Web site last week.
FUTURE PROGRESSIVE	I *will be updating* the Web site regularly.

The present progressive is used in three ways:

1. To refer to an action that is in progress at the moment of speaking or writing:
   ▶ The technician *is repairing* the copier.
2. To highlight that a state or an action is not permanent:
   ▶ The office temp *is helping* us for a few weeks.
3. To express future plans:
   ▶ The summer intern *is leaving* to return to school this Friday.

The past progressive is used to refer to a continuing action or condition in the past, usually with specified limits.

▶ I *was failing* calculus until I got a tutor.

The future progressive is used to refer to a continuous action or condition in the future.

▶ We *will be monitoring* his condition all night.

Verbs that express mental activity (*believe*, *know*, *see*, and so on) are generally not used in the progressive.

believe

▶ I ~~am believing~~ the defendant's testimony.

T

test reports

Test reports are similar to **laboratory reports** in communicating the results of scientific and technical testing, but they are considerably smaller, often less formal, and more routine. The test report can be presented as a **memo** or a **letter**, depending on whether its recipient is inside or outside the organization. Either way, as in Figure T–4, the **report** should have a subject line at the beginning to identify the test being discussed. See also **correspondence**.

The opening of a test report should state the test's purpose, unless it is obvious from the subject line. The body of the report presents the data and, if relevant, describes procedures used to conduct the test. State the results of the test and, if necessary, interpret them. Conclude the report, if appropriate, with any recommendations made as a result of the test. Figure T–4 shows a report of tests required by a government agency to monitor asbestos in the air at a highway construction site.

text messaging

Text messaging, or *texting*, refers to the delivery or exchange of brief written messages between mobile phones over cellular networks. Text messaging is effective for simple messages communicated between people on the move or in nontraditional workplaces. ("Client backup servers down.") Some text messages can include photographs, video, and other digital files. As with your workplace **e-mail**, consider carefully the content of your messages before sending them. For the real-time exchange of brief messages, the phone or **instant messaging** may be a better choice. See also **selecting the medium**.

that / which / who

The word *that* is often overused and can foster wordiness.

▸ *When* ~~I think that when~~ this project is finished, *I think* ~~that~~ you should publish the results.

However, include *that* in a sentence if it avoids ambiguity or improves the pace.

▸ Some designers fail to appreciate *that* the workers who operate equipment constitute an important safety system.

Biospherics, Inc.

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September 14, 2015

Safety Committee
The Angle Company, Inc.
1869 Slauson Boulevard
Waynesville, VA 23927

Subject: Monitoring Airborne Asbestos at the I-66 Site

On August 28, Biospherics, Inc., performed asbestos-in-air monitoring at your Interstate 66 construction site, near Front Royal, Virginia. Six people and three construction areas were monitored.

Methodology
All monitoring and analyses were performed in accordance with "Occupational Exposure to Asbestos," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 2014. Each worker or area was fitted with a battery-powered personal sampler pump operating at a flow rate of approximately two liters per minute. The airborne asbestos was collected on a 37 mm Millipore-type AA filter mounted in an open-face filter holder. Samples were collected over an 8-hour period.

Conclusions
In all cases, the workers and areas monitored were exposed to levels of asbestos fibers well below the standard set by OSHA. The highest exposure found was that of a driller exposed to 0.21 fibers per cubic centimeter. The driller's sample was analyzed by scanning electron microscopy followed by energy-dispersive X-ray techniques that identify the chemical nature of each fiber, to identify the fibers as asbestos or other fiber types. Results from these analyses show that the fibers present were tremolite asbestos. No nonasbestos fibers were found.

If you need more details, please let me know.

Yours truly,

Gary Geirelach

Gary Geirelach
Chemist
gg2@Biosp.net

FIGURE T–4. Test Report

Use *which*, not *that*, with nonrestrictive clauses (clauses that do not change the meaning of the basic sentence).

NONRESTRICTIVE	After John left the law firm, *which* is the largest in the region, he started a private practice.
RESTRICTIVE	Companies *that* diversify usually succeed.

That and *which* should refer to animals and things; *who* should refer to people.

- ▸ Dr. Cynthia Winter, *who* recently joined the clinic, treated a dog *that* was severely burned.

there / their / they're

There is an **expletive** (a word that fills the position of another word, phrase, or clause) or an **adverb**.

EXPLETIVE	*There* were more than 1,500 people at the conference.
ADVERB	More than 1,500 people were *there*.

Their is the **possessive case** form of *they*. ("Managers check *their* e-mail regularly.") *They're* is a **contraction** of *they are*. ("Clients tell us *they're* pleased with our services.")

thesaurus

A thesaurus lists **synonyms** and **antonyms** that are arranged alphabetically or retrievable by categories. Thoughtfully used, a thesaurus can help you with **word choice** during the **revision** phase of the writing process. However, the variety of words it offers may tempt you to choose an inappropriate word for the **context** or to use an obscure synonym. Do not use a thesaurus to impress your **readers**. (See also **affectation**.) Never use a word unless you are sure of its meanings; its **connotations** might be unknown to you and could mislead your readers. See also **dictionaries**.

titles

Titles of documents are important because many **readers** decide whether to read a **report** or message, for example, based on its title. Titles are also crucial for filing and retrieving documents. For advice on creating and using titles for figures and tables, see **visuals**.

Reports and Long Documents

Titles for reports, **proposals**, articles, and similar documents should identify the document's topic, reflect its **tone**, and indicate its **scope** and **purpose**, as in the following:

- ▸ "Effects of 60-Hertz Electric Fields on Embryo Chick Development, Growth, and Behavior"

Such titles should be concise but not so short that they are not specific. For example, the title "Electric Fields and Living Organisms" announces the topic and might be appropriate for a book, but it does not answer important questions that readers of an article would expect, such as "What is the relationship between electric fields and living organisms?" and "What aspects of the organisms are related to electric fields?"

Avoid titles with such redundancies as "Notes on," "Studies on," or "A Report on." However, works like annual reports or **feasibility reports** should be identified as such in the title because this information specifies the purpose and scope of the report. For titles of **progress and activity reports**, indicate the dates in a subtitle ("Quarterly Report on Hospital Admission Rates: January–March 2015"). Avoid using technical shorthand, such as chemical formulas, and other **abbreviations** in your title unless the work is addressed exclusively to specialists in the field. For multivolume publications, repeat the title on each volume and include the subtitle and number of each volume.

Do not write titles in sentence form, except for titles of articles in **newsletters**, magazines, and similar publications that ask a **rhetorical question**, as in the following:

- ▸ "Is Online Learning Right for You?"

E-mail, Memos, and Online Postings

Subject lines of **e-mail** messages, **memos**, and online postings function as titles and should concisely and accurately describe the topic of the message. Because recipients often use subject-line titles to prioritize and sort their **correspondence**, such titles must be specific.

VAGUE	Subject: Tuition Reimbursement
SPECIFIC	Subject: Tuition Reimbursement for Time-Management Seminar

Although the title in the subject line announces your topic, you should still develop an opening that provides **context** for the message.

Formatting Titles

Use the standards in this section for formatting titles, unless you are following a style that recommends otherwise.

Capitalization. Capitalize the initial letters of the first and last words of a title, as well as all major words in the title. Do not capitalize articles (*a*, *an*, *the*), coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*), or short prepositions (*at*, *in*, *on*, *of*) unless they begin or end the title (*The Lives of a Cell*). Capitalize prepositions in titles if they contain five or more letters (*Between*, *Since*, *Until*, *After*).

Italics. Use **italics** or underlining when referring to titles of separately published works, such as a book, periodical, newspaper, blog (but *not* the URL), pamphlet, brochure, legal case, movie, television series, and Web site based on a periodical. See also **blogs and forums**.

- *Turning Workplace Conflict into Collaboration* [book] by Joyce Richards was reviewed in the *New York Times* [newspaper, online or print].
- We will include links to the blog *Gizmodo* (http://gizmodo.com/) and to *Consumer Reports Online* (www.consumerreports.org).

Abbreviations of such titles are italicized if their spelled-out forms would be italicized.

- *NEJM* stands for the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Italicize the titles of CDs, DVDs, plays, long poems, paintings, sculptures, and long musical works.

Quotation Marks. Use **quotation marks** when referring to parts of publications, such as chapters of books and articles or sections within periodicals or blogs.

- Her chapter titled "Effects of Government Regulations on Motorcycle Safety" in the book *Government Regulation and the Economy* was discussed in a recent article, "No-Fault Insurance and Motorcycles?" published on the blog *AmericanCycle*.

Titles of reports, essays, short poems, short musical works (including songs), short stories, and single episodes of radio and television programs are also enclosed in quotation marks.

Special Cases. Some titles, by convention, are not set off by quotation marks, underlining, or italics. Such titles follow standard practice for capitalization and the practice of the organization.

- Microsoft.com [Web site], Technical Writing [college course title], Old Testament, Magna Carta, the Constitution, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Lands' End Catalog

The treatment for Internet content, such as individual YouTube videos, varies among documentation styles. The best guideline: Be consistent and adhere to the documentation style you are following. See **documenting sources**.

to / too / two

To, *too*, and *two* are frequently confused because they sound alike. *To* is used as a **preposition** or to mark an infinitive. See **verbs**.

- Send the report *to* the district manager. [preposition]
- I do not wish *to* attend. [mark of the infinitive]

Too is an **adverb** meaning "excessively" or "also."

- The price was *too* high. [excessively]
- I, *too*, thought it was high. [also]

Two is a **number** (*two* buildings, *two* concepts).

tone

Tone is the attitude a writer expresses toward the subject and his or her readers. In workplace writing, tone may range widely—depending on the **purpose**, situation, **context**, **audience**, and even the medium of a communication. For example, in an **e-mail** message to be read only by an associate who is also a friend, your tone might be casual.

- Your proposal to Smith and Kline is super. We'll just need to hammer out the schedule. If we get the contract, I owe you lunch!

In a message to your manager or superior, however, your tone might be more formal and respectful.

- Your proposal to Smith and Kline is excellent. I have marked a couple of places where I'm concerned that we are committing ourselves to a schedule that we might not be able to keep. If I can help further, please let me know.

In a message that serves as a **report** to numerous readers, the tone would be professional, without the more personal **style** that you would use with an individual reader.

- The Smith and Kline proposal appears complete and thorough, based on our department's evaluation. Several small revisions, however, would ensure that the company is not committing itself to an unrealistic schedule. These revisions are marked on the copy of the report attached to this message.

The **word choice**, the **introduction**, and even the **title** contribute to the overall tone of your document. For instance, a title such as "Ecological Consequences of Diminishing Water Resources in California" clearly sets a different tone from "What Happens When We've Drained California Dry?" The first title would be appropriate for a report; the second title would be more appropriate for a popular blog or **newsletter article**. See also **correspondence** and **technical writing style**.

trade journal articles

DIRECTORY

Planning the Article 550
Gathering the Data 551
Organizing the Draft 552
Preparing Sections of the Article 552
Preparing the Manuscript 553
Obtaining Publication Clearance 553

Trade journal articles are written for professional periodicals that aim to further the knowledge in a field among specialists in that field. (See **audience**.) Such periodicals, commonly known as trade journals (or professional or scholarly journals), are often the official publications of professional societies. *Technical Communication*, for example, is an official voice of the Society for Technical Communication. Other professional publications include *IEEE Transactions on Communications*, *Chemical Engineering Journal*, *Nucleonics Week*, and hundreds of others. Professional staff people, such as engineers, scientists, educators, and legal professionals, regularly contribute articles to trade journals.

Writing a trade journal article in your field can make your work more widely known, provide publicity for your employer, contribute to your profession, and even improve your chances for professional advancement.

Planning the Article

When you are thinking about writing an article for a trade journal, consider the following questions:

- Is your work or your knowledge of the subject original? If not, what is there about your approach that justifies publication?
- Will the significance of the article justify the time and effort needed to write it?
- What parts of your work, project, or study are most appropriate to include in the article?

To help you answer those questions, learn as much as possible about the periodical or periodicals to which you plan to submit an article and consult your colleagues for advice. Once you have decided on several journals, consider the following factors about each one:

- The professional interests and size of its readership
- The professional reputation of the journal
- The appropriateness of your article to the journal's goals, as stated on its masthead page or in a mission statement on its Web site
- The frequency with which its articles are cited in other journals

Next, read back issues of the journal or journals to find out information such as the amount and kind of details that the articles include, the length of the articles, and the typical writing **style**. (See also **context**.)

If your subject involves a particular project, begin work on your article when the project is in progress. That allows you to write the draft in manageable increments and record the details of the project while they are fresh in your mind. It also makes the writing integral to the project and may even reveal any weaknesses in the design or details of the project, such as the need for more data.

As you plan your article, decide whether to invite one or more coauthors to join you. Doing so can add strength and substance to an article. However, as with all **collaborative writing**, you should establish a schedule, assign tasks, and designate a primary author to ensure that the finished article reads smoothly.

Gathering the Data

As you gather information, take notes from all the sources of primary and secondary **research** available to you. First, carefully review the literature to establish what has been published about your topic to ensure that you are not duplicating what has already been published. (Some articles, in fact, begin with a **literature review**.) As you compile that information, record your references in full; include all the information you need to document the source. See also **documenting sources**.

Organizing the Draft

Some trade journals use a prescribed **organization** for articles. The following organization is common in scientific journals: introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, and sources cited. Look closely at several issues of the journals that you target to determine how those or other sections are developed. If the major organization is not prescribed, choose and arrange the various sections of the draft in a way that shows your results to best advantage.

The best guarantee of a well-organized article is a good outline. (See **outlining**.) If you have coauthors, work from a common, well-developed outline to coordinate the various writers' work and make sure the parts fit together logically.

Preparing Sections of the Article

As you prepare an article, pay particular attention to a number of key sections and elements: the **abstract**, the **introduction**, the **conclusion**, **visuals** and **tables**, **headings**, and references.

Abstract. Although the abstract will appear at the beginning of the article, write it only after you have finished writing the body of the manuscript. Follow any instructions provided by the journal on writing abstracts and review abstracts previously published in that journal. Prepare your abstract carefully—it will be the basis on which other researchers decide whether to read your article in full. Abstracts are often published independently and are a source of terms (called *keywords*) used to index, by subject, the original article for computerized information-retrieval systems.

Introduction. The introduction should discuss these aspects of the article:

- The **purpose** and **scope** of the article
- A definition of the problem examined
- The methodology or rationale for your approach to the problem or project and the reasons you rejected alternative approaches
- Earlier work in the field, including other approaches described in previously published articles

Above all, your introduction should emphasize what is new and different about your approach, especially if you are not dealing with a new concept. It should also demonstrate the overall significance of your project or approach by explaining how it fills a need, solves a current problem, or offers a useful application.

Conclusion. The conclusion pulls together your results and interprets them in relation to the purpose of your study and the methods used to conduct it. Your conclusion must grow from the evidence for the findings in the body of the article.

Visuals and Tables. Use visuals to clarify information and reinforce the point you are making in the article. Design each visual for a specific purpose: to describe a function, to show an external appearance, to show internal construction, to display statistical data, or to indicate trends.

Headings. Headings identify topics and break the text into manageable portions. They also allow journal readers to understand the development of your topic and pinpoint sections of particular interest to them. Check the use of headings when you review back issues of the journal.

References. The references section (often titled "Works Cited") of the article lists the sources you used in the article. The format for listing sources varies from field to field. Usually the journal to which you submit an article will specify the form the editors require for citing sources. For a detailed discussion of using and citing sources, see **documenting sources** and **quotations**.

Preparing the Manuscript

Trade journals often recommend a particular style guide, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, and most provide detailed guidelines on style and format at the journal's Web site. Such style guides often include specific instructions about how to format the manuscript, how many copies to submit, and how to handle **abbreviations**, symbols, **mathematical equations**, and the like. You may need to check with the editor about the format, file type, or other special requirements for **photographs** or scanned images.

Obtaining Publication Clearance

After you have finalized your article, submit a copy to your employer for review before sending it to the journal. A review will ensure that you have not inadvertently revealed any proprietary information. In an academic environment, you will need to seek assistance from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you plan to use research based on gathering data from people as research subjects. Likewise, secure permission ahead of time to print information for which someone else holds the **copyright**. See also **plagiarism**.

transition

Transition is the means of achieving a smooth flow of ideas from sentence to sentence, **paragraph** to paragraph, and subject to subject. Transition is a two-way indicator of what has been said and what will be said; it provides **readers** with guideposts for linking ideas and clarifying the relationship between them.

Transition can be obvious.

▶ *Having considered* the technical problems outlined in this proposal, *we move next* to the question of adequate staffing.

Transition can be subtle.

▶ *Even if* technical problems could be solved, there *still remains* the issue of adequate staffing.

Either way, you now have your readers' attention fastened on the problem of adequate staffing, which is exactly what you set out to do.

Methods of Transition

Transition can be achieved in many ways: (1) using transitional words and phrases, (2) repeating keywords or key ideas, (3) using **pronouns** with clear antecedents, (4) using enumeration (1, 2, 3, or first, second, third), (5) summarizing a previous paragraph, (6) asking a question, and (7) using a transitional paragraph.

Certain words and phrases are inherently transitional. Consider the following terms and their functions:

FUNCTION	TERMS
Result	*therefore, as a result, consequently, thus, hence*
Example	*for example, for instance, specifically, as an illustration*
Comparison	*similarly, likewise, in comparison*
Contrast	*but, yet, still, however, nevertheless, on the other hand*
Addition	*moreover, furthermore, also, too, besides, in addition*
Time	*now, later, meanwhile, since then, after that, before that time*
Sequence	*first, second, third, initially, then, next, finally*

Within a paragraph, such transitional expressions clarify and smooth the movement from idea to idea. Conversely, the lack of transitional devices can make for disjointed reading. See also **telegraphic style**.

Transition Between Sentences

You can achieve effective transition between sentences by repeating keywords or key ideas from preceding sentences and by using pronouns that refer to antecedents in previous sentences. Consider the following short paragraph, which uses both of those means.

▶ Representative of many American university towns is Middletown. *This Midwestern town*, formerly *a small farming community*, is today the home of a large and vibrant *academic community*. Attracting students from all over the Midwest, *this university town* has grown very rapidly in the last ten years.

Enumeration is another device for achieving transition.

▶ The recommendation rests on *two conditions*. *First*, the department staff must be expanded to handle the increased workload. *Second*, sufficient time must be provided for training the new staff.

Transition Between Paragraphs

The means discussed so far for achieving transition between sentences can also be effective for achieving transition between paragraphs. For paragraphs, however, longer transitional elements are often required. One technique is to use an opening sentence that summarizes the preceding paragraph and then moves on to a new paragraph.

▶ One property of material considered for manufacturing processes is hardness. Hardness is the internal resistance of the material to the forcing apart or closing together of its molecules. Another property is ductility, the characteristic of material that permits it to be drawn into a wire. Material also may possess malleability, the property that makes it capable of being rolled or hammered into thin sheets of various shapes. Purchasing managers must consider these properties before selecting manufacturing materials for use in production.

The requirements of hardness, ductility, and malleability account for the high cost of such materials. . . .

Another technique is to ask a question at the end of one paragraph and answer it at the beginning of the next.

▶ New technology has always been feared because it has at times displaced some jobs. However, it invariably created many more jobs than it eliminated. Almost always, the jobs eliminated by technological advances have been unskilled jobs, and workers who have been displaced have been forced to increase their skills, which resulted in better and higher-paying jobs for them. *In view of this history, should we now uncritically embrace new technology?*

Certainly technology has given us unparalleled access to information and created many new roles for employees. . . .

A purely transitional paragraph may be inserted to aid readability.

- ▸ The problem of poor management was a key factor that caused the weak performance of the company.

  Two other setbacks to the company's fortunes also marked the company's decline: the loss of many skilled workers through the early retirement program and the intensification of the rate of employee turnover.

  The early retirement program resulted in engineering staff . . .

If you provide logical **organization** and have prepared an outline, your transitional needs will easily be satisfied and your writing will have **unity** and **coherence**. During **revision**, look for places where transition is missing and add it. Look for places where it is weak and strengthen it.

trip reports

A trip report provides a permanent record of a business trip and its accomplishments. It provides managers with essential information about the results of the trip and can enable other staff members to benefit from the information. See also **reports**.

A trip report is normally written as a **memo** or an **e-mail** and addressed to an immediate superior, as shown in Figure T–5. The subject line identifies the destination and dates of the trip. The body of the report explains why you made the trip, whom you visited, and what you accomplished. The report should devote a brief section to each major activity and may include a **heading** for each section. You need not give equal space to each activity—instead, elaborate on the more important ones. Follow the body of the report with the appropriate **conclusions** and recommendations. Finally, if required, attach a record of expenses to the trip report.

T

trouble reports (*see* incident reports)

try to

The phrase *try and* is colloquial for *try to*. For technical writing, use *try to*.

- ▸ Please try ~~and~~ *to* finish the report by next week.

Send | Cancel | Save Draft | Add Attachment | Signature | Options

TO: Roberto Camacho <rcamacho@psys.com>

CC: Show BCC

Subject: Trip to Smith Electric Co., Huntington, West Virginia, January 6–7, 2015

Expense Report.xls (25 KB) Download

I visited the Smith Electric Company in Huntington, West Virginia, to determine the cause of a recurring failure in a Model 247 printer. Attached is my expense report.

Problem

The printer stopped printing periodically for no apparent reason. Repeated efforts to bring it back online eventually succeeded, but the problem recurred at irregular intervals. Neither customer personnel operating the printer nor the local maintenance specialist was able to solve the problem.

Action

On January 6, I met with Ms. Ruth Bernardi, the office manager, who explained the problem. My troubleshooting did not reveal the cause of the problem then or on January 7.

Only when I tested the logic cable did I find that it contained a broken wire. I replaced the logic cable and then ran all the normal printer test patterns to make sure no other problems existed. All patterns were positive, so I turned the printer over to the customer.

Conclusion

There are more than 12,000 of these printers in the field, and to my knowledge this is the first occurrence of a bad cable. I conclude that the logic cable problem at Smith Electric Company reflects the recurring failures during 2014.

James D. Kerson, Product Analyst
Printer Systems, Inc.
1366 Federal St., Allentown, PA 18101
(610) 747-9955   Fax: (610) 747-9956
jdkerson@psys.com
www.psys.com

FIGURE T–5. Trip Report Sent as E-mail (with Attachment)

U

unity

Unity is singleness of **purpose** and focus; a unified **paragraph** or document has a central idea and does not digress into unrelated topics.

The logical sequence provided through **outlining** is essential to achieving unity. An outline enables you to lay out the most direct route from **introduction** to **conclusion**, and it enables you to build each paragraph around a topic sentence that expresses a single idea. Effective **transition** helps build unity, as well as **coherence**, because transitional terms clarify the relationship of each part to what precedes it.

up

Adding the word *up* to **verbs** often creates a redundant phrase. See also **conciseness**.

► You must open ~~up~~ the exhaust valve.

usability testing

Usability refers to whether **readers** can use a print or an online document to easily fulfill their goals or accomplish tasks. For example, the usability of a technical **manual** might refer to the ability of readers to perform a procedure accurately and smoothly with the aid of **instructions**.*

Usability testing involves teams of skilled technical writers, usability specialists, and interface designers. Usability testing of documents has three main goals:

- To ensure that a document is easy to use and allows users to accomplish the tasks outlined in that document

U

**Usability engineering*, or *user-centered design* (*UCD*), refers to the process of developing products and systems with the users' needs in mind so that ideally usability is built into both products and their documentation from the beginning. See www.usability.gov.

- To detect potential problems for users and to guide writers in solving them, minimizing the risk of releasing ineffective documents
- To enable companies to avoid repeating mistakes in future documents

Usability testing helps produce a document that reduces the learning curve, allows more functionality with less effort, and increases productivity. At the same time, by focusing development on users, companies also reap benefits in reduced costs and increased customer satisfaction in the following ways:

- Enhance the organization's reputation for high-quality documentation.
- Increase the likelihood that documents will be used.
- Minimize the need for updates and maintenance releases.
- Ensure that product and document changes can be made before they become expensive.
- Support efficient document development and training.

Test participants typically are members of the target **audience** for the document. If the participants encounter problems with the document, it is likely that actual users will experience similar problems. For example, if page 15 of a tax form is unclear to test participants, it will likely be confusing to most taxpayers.

Usability tests can include one or more of the following methods:

- *Read-and-locate test*. Test participants respond to questions based on content found in different locations of a document. Testers record whether and how participants find answers to each question, and how much time it takes them to do so. This test evaluates ease of navigation and document **format** and **organization**.
- *User edit*. Testers watch participants perform real tasks while using the document to predict if users will be able to understand and follow the document's instructions.
- *Protocol method*. Test participants make comments aloud as they read and respond to sections of text and to graphics. This test can reveal a wide array of document problems, such as those of **clarity**, **coherence**, and **tone**, as well as use of **persuasion**.
- *Comprehension test*. Test participants take a written quiz to measure comprehension and recall of document content, such as text, **visuals**, and **tables**.
- *Survey or interview*. Testers ask participants the same questions both before and after the participants read the document to determine whether the participants' comprehension of and attitude

toward the document have improved, or they ask questions only after participants read a document to determine clarity and comprehension of the document.

Analyzing the results of such tests can help writers and designers detect problems and determine whether the document's goals have been met. If test participants have trouble navigating a document or quickly locating specific items, for example, the organization of the document as well as its **layout and design** should be revised.

Because of the expense of usability testing, some companies have moved to Web-based applications that handle the construction and execution of the test—especially for digital documents. Such testing, of course, cannot achieve the same quality of observation as in-person testing. For more about usability, see www.stcsig.org/usability. See also **forms**, design, **interviewing for information**, and **questionnaires**.

usage

Usage describes the choices we make among the various words and expressions available in our language. The lines between standard English and nonstandard English and between formal and informal English are determined by those choices. Your guideline in any situation requiring such choices should be appropriateness: Is the word or expression you use appropriate to your **audience** and your subject? When it is, you are practicing good usage.

This book contains many entries on specific usage questions. For a complete list of the usage entries in this book, see "Commonly Misused Words and Phrases" on pages 642–43. Usage entries are also distinguished by italicized titles (for example, see **utilize**). A reputable **dictionary** is also an invaluable aid in your selection of the right word.

utilize

Do not use *utilize* as a long variant of *use*, which is the general word for "employ for some purpose." *Use* will almost always be clearer and less pretentious. See **affectation** and **plain language**.

V

vague words

A vague word is one that is imprecise in the context in which it is used. Some words are vague because they encompass such a broad range of meanings that there is no focus for their definition. Words such as *real*, *nice*, *important*, *good*, *bad*, *contact*, *thing*, and *fine* are often called "omnibus words" because they can have so many meanings and interpretations. In speech, our vocal inflections help make the meanings of such words clear. Because you cannot rely on vocal inflections when you are writing, avoid using vague words. Be concrete and specific. See also **abstract / concrete words** and **word choice**.

VAGUE It was a *good* meeting.
[Why was it good?]

SPECIFIC The meeting resolved three questions: pay scales, fringe benefits, and workloads.

verbals

Verbals are **verbs** used as other parts of speech, such as **nouns**, **adjectives**, and **adverbs**. Depending on their function in sentences, verbals are identified as gerunds, infinitives, and participles.

Gerunds

A gerund is a verbal ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun. A gerund can be used as a subject, a direct **object**, the object of a **preposition**, a subjective **complement**, or an **appositive**.

- *Drawing* is a useful engineering skill. [subject]
- I find *drawing* interesting. [direct object]
- We were unprepared for their *coming*. [object of preposition]
- Seeing is *believing*. [subjective complement]
- My primary departmental function, *programming*, occupies about two-thirds of my time on the job. [appositive]

Only the possessive form of a noun or **pronoun** should precede a gerund.

- *John's* working has not affected his grades.
- *His* working has not affected his grades.

Infinitives

An infinitive is the bare, or uninflected, form of a verb (for example, *go*, *run*, *fall*, *talk*, *dress*, *shout*) without the restrictions imposed by **person** and **number**. Along with the gerund and the participle, it is one of the nonfinite verb forms. The infinitive is generally preceded by the word *to*, which, although not an inherent part of the infinitive, is considered to be the sign of an infinitive. An infinitive is a verbal and can function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

- *To expand* is not the only objective. [noun]
- These are the instructions *to follow*. [adjective]
- The company struggled *to survive*. [adverb]

The infinitive can reflect two **tenses**: the present and (with a helping verb) the present perfect.

- to go [present tense]
- to have gone [present perfect tense]

The most common mistake made with infinitives is using the present perfect tense when the simple present tense is sufficient.

- I should not have tried to go ~~have gone~~ so early.

Infinitives formed with the root form of transitive verbs can express both active and (with a helping verb) passive **voice**.

- to hit [present tense, active voice]
- to have hit [present perfect tense, active voice]
- to be hit [present tense, passive voice]
- to have been hit [present perfect tense, passive voice]

A split infinitive is one in which an adverb is placed between the sign of the infinitive, *to*, and the infinitive itself. Because they make up a grammatical unit, the infinitive and its sign are better left intact than separated by an intervening adverb.

▶ To ~~initially~~ build a client base, experts recommend networking with friends and family.

However, it may occasionally be better to split an infinitive than to allow a sentence to become awkward, ambiguous, or incoherent.

AMBIGUOUS	She agreed immediately *to deliver* the specimen to the lab. [This sentence could be interpreted to mean that she agreed immediately.]
CLEAR	She agreed *to* immediately *deliver* the specimen to the lab. [This sentence is no longer ambiguous.]

Participles

A participle is a verb form that functions as an adjective. Present participles end in *-ing*.

▶ *Increasing* costs forced us to reduce our staff.

Past participles end in *-ed*, *-t*, *-en*, *-n*, or *-d*.

▶ What are the *estimated* costs?

▶ Repair the *bent* lever.

▶ Return the *broken* part.

▶ What are the metal's *known* properties?

▶ The story, *told* many times before, was still interesting.

The perfect participle is formed with the present participle of the helping verb *have* plus the past participle of the main verb.

▶ *Having gotten* [perfect participle] a large bonus, the *smiling* [present participle], *contented* [past participle] technician worked harder than ever.

A participle cannot be used as the verb of a sentence. Inexperienced writers sometimes make that mistake, and the result is a **sentence fragment**.

, *his*

▶ The committee chair was responsible~~. His~~ vote being the decisive one.

V

▸ The committee chair was responsible. His vote ~~being~~ *was* the decisive one.

For information on participial and infinitive phrases, see **phrases**.

verbs

DIRECTORY

Types of Verbs 564
Forms of Verbs 565
  Finite Verbs 565
  Nonfinite Verbs 565
Properties of Verbs 566

A verb is a word or group of words that describes an action ("The copier *jammed* at the beginning of the job"), states how something or someone is affected by an action ("He *was disappointed* that the proposal was rejected"), or affirms a state of existence ("She *is* a district manager now").

Types of Verbs

Verbs are either transitive or intransitive. A *transitive verb* requires a direct **object** to complete its meaning.

▸ They *laid* the foundation on October 26.
[*Foundation* is the direct object of the transitive verb *laid*.]

▸ Rosalie Anderson *wrote* the treasurer a memo.
[*Memo* is the direct object of the transitive verb *wrote*.]

An *intransitive verb* does not require an object to complete its meaning. It makes a full assertion about the subject without assistance (although it may have **modifiers**).

▸ The engine *ran*.

▸ The engine *ran* smoothly and quietly.

A *linking verb* is an intransitive verb that links a **complement** to the subject.

▸ The carpet *is* stained.
[*Is* is a linking verb; *stained* is a subjective complement.]

Some intransitive verbs, such as *be*, *become*, *seem*, and *appear*, are almost always linking verbs. A number of others, such as *look*, *sound*, *taste*, *smell*, and *feel*, can function as either linking verbs or simple intransitive or transitive verbs. If you are unsure about whether one of those verbs is a linking verb, try substituting *seem*; if the sentence still makes sense, the verb is probably a linking verb.

▸ Their antennae *feel* delicate.
[*Seem* can be substituted for *feel*—thus *feel* is a linking verb.]

▸ Their antennae *feel* delicately for their prey.
[*Seem* cannot be substituted for *feel*; in this case, *feel* is a simple intransitive verb.]

Forms of Verbs

Verbs are described as being either finite or nonfinite.

Finite Verbs. A finite verb is the main verb of a **clause** or sentence. It makes an assertion about its subject and often serves as the only verb in its clause or sentence. ("The telephone *rang*, and the receptionist *answered* it.") See also **sentence construction**.

A helping verb (sometimes called an *auxiliary verb*) is used in a verb **phrase** to help indicate **mood**, **tense**, and **voice**. ("The phone *had* rung.") Phrases that function as helping verbs are often made up of combinations with the sign of the infinitive, *to* (for example, *am going to*, *is about to*, *has to*, and *ought to*). The helping verb always precedes the main verb, although other words may intervene. ("Machines *will* never completely *replace* people.")

Nonfinite Verbs. Nonfinite verbs are **verbals**—verb forms that function as **nouns**, **adjectives**, or **adverbs**.

A *gerund* is a noun that is derived from the *-ing* form of a verb. ("*Seeing* is *believing*.") An *infinitive*, which uses the root form of a verb (usually preceded by *to*), can function as a noun, an adverb, or an adjective.

▸ He hates *to complain*. [noun, direct object of *hates*]

▸ The valve closes *to stop* the flow. [adverb, modifies *closes*]

▸ This is the proposal *to consider*. [adjective, modifies *proposal*]

A *participle* is a verb form that can function as an adjective.

- The *rejected* proposal may be resubmitted when the client's concerns are addressed.
  [*Rejected* is a verb form that is used as an adjective modifying *proposal*.]

Properties of Verbs

Verbs must (1) agree in **person** with personal pronouns functioning as subjects, (2) agree in tense and **number** with their subjects, and (3) be in the appropriate voice.

Person is the term for the form of a personal pronoun that indicates whether the pronoun refers to the speaker, the person spoken to, or the person (or thing) spoken about. Verbs change their forms to agree in person with their subjects.

- I *see* [first person] a yellow tint, but she *sees* [third person] a yellow-green hue.

ESL TIP for Avoiding Shifts in Voice, Mood, or Tense

To achieve clarity in your writing, maintain consistency and avoid abrupt changes in voice, mood, or tense. Pay special attention when you edit your writing to check for the following types of shifts.

Voice

- The captain permits his crew to go ashore, but *he does not permit them* ~~they are not permitted~~ to go downtown.
  [The entire sentence is now in the active voice.]

Mood

- Reboot your computer, and ~~you should~~ empty the cache.
  [The entire sentence is now in the imperative mood.]

Tense

- I was working quickly, and suddenly a box *fell* ~~falls~~ off the conveyor belt and *broke* ~~breaks~~ my foot.
  [The entire sentence is now in the past tense.]

V

Tense refers to verb forms that indicate time distinctions. The six tenses are past, past perfect, present, present perfect, future, and future perfect.

Number refers to the two forms of a verb that indicate whether the subject of a verb is singular ("The copier *was* repaired") or plural ("The copiers *were* repaired").

Most verbs show the singular of the present tense by adding *-s* or *-es* (he *stands*, she *works*, it *goes*), and they show the plural without *-s* or *-es* (they *stand*, we *work*, they *go*). The verb *to be*, however, normally changes form to indicate the singular ("I *am* ready") or plural ("We *are* ready").

Voice refers to the two forms of a verb that indicate whether the subject of the verb acts or receives the action. The verb is in the *active voice* if the subject of the verb acts ("The bacteria *grow*"); the verb is in the *passive voice* if it receives the action ("The bacteria *are grown* in a petri dish").

very

The use of **intensifiers** like *very* is tempting, but the word can usually be deleted.

- The board was ~~very~~ worried about a possible product recall.

When you do use intensifiers, clarify their meaning.

- The patient's resting heart rate was *very* fast; it was measured at 180 beats per minute.

via

Via is Latin for "by way of." The term should be used only in routing instructions.

- The package was shipped *via* FedEx.
- Her project was funded ~~via~~ *as a result of* the recent legislation.

visuals

Visuals can express ideas or convey information in ways that words alone cannot by making abstract concepts and relationships concrete. Visuals can show how things look (drawings, photographs, maps), represent numbers and quantities (graphs, tables), depict processes or relationships (flowcharts, Gantt charts, infographics, schematic diagrams), and show hierarchical relationships (organizational charts). They also highlight important information and emphasize key concepts succinctly and clearly.

Many qualities of good writing—simplicity, clarity, conciseness, directness—are equally important when creating and using visuals. Presented with clarity and consistency, visuals can help **readers** focus on key portions of your document, presentation, or Web site. Be aware, though, that even the best visual will not be effective without **context**—and most often context is provided by the text that introduces the visual and clarifies its purpose.

The following entries in this book are related to specific visuals and their use in printed and online documents, as well as in **presentations** (see that entry for presentation graphics).

drawings 157
flowcharts 192
formal reports 196
global graphics 229
graphs 238
infographics 260
layout and design 310
maps 334
organizational charts 377
photographs 392
tables 536
writing for the Web 582

Selecting Visuals

Consider your **audience** and your **purpose** carefully in selecting visuals. You would need different illustrations for an automobile owner's manual or an auto dealer's Web site, for example, than you would for a technician's diagnostic guide. Figure V–1 can help you select the most appropriate visuals, based on their purposes and special features. Jot down visual options when you are considering your **scope** and **organization**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Visuals have the potential of misleading readers when data are selectively omitted or distorted. For example, Figure G–6 (page 239) shows a graph that gives a misleading impression of lab-test failures because the scale is compressed, with some of the years selectively omitted. Visuals that mislead readers call the credibility of you and your organization into question—and they are unethical. The use of misleading visuals can even subject you and your organization to lawsuits. ❖

Integrating Visuals with Text

After selecting your visuals, carefully integrate them with your text. The following guidelines will improve the effectiveness of your visuals by describing how to position and identify them consistently and uniformly.

Begin by considering the best locations for visuals during the **outlining** stage of your draft. At appropriate points in your outline, either make a rough sketch of the visual, if you can, or write "illustration of . . . ," noting the source of the visual and enclosing each suggestion in a text box. You may also include sketches of visuals in your thumbnail pages, as discussed in **layout and design**. When **writing a draft**, place visuals as close as possible to, but following, the text where they are discussed—in fact, no visual should precede its first text mention. Refer to graphics (such as drawings and photographs) as "figures" and to tables as "tables." Clarify for readers why each visual is included in the text. The amount of description you should provide will vary, depending on your readers' backgrounds. For example, nonexperts may require lengthier explanations than experts need.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Obtain written permission to use copyrighted visuals in works that you intend to publish in print or online—including images and multimedia material from Web sites. Acknowledge all quoted or borrowed material in a source line below the caption for a figure and in a footnote at the bottom of a table. Use a site's "Contact Us" page to request approval. Acknowledge your use of any material from the public domain (thus uncopyrighted), such as demographic or economic data from government publications and Web sites, with a source line. See also **copyright**, **documenting sources**, and **plagiarism**. ❖

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Creating and Integrating Visuals

CREATING VISUALS

✔ Keep visuals simple. Include only information needed for discussion in the text and eliminate unneeded labels, arrows, boxes, and lines.

✔ Position the lettering of any explanatory text or labels horizontally; allow adequate white space within and around the visual.

✔ Specify the units of measurement used, make sure relative sizes are clear, and indicate distance with a scale when appropriate.

✔ Use consistent terminology; for example, do not refer to the same information as a "proportion" in the text and a "percentage" in the visual.

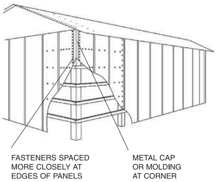
✔ Define **abbreviations** the first time they appear in the text and in figures and tables. If any symbols are not self-explanatory, label them as in Figure G–11 (page 243).

(*continued*)

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE VISUALS

TO SHOW OBJECTS AND SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS

DRAWINGS CAN . . .



- Depict real objects difficult to photograph
- Depict imaginary objects
- Highlight only parts viewers need to see
- Show internal parts of equipment in cutaway views
- Show how equipment parts fit together in exploded views
- Communicate to international audiences more effectively than text alone

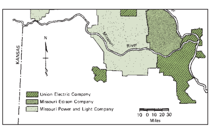
PHOTOGRAPHS CAN . . .

Monkey Business Images/ Shutterstock

- Show images of subjects
- Record an event in process
- Record the development of phenomena over time
- Record the as-found condition of a situation for an investigation
- Show the colors essential to the accuracy of information in medical, chemical, forensic, botanical, and other fields

TO DISPLAY GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

MAPS CAN . . .



- Show specific geographic features of an area
- Show distance, routes, or locations of sites
- Show the geographic distribution of information (e.g., populations by region)

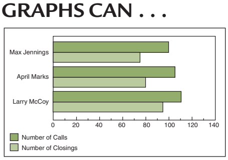
TO SHOW NUMERICAL AND OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

TABLES CAN . . .

Divisions	*Employees*
Research	*1,052*
Marketing	*2,782*
Automotive	*13,251*
Consumer Products	*2,227*

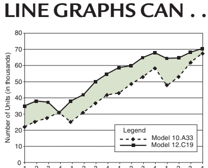
- Organize information systematically in rows and columns
- Present large numerical quantities concisely
- Facilitate item-to-item comparisons
- Clarify trends and other graphical information with precise data

BAR & COLUMN GRAPHS CAN . . .



- Depict data in vertical or horizontal bars and columns for comparison
- Show quantities that make up a whole
- Track status of projects from start to finish
- Visually represent data shown in tables

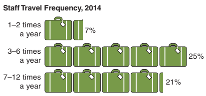
LINE GRAPHS CAN . . .



- Show trends over time in amounts, sizes, rates, and other measurements
- Give an at-a-glance impression of trends, forecasts, and extrapolations of data
- Compare more than one kind of data over the same time period
- Visually represent data shown in tables

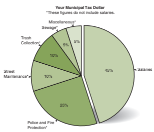
FIGURE V–1. Chart for Choosing Appropriate Visuals

PICTURE GRAPHS CAN . . .



- Use recognizable images to represent specific quantities
- Help nonexpert readers grasp the information
- Visually represent data shown in tables

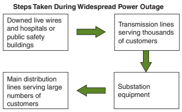
PIE GRAPHS CAN . . .



- Show quantities that make up a whole
- Give an immediate visual impression of the parts and their significance
- Visually represent data shown in tables or lists

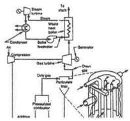
TO SHOW STEPS IN A PROCESS OR RELATIONSHIPS IN A SYSTEM

FLOWCHARTS CAN . . .



- Show how the parts or steps in a process or system interact
- Show the stages of an actual or a hypothetical process in the correct direction, including recursive steps

SCHEMATIC DIAGRAMS CAN . . .



- Show how the components in electronic, chemical, electrical, and mechanical systems interact and are interrelated
- Use standardized symbolic representations rather than realistic depictions of system components

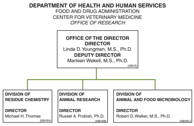
TO GIVE AN OVERVIEW OF A COMPLEX PROCESS OR EVENT

INFOGRAPHICS CAN . . .

- Integrate text, graphs, images, and numbers to "tell a story"
- Combine the communications advantages of text and graphics to give both an overview and a narrative explanation of a topic
- Organize disparate facts, concepts, images into an understandable whole

TO SHOW RELATIONSHIPS IN A HIERARCHY

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS CAN . . .



- Give an overview of an organization's depart-mental components
- Show how the components relate to one another
- Depict lines of authority within an organization

TO SUPPLEMENT OR REPLACE WORDS

SYMBOLS OR ICONS CAN . . .

- Convey ideas without words
- Save space and add visual appeal
- Transcend individual languages to communicate ideas effectively for international readers
- Communicate culturally neutral images

FIGURE V–1. Chart for Choosing Appropriate Visuals (*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Integrating Visuals** (*continued*)

- ✔ Give each visual a caption or concise **title** that clearly describes its content, and assign figure and table numbers if your document contains more than one illustration or table.

INTEGRATING VISUALS

- ✔ Clarify for readers why each visual is included in the text and provide an appropriate description.
- ✔ Place visuals as close as possible to the text where they are discussed but always after their first text mention.
- ✔ Allow adequate white space on the written or Web page around and within each illustration.
- ✔ Refer to visuals in the text of your document as "figures" or "tables" and by their figure or table numbers.
- ✔ Consider placing lengthy or detailed visuals in an **appendix**, which you refer to in the body of your document.
- ✔ In documents with more than five illustrations or tables, include a section following the **table of contents** titled "List of Figures" or "List of Tables" that identifies each by number, title, and page number.
- ✔ Follow the editorial guidelines or recommended style manual when preparing visuals for a publication.

voice

In grammar, *voice* indicates the relation of the subject to the action of the **verb**. When the verb is in the *active voice*, the subject acts; when it is in the *passive voice*, the subject is acted upon.

ACTIVE David Cohen *wrote* the newsletter article.
[The subject, *David Cohen*, performs the action; the verb, *wrote*, describes the action.]

PASSIVE The newsletter article *was written* by David Cohen.
[The subject, *the newsletter article*, is acted upon; the verb, *was written*, describes the action.]

The two sentences say the same thing, but each has a different emphasis: the first emphasizes the writer (*David Cohen*); the second emphasizes what was written (*the newsletter article*). In technical writing, it is often important to emphasize who or what performs an action. Further, the passive-voice version is indirect because the performer of the action generally follows the verb instead of preceding it. Because the active voice is more direct, more concise, and easier for readers to understand, use the active voice unless the passive voice is more appropriate, as described on pages 574–75. Whether you use the active voice or the passive voice, be careful not to shift voices within a sentence.

- David Cohen corrected the error as soon as ~~it was identified by~~ the editor *identified it*.

Using the Active Voice

Improving Clarity. The active voice improves **clarity** and avoids confusion, especially in **instructions** and manuals.

PASSIVE Sections B and C *should be checked* for errors. [Are they already checked?]

ACTIVE *Check* sections B and C for errors. [The performer of the action, *you*, is understood: (You) *Check* the sections.]

Active voice can also help avoid **dangling modifiers**.

PASSIVE Hurrying to complete the work, the cables *were connected* improperly. [*Who* was hurrying? The implication is the cables were hurrying!]

ACTIVE Hurrying to complete the work, the technician *connected* the cables improperly. [Here, *hurrying to complete the work* properly modifies the performer of the action: *the technician*.]

Highlighting Subjects. One difficulty with passive sentences is that they can bury the performer of the action within **expletives** and prepositional **phrases**.

PASSIVE It *was reported by* the testing staff that the new model is defective.

ACTIVE The testing staff *reported* that the new model is defective.

Sometimes writers using the passive voice fail to name the performer—information that might be missed.

PASSIVE The error *was discovered* yesterday.

ACTIVE The attending physician *discovered* the error yesterday.

Achieving Conciseness. The active voice helps achieve **conciseness** because it eliminates the need for an additional helping verb as well as an extra **preposition** to identify the performer of the action.

PASSIVE Arbitrary changes in policy *are resented by* employees.

ACTIVE Employees *resent* arbitrary changes in policy.

The active-voice version takes one verb (*resent*); the passive-voice version takes two verbs (*are resented*) and an extra preposition (*by*).

Using the Passive Voice

The passive voice is sometimes effective or even necessary. Indeed, for reasons of tact and diplomacy, you might need to use the passive voice to avoid an implied accusation.

ACTIVE Your staff *did not meet* the quota last month.

PASSIVE The quota *was not met* last month.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Be careful not to use the passive voice to evade responsibility or to obscure an issue or information that readers should know, as in the following examples.

- Several mistakes *were made*.
  [*Who* made the mistakes?]
- It *has been decided*.
  [*Who* has decided?]

See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

When the performer of the action is either unknown or unimportant, of course, use the passive voice. ("The copper mine *was discovered* in 1929.") When the performer of the action is less important than the receiver of that action, the passive voice is sometimes more appropriate. ("Ann Bryant *was presented* with an award by the president.") Even in such cases, another verb may enable you to use the active voice. ("Ann Bryant *received* an award from the president.")

When you are explaining an operation in which the reader is not actively involved or when you are explaining a process or a procedure, the passive voice may be more appropriate. In the following example, anyone—it really does not matter who—could be the performer of the action.

- Area strip mining *is used* in regions of flat to gently rolling terrain, like that found in the Midwest. Depending on applicable reclamation laws, the topsoil *may be removed* from the area *to be mined*, *stored*, and later *reapplied* as surface material during reclamation of the mined land. After the removal of the topsoil, a trench *is cut* through the overburden to expose the upper surface of the coal to be mined. The overburden from the first cut *is placed* on the unmined land adjacent to the cut. After the first cut *has been completed*, the coal *is removed*.

Do not, however, simply assume that any such explanation should be in the passive voice; in fact, as in the following example, the active voice is often more effective.

- In the operation of an internal combustion engine, an explosion in the combustion chamber *forces* the pistons down in the cylinders. The movement of the pistons in the cylinders *turns* the crankshaft.

Ask yourself, "Would it be of any advantage to the reader to know the performer of the action?" If the answer is yes, use the active voice, as in the previous example.

ESL TIP for Choosing Voice

Different languages place different values on active-voice and passive-voice constructions. In some languages, the passive is used frequently; in others, hardly at all. As a nonnative speaker of English, you may have a tendency to follow the pattern of your native language. As this entry describes, even though technical writing may sometimes require passive voice, the active voice is highly valued in English.

W

wait for / wait on

Wait on should be restricted in writing to the activities of hospitality and service employees. ("We need extra staff to *wait on* customers.") Otherwise, use *wait for*. ("Be sure to *wait for* Ms. Garcia's approval.") See also **idioms**.

Web design (*see* writing for the Web)

when / where / that

When and if (or *if and when*) is a colloquial expression that should not be used in writing.

- When ~~and if~~ funding is approved, you will get the position.

- *If* ~~When and if~~ funding is approved, you will get the position.

In phrases using the *where . . . at* construction, *at* is unnecessary and should be omitted.

- Where is his office ~~at~~?

Do not substitute *where* for *that* to anticipate an idea or fact to follow.

- I read in the newsletter *that* ~~where~~ research funding will increase.

whether

Whether communicates the notion of a choice. The use of *whether or not* to indicate a choice between alternatives is redundant.

- The client asked whether ~~or not~~ the proposal was finished.

The phrase *as to whether* is clumsy and redundant. Either use *whether* alone or omit it altogether.

▸ We have decided to ~~As to whether we will~~ commit to a long-term contract. ~~contract, we have decided to do so.~~

while

While, meaning "during an interval of time," is sometimes substituted for connectives like *and*, *but*, *although*, and *whereas*. Used as a connective in that way, *while* often causes ambiguity.

▸ Ian Evans is a media director, and ~~while~~ Joan Thomas is a vice president for research.

Do not use *while* to mean *although* or *whereas*.

▸ Although ~~While~~ Ryan Sims is retired, he serves as our technical consultant.

Restrict *while* to its meaning of "during the time that."

▸ I'll have to catch up on my reading *while* I am on vacation.

white papers

A white paper is a document that announces a new product or a newly developed technical or business solution to a common problem. White papers function as (1) educational tools that provide credibility for an organization and (2) marketing tools to establish a company's market position as an industry leader. White papers are often posted on a company's Web site, distributed to potential customers at trade shows and conferences, and published for wider exposure at Web sites that feature white papers from various sources.

Using Persuasion

White papers are promotional documents, so they must be interesting to read, reflect strong empathy with the reader, and use effective **persuasion**. They require that writers shift from a technology-centered point of view to the **"you" viewpoint**, as suggested in the following example from Darren K. Barefoot's article "Ten Tips on Writing White Papers."*

*Darren K. Barefoot, "Ten Tips on Writing White Papers," *Intercom*, February 2002, 12–13. See also Michael A. Stelzner, "How to Create a Persuasive White Paper," *Intercom*, June 2007, 24–27.

TECHNOLOGY CENTERED	Buy a DVD player because it has a 128-bit over-sampling and advanced virtual surround sound.
READER CENTERED	Buy a DVD player because you want better sound and a crisper picture.

If your white paper is targeted to nonspecialists, leave the details to the technical **manuals**, sales **brochures**, and press releases. Focus on your readers' concerns and explain clearly how your company or product can solve their specific problems.

Preparing to Write

Begin by checking with the members of your management team to determine their goals for the white paper and how that white paper fits into their overall strategy. Then analyze your **audience** to determine whether your readers are technical experts who appreciate technical terminology or nonexperts, such as executives, who tend to focus on the bottom line and problem solving.

Decide on the most appropriate **method of development** and then create an outline that offers your product or solution as the most effective way to solve the readers' problem (see **outlining**). An outline helps provide **coherence** and **transition** to your draft so that readers can follow the development of a new technology or product as the white paper moves smoothly from the **introduction** to the **conclusion**. Define any new terms, avoid **affectation**, and follow the principles of effective **technical writing style**.

As you consider the **scope** of your white paper, make certain that your white paper deals with only one product or solution; for multiple topics, write separate white papers. The length of your white paper depends on the complexity of your product, but keep it as brief as possible. If it is longer than ten pages, include a **table of contents**.

Developing Major Sections

The *introduction* to a white paper should attract your readers' interest by explaining the problem that needs to be solved. Readers might be persuaded to accept your message more readily if they believe your company is developing innovative products, as in the following example:

► The rings of Saturn have puzzled astronomers ever since Galileo discovered them in 1610 using the first telescope. Recently, even more rings have been discovered. . . .

Our company's Scientific Instruments Division designs and manufactures research-quality, computer-controlled telescopes that promise to solve the puzzles of Saturn's rings by enabling scientists to use multicolor differential photometry to determine the rings' origins and composition.

Use the *body* to provide supporting evidence that your product or solution is the best way to solve the readers' problem. Be careful not to be too biased toward your own product, however, especially early in your white paper. You might start by explaining what led to the development of the problem and how its solution impacts all customers in the industry. Describe the kind of technology that can solve the problem, and develop a high standard for the needed solution. Then explain precisely how your way of solving the customer's problem is the best way to meet that standard. Provide persuasive supporting evidence from outside sources. See **documenting sources** and **research**.

The *conclusion* of a white paper should summarize the problem, how your solution best solves it, and how readers can contact your company for more information.

Planning Layout and Design

A white paper should be well designed. Make the best use of **headings**, **lists**, call-outs, text boxes, and other devices as described in **layout and design**. Use **visuals** to help readers grasp and retain your message, but use them selectively. A complex visual that requires paragraphs of explanation is more likely to hinder your reader's understanding than enhance it. Follow the style of the organization's marketing and other published materials where appropriate.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Ask management, subject-matter experts, and perhaps your legal department to read the finished draft to make certain it meets management's objectives, is technically accurate, and stays within legal requirements. Be sure to cite any outside sources used and get permission from any source quoted. See **copyright** and **plagiarism**. ❖

who / whom

Who is a subjective **case** pronoun, and *whom* is the objective case form of *who*. When in doubt about which form to use, substitute a personal pronoun to see which one fits. If *he*, *she*, or *they* fits, use *who*.

▶ *Who* is the training coordinator?
[You would say, "*She* is the training coordinator."]

If *him*, *her*, or *them* fits, use *whom*.

▶ It depends on *whom*?
[You would say, "It depends on *them*."]

who's / whose / of which

Who's is the contraction of *who is*. ("*Who's* scheduled today?") *Whose* is the possessive case of *who*. ("Consider *whose* budget should be cut.")

Normally, *whose* is used with persons, and *of which* is used with inanimate objects.

- ▸ The employee *whose* car had been towed away was angry.
- ▸ Completing a Ph.D. in engineering is an achievement *of which* to be proud.

If *of which* causes a sentence to sound awkward, *whose* may be used with inanimate objects. (Compare: "The business the profits *of which* steadily declined . . ." versus "The business *whose* profits steadily declined. . . .")

word choice

Mark Twain once said, "The difference between the almost right word and the right word is . . . the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning." The most important goal in choosing the right word in technical writing is the preciseness implied by Twain's comment. Vague words and abstract words defeat preciseness because they do not convey the writer's meaning directly and clearly.

VAGUE It was a *productive* meeting.

PRECISE The meeting resulted in the approval of the health-care benefits package.

In the first sentence, *productive* sounds specific but conveys little information; the revised sentence says specifically what made the meeting "productive." Although abstract words may at times be appropriate to your topic, using them unnecessarily will make your writing difficult to understand. See **abstract / concrete words**.

Being aware of the connotations and denotations of words will help you anticipate reactions of your audience to the words you choose. (See **connotation / denotation**.) Understanding **antonyms** (*fresh/stale*) and **synonyms** (*notorious/infamous*) will increase your ability to choose the proper word. Make other **usage** decisions carefully, especially in technical contexts, such as **average / median / mean** and **biannual / biennial**.

Although many entries throughout this book will help you improve your word choices and avoid impreciseness, the following entries should be particularly helpful:

affectation 23
biased language 48
buzzwords 58
clichés 72
conciseness 91
euphemisms 180
idioms 253
jargon 295
logic errors 327
vague words 561

A key to choosing the correct and precise word is to keep current in your reading and to be aware of new words in your profession and in the language. In your quest for the right word, use a reputable and current **dictionary**. See also **English as a second language** and **plain language**.

writing a draft

You are well prepared to write a rough draft when you have established your **purpose** and readers' needs, considered the **context**, defined your **scope**, completed adequate **research**, and prepared an outline (whether rough or developed). (See also **audience** and **outlining**.) Writing a draft is simply transcribing and expanding the notes from your outline into **paragraphs**, without worrying about **grammar**, refinements of language, or **spelling**. Refinement will come with **revision** and **proofreading**. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xiii).

Writing and revising are different activities. Do not let worrying about a good opening slow you down. Instead, concentrate on getting your ideas on paper—now is not the time to polish or revise. Do not wait for inspiration—treat writing a draft as you would any other on-the-job task.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Writing a Rough Draft

- ✔ Resist the temptation of writing first drafts without planning.
- ✔ Use an outline (rough or developed) as a springboard to start and to write quickly.
- ✔ Give yourself a set time in which you write continuously, regardless of how good or bad your writing seems to be. But don't stop if you are rolling along easily—keep your momentum.
- ✔ Start with the section that seems easiest. Your readers will neither know nor care that the middle section of the document was the first section you wrote.
- ✔ Keep in mind your readers' needs, expectations, and knowledge of the subject. Doing so will help you write directly to your readers and suggest which ideas need further development.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing a Rough Draft** *(continued)*

- ✔ When you come to something difficult to explain, try to relate the new concept to something with which the readers are familiar, as discussed in **figures of speech**.
- ✔ Routinely save your draft to your local drive or to a cloud tool, such as Microsoft Office 365 or Google Docs.
- ✔ Save backup copies of your documents and files to an external hard drive, an online backup service, or a company network.
- ✔ Give yourself a small reward — a short walk, a soft drink, a brief chat with a friend, an easy task — after you have finished a section.
- ✔ When you return to your writing, reread what you have written. Seeing what you have already written can return you to a productive frame of mind.

writing for the Web

This entry is intended to help you contribute content for your company's or organization's Web site. For questions about the appropriateness of content you plan to post, check with your Webmaster or manager to determine if your content complies with your organization's Web policy. On campus, consult your instructor or campus computer support staff about standards for posting Web content. See also **blogs and forums**, **content management**, and **FAQs**.

Crafting Content for Your Site

Most **readers** scan Web pages for specific information, so state your important points first before providing detailed supporting information. Keep your writing **style** straightforward and concise, and use **plain language** as much as possible. Use the following techniques to make your content more accessible to your audience. See also **conciseness**.

Text Content. Break up dense blocks of text by dividing them into short **paragraphs** so that they stand out and can be quickly scanned and absorbed. Focus each passage on one facet of your topic. Where necessary, include links to more detailed secondary information.

Headings. Use informative topic **headings** for paragraphs or sections to help readers decide at a glance whether to read a passage. Headings also clarify text by highlighting structure and organization. They signal breaks in coverage from one topic to the next as well as mark **transitions**

between topics. Set off headings in boldface or another text style, such as a different color, on a separate line directly above the text they describe, or in the left margin directly across from the text. See also **layout and design**.

Lists. Use bulleted and numbered **lists** to break up dense paragraphs, reduce text length, and highlight important content. Do not overuse lists, however. Lists without supporting explanatory text lack **coherence**.

Keywords. To help search engines and your audience find your site, use terms that highlight content in the first 50 or so words of text for each new topic.

WITHOUT KEYWORDS	We are proud to introduce a new commemorative coin honoring our bank's founder and president. The item will be available on this Web site after December 3, 2015, which is the 100th anniversary of our first deposit.
WITH KEYWORDS	The new *Reynolds* commemorative coin features a portrait of *George G. Reynolds*, the founder and president of *Reynolds Bank*. The coin can be purchased after December 3, 2015, in honor of the 100th anniversary of *Reynolds*'s first deposit.

To learn more about Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Google Adwords, and Internet marketing tools, visit http://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo.

Directional Cues. Avoid navigational cues, such as "on the next page," that make sense on the printed page but not on a Web screen. Instead, position links so that they are tied directly to the content to which they pertain, such as the ***Back to Top*** links on pages that are several screens long.

Graphics. Graphics provide information that text alone cannot; they also provide visual relief. Use only **visuals** that are appropriate for your audience and **purpose**, however. Avoid overusing complex graphs and animation that can clutter or slow access to your site. Work with the site Webmaster to optimize all graphics for speed of access. Ask about the preferred file-compression format for your visuals. Also consider giving visitors a graphics-free option for quicker access to your content.

Fonts. Font sizes and styles affect screen legibility. Because screens display fonts at lower resolutions compared to printed text, sans serif fonts often work better for online text passages. Do not use ALL CAPITAL

LETTERS or **boldface type** for blocks of text because they slow the reader. For content that contains special characters (such as mathematical or chemical content), consult your Webmaster about the best way to submit the files for HTML (hypertext markup language) coding or post them as portable document format (PDF) files.

Using Links

Use *internal links* to help readers navigate the information at your site. If text is longer than two or three screens, create a **table of contents** of links for it at the top of the Web page and link each item to the relevant content further down the page. Use *external links* to enrich coverage of your topic with information outside your site and to help reduce content on your page. When you do, consider placing an icon or a text label next to the link to inform users that they are leaving the host site. Avoid too many links within text paragraphs because they can distract readers, make scanning the text difficult, and tempt readers to leave your site before reaching the end of your page.

Links to outside sites can expand your content. However, *review such sites carefully before linking to them*. Is the site's author or sponsoring organization reputable? Is its content accurate, current, and unbiased? Does the site date-stamp its content with notices such as, "This page was last updated on January 1, 2015"? Link directly to the page or specific area of an outside site that is relevant to your users, and be sure that you provide a clear **context** for why you are sending your readers there. For more advice on evaluating Web sites, see page 479.

Posting an Existing Document

If you post existing documents to a Web site, try to retain the original sequence and layout of the documents. If, for example, you shorten or revise an existing document for posting to the Web, add a notice informing readers how it differs from the original.

Before posting the document publicly, review it offline to ensure that it is the correct version and that all links work and go to the right places. Consider creating a "single-file version" of the content (a version formatted as a single, long Web page) for readers who will print the content to read offline. See also **proofreading** and **repurposing**.

❖ **ETHICS NOTE** Keep a record of how and where you find content online, be it text, images, tables, streaming video, or other material. Seek approval from the **copyright** holder before using any such information. Documenting your sources not only is required legally and ethically but also bolsters the credibility of your site. To document your sources, either provide links to your source or use a citation, as described in **documenting sources**. See also **plagiarism**. ❖

W

Protecting User Privacy

Ensure that your content is consistent with your site's privacy policies for site users. A site's privacy statement informs visitors about how the site sponsor handles solicited and unsolicited information, its policy on the use of cookies,* and its policy on handling security breaches.

Writing for a Global Audience

When you write for a site aimed at an international audience, eliminate expressions and references that make sense only to someone familiar with American English. Express **dates**, clock times, and measurements consistent with international practices. For visuals, choose symbols and icons, colors, representations of human beings, and captions that can be easily understood, as described in **global communication** and **global graphics**. See also **biased language**, **English as a second language**, and **idioms**.

DIGITAL TIP

Using PDF Files

Convert documents such as reports, flyers, and brochures to PDF files to make sure your electronic documents look identical to your printed documents. Readers can view a PDF file online, download it, or print it in whole or in part. Using specialized PDF software, you can create sophisticated forms, add signatures and watermarks to documents, and password-protect sensitive files. To view these files, log in to ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e*** and select *Digital Tip*, "Using PDF Files."

*"Cookies" are small files that are downloaded to your computer when you browse certain Web pages. Cookies hold information, such as language and selections that you've made, so you do not need to render those selections each time you visit the site.

Y

"you" viewpoint

The "you" viewpoint places the reader's interest and perspective foremost. It is based on the principle that most readers are naturally more concerned about their own needs than they are about those of a writer or a writer's organization. See **audience**.

The "you" viewpoint often, but not always, means using the words *you* and *your* rather than *we*, *our*, *I*, and *mine*. Consider the following sentence that focuses on the needs of the writer and organization (*we*) rather than on those of the reader. (See also **refusal letters**.)

- ▸ *We must receive* your signed approval before *we can process* your payment.

Even though the sentence uses *your* twice, the words in italics suggest that the **point of view** centers on the writer's need to receive the signed approval in order to process the payment. Consider the following revision, written with the "you" viewpoint.

- ▸ *So you can receive* your payment promptly, please send your signed approval.

Because the benefit to the reader is stressed, the writer is more likely to motivate the reader to act. See also **persuasion**.

In some instances, as suggested earlier, you may need to avoid using the **pronouns** *you* and *your* to achieve a positive **tone** and maintain goodwill. Notice how the first of the following examples (with *your*) seems to accuse the reader. But the second (without *your*) uses **positive writing** to emphasize a goal that reader and writer share—meeting a client's needs.

ACCUSATORY	*Your* budget makes no allowance for setup costs.
POSITIVE	The budget should include an allowance for setup costs to meet all the concerns of our client.

As this example illustrates, the "you" viewpoint means more than using the pronouns *you* and *your* or adopting a particular writing **style**. By genuinely considering the readers' interests as you write, you can achieve your **purpose** not only in **correspondence** but also in **proposals**, many **reports**, and **presentations**.

your / you’re

Your is a possessive **pronoun** (“*your* wallet”); *you’re* is the contraction of *you are* (“*You’re* late for the meeting”). If you tend to confuse *your* with *you’re*, use the “find” function for both terms during **proofreading** to review for the correct usage.

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Acknowledgments (continued from p. vi)

TEXT CREDIT

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Index

Words and phrases in **bold type** indicate main alphabetical entries. Usage terms appear in *italic type*.

a / an, 1, 41–42
a few / few, 189
a lot, 2
a while / awhile, 46
abbreviations, 2–5
  acronyms and initialisms, 2, 3, 11
  audience and, 2–3
  capitalization of, 63
  commas with, 83
  in e-mail, 3, 165
  in figures and tables, 569
  in instant messaging, 2–3, 265
  in international correspondence, 277
  italics with, 292
  of Latin words, 5, 162–63, 178
  list of, in reports, 199
  for measurements, 4
  for names and titles, 4–5
  for organization names, 3–4
  periods with, 3, 390–91
  and plain language, 400
  plurals of, 3, 34
  postal, 5, 317
  scholarly, 5
  spelling out, 3, 182
  in tables, 536
  in titles of works, 547
  writer's checklist for, 3
above, 5
abridged dictionaries, 127–28
absolute phrases, 80
absolute words, 15, 177
absolutely, 6
abstract / concrete words, 6
  ethics in writing and, 179
  figures of speech and, 190
  gobbledygook and, 232
  and word choice, 580
abstract nouns, 27, 364
abstracts, 6–8
  vs. executive summaries, 182
  in formal reports, 198, 204
  in grant proposals, 235
  samples of, 7, 204
  of trade journal articles, 552
academic titles, 4–5
accept / except, 8
acceptance / refusal letters (for employment), 8–10. *See also* employment process
  professionalism and, 10
  samples of, 9–10
access protocols for documents, 133
accident reports. *See* trouble reports
accordingly. See conjunctive adverbs
accuracy. *See also* proofreading
  in application cover letters, 39–40
  in correspondence, 113–14, 164
  in executive summaries, 182
  of instructions, 268
  in minutes of meetings, 347
  in note-taking, 364
  in résumés, 484
accuracy / precision, 10
accusative case. *See* objective case
acknowledgment letters, 10–11
  sample of, 11
acronyms and initialisms, 11. *See also* abbreviations
action verbs
  pronoun case and, 64, 65
  in résumés, 499
activate / actuate, 11

active listening, 322–24
active voice, 572–75. *See also* voice
  for clarity, 573
  for conciseness, 93, 574
  for emphasis, 169
  in formal style, 530–31
  infinitives and, 562
  for instructions, 266
  naming the actor, 567, 573
  for plain language, 400
  in sentence construction, 512
activity reports. *See* progress and activity reports
actually, 462
actuate / activate, 11
ad hoc, 12
adapt / adept / adopt, 12
adapting to new technologies, 12–13. *See also* digital tips
  for content management, 98–99
  for forms, 223
  for layout and design, 316
  for mathematical equations, 336
  for presentations, 412
  for research, 475–78
  for résumés, 500–502
  for revision, 93, 504
  white papers for, 578
addresses, e-mail, 165, 496
addresses, street
  commas with, 82
  in letters, 317, 319
  numbers in, 370
  in résumés, 496
addresses, Web. *See* URLs
adept / adopt / adapt, 12
adjective clauses, 16, 172–73
adjectives, 13–17. *See also* adverbs; modifiers
  absolute words, 15
  articles as, 14, 41–42
  commas with, 17, 81
  comparison of, 15
  with count nouns, 170–71
  demonstrative, 14–15, 171
  descriptive, 14
  ESL tips for, 16
  gerunds as, 565
  in idioms, 407
  indefinite, 15
  infinitives as, 562
  irregular, 15
  limiting, 14–15, 41
  as modifiers, 349
  nouns as, 17, 365, 404
  numbers as, 15
  order for, 16–17
  participles as, 563, 566
  phrases as, 395
  placement of, 16–17
  possessive, 15, 171
  relative, 92
  types of, 14–15
  verbals as, 561
  verbs as, 16, 519
adjustment letters, 17–20
  context in, 100
  professionalism and, 20
  samples of, 18–19
Adobe PDF files, 500, 585
adopt / adapt / adept, 12
advanced search, 477
adverbs, 20–22. *See also* adjectives; modifiers
  commas with, 21, 80
  comparison of, 22
  conjunctive, 21
  gerunds as, 565
  in idioms, 407
  infinitives as, 562
  intensifiers, 271–72, 350
  irregular, 22
  as modifiers, 349
  nouns as, 365
  numbers as, 15
  phrases as, 395
  placement of, 22
  with prepositions, 407
  and split infinitives, 562–63
  types of, 21–22
  verbals as, 561
advertisements, job, 300

advertising. *See* promotional writing
affect / effect, 23
affectation, 23–24
abbreviations and, 2–3
allusions and, 32
buzzwords as, 58–59
causes of, 24
ethics in writing and, 23
foreign words as, 23, 195
formal style as, 106, 531
as gobbledygook, 232
nominalizations as, 361
wordiness as, 93
affinity, 24
aforementioned, 5
aforesaid, 5, 23
age bias, avoiding, 49
agenda, for meetings, 340–41
sample of, 340–41
agreement, 25–27. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; subject-verb agreement
in gender, 25, 28, 226, 425
in number, 24–25, 29, 366–67, 425–26
in person, 25, 566–67
of pronoun and antecedent, 25, 28–30, 425
of subject and verb, 25–27, 512–13, 566–67
with *this / that / these / those*, 14
aircraft, italics for names of, 293
all ready / already, 30
all right, 31
all together / altogether, 31
all-capital letters. *See also* capitalization
in e-mail, 165
for emphasis, 170, 313
in Web design, 583–84
allude / elude / refer, 31
allusion / illusion, 31
allusions, 31–32, 273
almost / most, 32
alot / a lot, 2
already / all ready, 30
alright / all right, 31
also, 32
altogether / all together, 31
ambiguity, 33–34
commas for preventing, 78
incomplete comparisons, 33
misplaced modifiers, 33, 350
prepositional phrases and, 396
in pronoun references, 33, 421
in telegraphic writing, 540
using *that* for, 544
word choice and, 34, 70
American Psychological Association. *See* APA documentation
among / between, 47
amongst, 47
amount / number, 34
ampersands, 34
in APA citations, 137
in company names, 4, 34
an. See a / an
analogy, 191
definition by, 122
in description, 125
and
both . . . , 52, 96–97
commas with, 78, 84
with *etc.*, 178
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 30
subject-verb agreement with, 27–28
and/or, 34
anecdotes, 288
annexes, in IEEE documentation, 144, 149
annotated bibliography, 50
anonymous. *See* unknown authors
antecedents. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement
compound, 30
implied, 421
pronouns and, 422–23, 425–26
references to, 33, 421
antonyms, 34–35
in thesaurus, 546
word choice and, 580

anxiety, presentation, 416
APA documentation, 137. *See also* documenting sources
  for articles in periodicals, 138–39
  for books, 138
  documentation models, 138–41
  for electronic sources, 139
  in-text citations, 137
  for miscellaneous sources, 141
  for multimedia sources, 140–41
  sample pages, 142–43
apologies. *See* adjustment letters
apostrophes, 35
  in contractions, 35, 101–2
  showing possession, 35, 65, 403–4
appendixes, 36
  for formal reports, 200
  for grant proposals, 237
  for proposals, 434, 448
  in requests for proposals, 472–73
  visuals in, 572
application cover letters, 36–41. *See also* application forms
  professionalism and, 36
  résumés and, 484
  samples of, 36–41
application forms, 302–5. *See also* job search
  ethics in writing and, 305–6
  for grant proposals, 235
  professionalism and, 282
  sample of, 303–4
  writer's checklist for, 305
appositives, 41
  capitalization of, 62
  case of, 41, 65–66, 424
  commas with, 79
  gerunds as, 561
  nouns as, 365
arguments, loaded, 329
articles (*a / an / the*), 41–43
  a / an, 1, 41–42
  count nouns with, 171–72
  definite, 41–42
  ESL tips for, 42–43, 171–72
  indefinite, 1, 41–42
  telegraphic style and, 540
  the, 41–42
  unnecessary, 1, 42
articles in periodicals (print and electronic). *See also* newsletter articles; periodicals; trade journal articles
  abstracts of, 6–8
  APA documentation of, 138–39
  capitalization in titles of, 62, 548
  databases and indexes for, 475–76
  evaluating, 480
  IEEE documentation of, 145, 146
  MLA documentation of, 151, 152
  quotation marks for titles of, 458, 548
as / because / since, 43
as / like, 321–22
as much as / more than, 43
as such, 44
as / than, and pronoun case, 64, 66
as to whether, 576–77
as well as, 44
ASCII résumés, 501
assure / insure / ensure, 271
attachments
  e-mail, 164, 165
  for grant proposals, 237
attributive adjectives, 17
audience, 44–45
  abbreviations and, 2–3
  for abstracts, 8
  appropriate language for, 399–400
  assessing, xiv–xvi, 44, 107–8, 405–6
  for brochures, 55
  content management for, 98
  for correspondence, 105–6
  defining terms for, 45, 122, 231–32
  drafting and, 581
  for environmental impact statements, 176
  ESL tips for, xv–xvi
  global, 229–30
  goodwill and, 107–8

for incident reports, 255
infographics for, 260–61
for instructions, 266
layout and design and, 311
for manuals, 331
multiple, 44–45, 176
for newsletters, 358–59
pace and, 382
for presentations, 408
for proposals, 429
purpose and, 449
revision and, 502
selecting the medium for, 506–7
for social media, 524, 525
tone and, 549
usability testing for, 558–60
usage and, 559
for visuals, 568
for Web content, 582
for white papers, 578
writing style and, 105–6, 530–31
"you" viewpoint for, 586
augment / supplement, 45
author-date method of documentation. *See* APA documentation
authors, documenting. *See* corporate authors; multiple authors; unknown authors
auxiliary verbs. *See* helping verbs
average / median / mean, 45–46
awhile / a while, 46
awkwardness, 46
writer's checklist for, 46

back matter, for formal reports, 197, 200–201
background
in environmental impact statements, 176
in formal reports, 199
opening with, 287
in résumés, 485, 495
bad / badly, 47
bad-news patterns
in correspondence, 110–12, 273
cultural differences in, 273
positive writing and, 402–3
for refusal letters, 465–67
for resignation letters, 480–82
samples of, 112
bar graphs. *See* graphs
barely, 156
basis
of classification, 131
of comparison, 86
bcc: notations, 168, 321
be sure to, 47
because / since / as, 43
because, reason is, 462
because of / due to, 161, 184
behavioral interviews, 282
beside / besides, 47
between / among, 47
between you and me, 48, 406
bi- / semi-, 48
biannual / biennial, 48
biased evidence, 328
biased language, 48–49. *See also* sexist language
ethics in writing and, 179
professionalism and, 48
bibliographies, 50. *See also* documenting sources
abbreviations in, 4, 5
annotated, 50
in formal reports, 200, 201
in IEEE style, 136, 144–47, 149
for research, 477
biennial / biannual, 48
bilingual writers. *See* English as a second language (ESL)
blind-copy notations (*bcc:*), 168, 321
block quotations
APA style for, 137, 461
MLA style for, 150
blogs and forums, 50–52. *See also* writing for the Web
APA documentation of, 140
ethics in writing and, 52
functions of, 50–51, 510
MLA documentation of, 152

blogs and forums (*continued*)
social media and, 523
subject lines of, 548
body
of application cover letters, 39–40
of feasibility reports, 189
of formal reports, 196, 199–200, 211–15
of grant proposals, 235–36
of letters, 320
of presentations, 410–11
of proposals, 431
of reports, 469
of tables, 536
of white papers, 579
body depictions, for global graphics, 230–31
body movement, in presentations, 415–16
boilerplate material, 103, 436
boldface. *See also* typography
for emphasis, 170, 314
in Web design, 583–84
books
APA documentation of, 138, 139
capitalization in titles of, 62, 548
catalogs for, 474–75
evaluating, 479
IEEE documentation of, 144–45
italics for titles of, 292, 459, 548
MLA documentation of, 150–52
both . . . and, 52, 96–97
both / as well as, 44
box heads, in tables, 536
boxes
in forms, 223
for organizational charts, 377
in page design, 316
brackets, 53
in mathematical equations, 337
for parenthetical items, 53, 388
in quotations, 460–61
with *sic*, 53, 461
brainstorming, 53–54
during presentations, 412
for research, 473
for résumés, 485, 495
sample of, 54
brand, personal, 298, 300
brochures, 55–58
APA documentation of, 141
designing, 55–56
IEEE documentation of, 147
italics for titles of, 292, 548
MLA documentation of, 153
repurposed content for, 469–70
samples of, 56–57
writer's checklist for, 57–58
budget, in proposals, 236
buffer, for bad news, 111, 465
bulleted lists. *See* lists
business letters. *See* correspondence; letters
business names. *See* organization names
but, comma with, 78, 84
buzzwords, 58–59
as affectation, 23
as gobbledygook, 232

callouts. *See* labels
campus career services, 299
can / may, 60
cannot, 60
capitalization, 60–63. *See also* all-capital letters
of abbreviations, 63
of adjectives of origin, 16
after colons, 61, 76
of complimentary closings, 61, 320
after dashes, 118
of events and concepts, 62
of group names, 61
in lists, 325
of organization names, 62
of place names, 61
of professional and personal titles, 62–63
of proper nouns, 60, 364
in quotations, 61, 459
of salutations, 61
in sentences, 61

in subject lines, 62, 113–14
of titles of works, 62, 548
captions, with visuals, 316, 394
cardinal numbers, 15, 119
career counselors, 299
case, 63–66, 423–24
agreement and, 25
of appositives, 41, 65, 424
objective, 65, 423
possessive, 65, 403–5, 423
subjective, 64, 423
tests for determining, 41, 66, 424
case statement, in grant proposals, 235
catalog, library, 474–75
categories
for blogs and forums, 52
for FAQs, 185
cause
definition by, 122–23
false, 67, 328
cause-and-effect method of development, 66–68, 346
cc: notations, 165, 168, 321
CD-ROM publications
APA documentation of, 140
MLA documentation of, 152
cell phones, 508–9, 544
center on, 68
centuries, 120
format for writing, 368
chalkboards, 412
channel, 506–7. *See also* selecting the medium
chapters and sections
capitalization in titles of, 63
in feasibility reports, 188–89
in formal reports, 197–201
in grant proposals, 233–38
in manuals, 332
numbers for, 370
quotation marks for titles of, 293, 459, 548
in résumés, 496–500
in sales proposals, 435–36
in tables of contents, 198
charts. *See also* visuals
flowcharts, 192–94, 571
IEEE documentation of, 146
organizational, 377, 571
in presentations, 412, 414
chat sessions, online, 73
check boxes, in forms, 223
checklist of the writing process, xxi–xxii. *See also* writer's checklists
check-out procedures for documents, 133
choppy writing, 519
chronological method of development, 68–70, 346
sample of, 69
chunking. *See* paragraphs
circular definitions, 121
circumlocution, 92
citation management software, 475
citations, in-text. *See also* documenting sources
APA style, 135–37, 142–43
in formal proposals, 431
in grant proposals, 235
IEEE style, 136
MLA style, 136, 150, 154–55
sample pages, 142–43, 148, 154
cite / sight / site, 70
claims
adjustment letters for, 17–20
in complaint letters, 88–89
clarity, 70–71
active voice for, 573
commas for, 82
conciseness and, 70, 91
in correspondence, 113–14
defining terms for, 120–21
grammar and, 233
hyphens for, 251
in instructions, 266–67
plain language for, 401
semicolons for, 511
in technical writing style, 537
transitions for, 554–56
word choice and, 580

classification, 130–32. *See also* division-and-classification method of development
  sample of, 132
clauses, 71–72. *See also* dependent clauses; independent clauses; sentence construction
  adjective, 172–73
  commas with, 78
  missing subjects in, 517
  restrictive and nonrestrictive, 483–84
clichés, 72
  and figures of speech, 190
  as gobbledygook, 232
climactic order, for emphasis, 168
clip-art images, 157, 160, 412–13
closed-ended questions, 222–23
closings. *See also* conclusions
  for adjustment letters, 20
  for application cover letters, 40
  for bad-news letters, 111
  for correspondence, 111, 320
  for e-mail, 166
  for international correspondence, 273
  for meetings, 343
  for presentations, 411
  for refusal letters, 467
clustering, 53–54
  sample of, 54
coherence, 72
  clarity and, 70–71
  outlining and, 378
  in paragraphs, 384–85
  plain language and, 401
  pronoun references and, 421
  unity and, 558
collaborative writing, 73–75
  brainstorming and, 53–54
  coherence in, 72, 73
  conflict and, 74
  for environmental impact statements, 177
  outlining for, 378
  professionalism and, 73, 74
  for proposals, 429, 435
  purpose in, 450
  reviewing, xx, 74
  schedule for, 240
  team tasks in, 73–74
  technology for, 75
  for trade journal articles, 551
  wikis for, 75
  writer's checklist for, 74
collective nouns, 364
  pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 29, 365
  subject-verb agreement with, 27, 365
colloquialisms
  in informal writing, 531
  as nonstandard English, 174
  quotation marks and, 458
colons, 75–77
  capitalization after, 61, 76
  in citations, 76
  for enumeration, 511
  before lists, 75–77, 324
  with numbers, 76
  with quotation marks, 76, 459
  in salutations, 76, 319
  in sentences, 75–76
  in titles, 76
  unnecessary, 77
color
  in brochures, 57
  in global graphics, 230, 231
  in graphs, 240
  in maps, 334
  in page design, 315
  in warnings, 268
column graphs. *See* graphs
columns
  in newsletters, 360
  page design for, 314, 315
  in tables, 536–37
comma splice, 77–78, 504
commands, 266, 351, 513. *See also* imperative mood
commas, 78–84
  with addresses, 82

with adjectives, 17, 81
for clarifying, 82
in compound sentences, 514
with conjunctive adverbs, 21–22, 83
for contrasting, 82
with dashes, 118
in dates, 82, 119
for enclosing elements, 79, 118
with interjections, 80, 272
in international correspondence, 82
for introducing elements, 80
for items in series, 81, 84
for linking clauses, 21–22, 78–79, 83
with names, 83
with nonrestrictive elements, 483–84
with numbers, 82–83, 369
for omissions, 82
with other punctuation, 83
with parentheses, 388
with quotation marks, 80–81, 390, 459–60
unnecessary, 84
common knowledge, 399
common / mutual, 352–53
common nouns, 61, 364
communication
global, 229–30, 272–77
listening, 322–24
nonverbal, 415–16
selecting the medium for, xvi, 506–10
comparative form
absolute words and, 15, 177
of adjectives, 15
of adverbs, 22
compare / contrast, 84–85
comparison, 84–85
with absolute words, 15, 177
basis of, 86
incomplete, 33
like and *as* for, 321–22
comparison method of development, 86–88, 346
samples of, 86–88
complaint letters, 88–89. *See also* adjustment letters; refusal letters
sample of, 89
complement / compliment, 89–90
complements, 90–91. *See also* objective complements; subjective complements
linking verbs and, 564
sentence construction and, 513–14
types of, 90
verbals as, 172
complex sentences, 169, 514
compliment / complement, 89–90
complimentary closings, 61, 320
component content-management systems, 98–99
components, definition by, 123
compose / constitute / comprise, 91
compound sentences, 169, 514
compound words, 91
antecedents, 30
case of, 424
commas with, 84
hyphens for, 91, 250
plurals of, 91, 366
possessive, 91, 404
predicates, 83, 514
pronoun case and, 66
subjects, 513
subject-verb agreement with, 27–28
compound-complex sentences, 514
comprehension tests, 559
comprise / compose / constitute, 91
computer technologies. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
conciseness, 91–94. *See also* wordiness
in abstracts, 8
active voice for, 574
in blogs and forums, 52
in brochures, 55
clarity and, 70
in executive summaries, 182
functional shifts and, 224

conciseness (*continued*)
in instructions, 266–67
in international correspondence, 273
in minutes of meetings, 347–48
overdoing, 2–3, 92
subordination for, 534
telegraphic style, 540
writer's checklist for, 93–94
"you" viewpoint and, 107–8
conclusions, 94–96. *See also* closings
in abstracts, 8
false, 67
for feasibility reports, 189
for formal reports, 199, 215–17
for grant proposals, 237
in incident reports, 255
for newsletter articles, 356
for progress reports, 418
for proposals, 431, 447, 448
for reports, 469
samples of, 95, 215–17, 447
summary of, 287
for test reports, 544
for trade journal articles, 553
for trip reports, 556
for white papers, 579
concrete nouns, 364
concrete words. *See* abstract / concrete words
conditional statements, 533
conference calls, 509–10
confidentiality
blogs and forums and, 52
e-mail and, 164
forms and, 219
instant messaging and, 266
conflict
in collaborative writing, 74
in meetings, 342
conjugation of verbs, 567
conjunctions, 96–97. *See also* coordinating conjunctions; correlative conjunctions; subordinating conjunctions
and subject-verb agreement, 27–28
telegraphic style and, 540
types of, 96–97
conjunctive adverbs
for comma splices, 77
commas with, 21–22, 83
in compound sentences, 514
for linking clauses, 21–22, 71–72, 96
list of common, 21, 83, 96
for run-on sentences, 391
semicolons with, 21–22, 511
connotation / denotation, 97–98
of synonyms, 534, 546
of visuals, 230–31
word choice and, 580
consensus, 98
consequently. See conjunctive adverbs
consistency
in environmental impact statements, 176
in format, 427
in repetition, 468
in résumés, 484
for visuals, 414, 572
in voice, mood, tense, 543, 566
constitute / comprise / compose, 91
contacts, personal and professional
lists of, 264, 266
networking and, 298–99
content management, 98–99, 470
context, 99–101
and adapting to new technologies, 12
in application cover letters, 38
assessing, xiv–xv, 100–101, 405–6
in bad-news patterns, 111
design and, 311
in forewords, 198–99
in formal reports, 198–99
global communication and, 230
global graphics and, 230
listening and, 322
in openings, 101, 111
for proposals, 100, 430
purpose and, 449
in refusal letters, 465

repurposing for, 470
of requests for proposals, 471
scope and, 506
selecting the medium and, 506–7
signaling, 101
in social media, 525
style and, 530
tone and, 549
for visuals, 230, 568
continual / continuous, 101
continuing pages
for letters, 321
for memos, 345
for tables, 537
continuous / continual, 101
contractions, 101–2
apostrophes in, 35, 101–2
in global communication, 273, 277
contrast
commas for, 82
dashes for, 118
contrast / compare, 84–85
conversational style
in blogs and forums, 51–52
in correspondence, 105–6
in informal writing, 531
nonstandard English, 174
in social media, 525
cookies, 585
coordinate nouns, possessive case of, 404
coordinate series, 81
coordinating conjunctions, 96
for comma splices, 77
commas with, 78–79, 84
in compound sentences, 514
for linking clauses, 71–72, 78–79, 96
list of, 78, 96
for run-on sentences, 391, 504–5
semicolons with, 511
in subordination, 533
copy notations (*cc:*, *bcc:*), 165, 168, 321
copyleft Web material, 103, 399
copyrights, patents, and trademarks, 102–3. *See also* documenting sources
alternative forms of, 103
ethics in writing and, 52, 102, 103, 179
exceptions to, 102–3
permissions and, 102, 159, 199, 551
plagiarism and, 399
repurposing and, 102–3, 470
for visuals, 159, 394–95, 569
corporate authors
APA documentation of, 138, 139
IEEE documentation of, 144, 146
MLA documentation of, 150, 152
corporate names. *See* organization names
correlative conjunctions, 97
double negatives and, 156
in parallel structure, 386
correspondence, 105–14. *See also* e-mail; letters; memos; selecting the medium
acceptance / refusal letters (for employment), 8–10
accuracy in, 113–14, 164
acknowledgment letters, 10–11
adjustment letters, 17–20
APA documentation of, 141
application cover letters, 36–41
bad-news patterns for, 110–12
clarity in, 113–14
closings, 111
complaint letters, 88–89
cover letters, 36–41, 114–15
e-mail, 164–68
emphasis in, 113–14
employment offers and, 8–10, 284
ethics in writing and, 168
good-news patterns for, 109–10
goodwill and, 107–8
headings in, 113
IEEE documentation of, 146, 147
inquiries and responses, 261–64
international, 272–77
letters, 316–21
lists in, 113
memos, 343–45
MLA documentation of, 153

correspondence (*continued*)
names and titles in, 4–5, 319
openings, 109, 285–86
order-of-importance method of development for, 373–76
outlining for, 378
point of view in, 402
reference letters, 462–64
refusal letters, 465–67
for reports, 469
resignation letters, 480–82
test reports, 544
thank-you letters, 284–85
transmittals, 114–15
writer's checklists for, 108–9, 114
cost analysis, in sales proposals, 436
sample of, 442
count nouns, 364
adjectives and, 15
articles with, 171–72
ESL tips for, 170–71
subject-verb agreement and, 25–26
cover letters (or transmittals), 114–15
context in, 101
for e-mail attachments, 165
for faxes, 509
for formal reports, 196, 202
for grant proposals, 234
for meeting agendas, 340
for questionnaires, 453, 457
for résumés, 36–41
for sales proposals, 435, 437–38
samples of, 37–40, 115, 202, 340, 437–38, 454
credible / creditable, 115
criteria / criterion, 115
critique, 116
cultural differences. *See also* global communication; global graphics; international correspondence
as context, 100
in directness of messages, 229–30, 273
international correspondence and, 272–77
listening and, 322
visuals and graphics and, 229–31
currency, of sources, 474
curriculum vitae, 484n. *See also* résumés
cutaway drawings. *See* drawings

-d endings, 541, 563
dangling modifiers, 117
active voice for, 573
ambiguity and, 33
phrases as, 397–98
dashes, 118
for emphasis, 118, 170
for enclosing elements, 118, 511
vs. hyphens, 250
data, 119
data, numerical. *See* numerical data
databases
APA documentation of, 140
for employment, 299
IEEE documentation of, 146
MLA documentation of, 152
for periodicals, 475–76
résumés for, 501
search strategies, 477
storing search results, 475
dates, 119–20
apostrophes in, 35
capitalization of, 62
commas in, 82, 119
format for writing, 82, 119–20
on forms, 221, 223
in headers or footers, 246–47, 314
in international correspondence, 119, 277
in letters, 317–18, 321
numbers in, 368, 369
plurals of, 35
publication, 198
slashes in, 522
in subtitles, 198, 547
datum, 119
days. *See* dates
deceptive language, avoiding, 179, 392, 403
decimal numbering system
for headings, 249
for outlines, 379–80

decimals
  commas with, 83
  numerals for, 368
  periods with, 83, 390
declarative sentences, 515
decreasing order-of-importance method of development, 346, 376
  sample of, 374
defective / deficient, 120
defining terms, 120–21. *See also* definition method of development; definitions
  audience and, 45, 122, 231
  in executive summaries, 182
  glossaries for, 231–32
  plain language and, 401
  technical terminology and, 176, 290
definite articles, 41–42
definite / definitive, 121
definition method of development, 121–24, 346
definitions. *See also* defining terms; word meanings
  by analogy, 122
  by cause, 122–23
  circular, 121
  by components, 123
  dictionaries for, 127–28
  by exploration of origin, 123–24
  extended, 122
  formal and informal, 120
  in glossaries, 231–32
  is when / is where, 121
  negative, 120–21, 124
  opening with, 288
definitive / definite, 121
deletions. *See* omissions
delivery schedules
  in requests for proposals, 472
  in sales proposals, 436
  sample of, 442
delivery techniques, for presentations, 415–16
demonstrative adjectives, 14–15
  and agreement in number, 15, 29
  with count nouns, 171
demonstrative pronouns, 422
denotation, 97–98, 580
dependent clauses, 71
  and sentence structure, 514
  subordinating conjunctions with, 97
  subordination of, 532–34
description, 124–26
  samples of, 125–26
  schematics for, 159
  spatial method of development for, 527–28
  of vendor, in sales proposals, 436
descriptive abstracts, 7
descriptive adjectives, 16–17
descriptors, in electronic résumés, 500
design. *See* layout and design
desktop publishing software, 316
despite / in spite of, 127
detail
  in description, 124–26
  opening with, 287–88
development. *See* grant proposals; methods of development
diagnosis / prognosis, 127
dialectal English, 174
dictionaries, 127–28
  abridged, 127–28
  APA documentation of, 138
  ESL, 128
  IEEE documentation of, 145
  MLA documentation of, 151
  for research, 476
  subject, 128
  unabridged, 128
  for usage, 560
  for word choice, 581
differ from / differ with, 128–29
different from / different than, 129
difficult personalities, 342
digital object identifier, 139
digital tips. *See also* adapting to new technologies
  assessing hardware and software, 13

digital tips (*continued*)
 collaborative software, 75
 e-mail attachments, 165
 formal reports, digital versions of, 197
 indexing, 201, 258
 outlining, 380
 PDF files, 585
 proofreading, 427
 scheduling meetings, 339
 storing research results, 475
 styles and format templates, 201
 tracked changes, 504
 videoconferencing, 339
direct address, 129
 comma with, 79, 129
 for emphasis, 169
direct objects, 371
 as complements, 90
 gerunds as, 561
 nouns as, 365
 pronoun case and, 65
 transitive verbs and, 371, 564
 verbals as, 172
direct quotations. *See* quotations
direct statements
 for emphasis, 169–70
 for plain language, 400
directional cues, in Web design, 583
disabilities, people with, 49
discreet / discrete, 129
disinterested / uninterested, 129
division-and-classification method of development, 130–32, 346
document capture, 133–34
document design. *See* layout and design
document management, 132–33
documenting sources, 135–55. *See also* APA documentation; citations, in-text; IEEE documentation; MLA documentation
 abbreviations for, 5
 APA style, 136–43
 bibliographies and, 50
 common knowledge, 399
 copyright and, 103
 drawings and, 159, 569
 ethics in writing and, 159, 569
 in formal reports, 200
 IEEE style, 144–47
 in literature reviews, 326
 MLA style, 150–55
 note-taking and, 363
 paraphrasing and, 387, 399
 photographs and, 394–95, 569
 plagiarism and, 135, 398–99
 in presentation slides, 412, 569
 in proposals, 431
 purposes of, 135
 quotations and, 135, 459, 461
 samples of, 142–43, 149, 154–55
 style manuals for, 136, 159
 in tables, 537, 569
 in trade journal articles, 551, 553
 for Web content, 584
document-management systems, 98, 133–34
document-naming conventions, 134
DOI (digital object identifier), APA citation of, 139
domain names, 478–79
dots. *See* ellipses
double negatives, 156–57, 402
drafting. *See* writing a draft
drawings, 157–61. *See also* visuals
 ethics in writing and, 159
 functions of, 570
 samples of, 157–60
 writer's checklist for, 161
due to / because of, 161, 184
dummy, in page design, 316

each, 162
 pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 28, 162, 425
 subject-verb agreement with, 25, 28, 162, 425
each other, 423
economic / economical, 162
-ed endings, 541, 563
edited collections
 APA documentation of, 138

IEEE documentation of, 145
MLA documentation of, 151
editing. *See also* proofreading; revision
proofreaders' marks for, 428
writer's checklist for, xxii
editions, book
APA documentation of, 138
IEEE documentation of, 144
MLA documentation of, 151
educational material, copyright and, 102
effect. *See* cause-and-effect method of development
effect / affect, 23
e.g. / i.e., 162–63
either . . . or
as correlative conjunction, 97
in parallel structure, 386
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 30
subject-verb agreement with, 27–28
electronic résumés, 299, 500–502
electronic sources. *See also* Internet research
APA documentation of, 139
IEEE documentation of, 145–46
MLA documentation of, 151–52
elegant variation, 23
ellipses, 163
periods as, 390
in quoted material, 460
elliptical constructions, commas with, 82
elude / refer / allude, 31
e-mail, 164–68. *See also* correspondence
abbreviations in, 3, 165
accuracy in, 164
addresses, 165, 496
APA documentation of, 140, 141
attachments, 165
bad-news patterns for, 112
closings for, 166
confidentiality and, 164
design and, 165–67
functions of, 166, 507
hyphens in, 251
IEEE documentation of, 146
interviewing by, 279
managing, 167
for memos, 343
MLA documentation of, 152
netiquette, 165
for newsletters, 360
openings for, 112, 286
overload, 167
professionalism and, 164–65
for research, 474
responding to, 165–67
for résumés, 500
salutations for, 166
samples of, 375, 557
signature blocks for, 166–67
social media and, 523
subject line of, 62, 113–14, 165, 547
vs. text messaging, 544
tone for, 549
writer's checklists for, 165, 167
emoticons, 165
emphasis, 168–70
active voice for, 169
clarity and, 70, 113–14
climactic order for, 168
colons for, 76
conjunctions for, 97
in correspondence, 113–14
dashes for, 118, 170
design for, 166
direct statements for, 169–70
ethics in writing and, 179
figures of speech for, 191
intensifiers for, 271–72
italics for, 292
pace and, 382
parallel structure for, 385
position for, 168
repetition for, 169, 468
in résumés, 484
sentence construction and, 169, 512, 519
subordination for, 533

emphasis (*continued*)
typography for, 170, 313–14
word order and, 515–16
employment agencies, 301
employment process
acceptance / refusal letters, 8–10
application cover letters, 36–41
applications, 302–5
internships, 301–2
job descriptions, 295–97
job interviews, 280–85
job searches, 297–306
reference letters, 462–64
resignation letters, 480–82
résumés, 484–502
returning job seekers, 495
salary negotiations, 283–84
social media activity, reviewing, 525
volunteering, 495
enclosure notations, 165, 320–21
encyclopedias
APA documentation of, 138
IEEE documentation of, 145
MLA documentation of, 151
for research, 476
end notations, in correspondence, 320–21
end punctuation. *See* sentence endings
endnotes. *See* footnotes / endnotes
English, varieties of, 174–75
colloquial, 174
dialectal, 174
localisms, 174
nonstandard, 174–75
slang, 174–75
standard, 174, 530
English as a second language (ESL), 170–73
adjective clauses, 172–73
adjectives, 16
articles, 42–43, 171–72
audience, xv–xvi
count nouns, 170–71
dictionaries, 128
gender, 226
gerunds and infinitives, 172
idioms, 253
mass nouns, 170–71
mood, 352
numbers, 369
opinions, 402
possessive pronouns, 423
present perfect tense, 173
progressive tenses, 173, 543
sentence construction, 516
shifts in voice, mood, tense, 566
subjects, 513
voice, 575
ensure / assure / insure, 271
enterprise content-management systems, 99
entry lines and fields, in forms, 223
enumeration
colons with, 512
for transitions, 385, 554, 555
environmental impact statements, 175–77
ethics in writing and, 177
equal / unique / perfect, 177–78
equations. *See* mathematical equations
-er / *-est* endings, 15, 22
-es endings
for plurals, 366, 368, 404
for verbs, 367, 567
-ese endings, 23
ESL. *See* English as a second language (ESL)
essays, quotation marks for titles of, 458, 548
-est endings, 15, 22
etc., 178
ethics in writing, 178–80
affectation and, 23
bcc: notations and, 168
for blogs and forums, 52
for boilerplate content, 436
copyright and, 102, 159
documenting sources and, 159, 200, 584
for drawings, 159

for environmental impact statements, 177
euphemisms and, 179, 180
for FAQs, 185
for formal reports, 200
for forms, 219
graphs and, 238, 568
for instant messaging, 266
I / we usage, 402
job applications and, 305–6
logic errors and, 327, 328
for note-taking, 362
paraphrasing and, 387
passive voice and, 179, 574
persuasive writing and, 392
photographs and, 394–95
plagiarism and, 200, 362
positive writing and, 403
for presentation slides, 412
for questionnaires, 454, 474
for quotations, 454, 459
for reference letters, 464
for repurposed content, 399, 470–71
for requests for proposals, 473
for research, 474
for résumés, 484
for sales proposals, 435, 436
for trade journal articles, 551
for visuals, 394–95, 569
for Web content, 584
for white papers, 579
writer's checklist for, 180
ethnic groups
bias toward, avoiding, 49
capitalization of names of, 61
etymologies, 127. *See also* definitions
euphemisms, 180
as affectation, 23
ethics in writing and, 179, 180
as gobbledygook, 232
evaluating sources, 478–79. *See also* evidence
every
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 28
subject-verb agreement with, 28
everybody / everyone, 180–81
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 29, 180
subject-verb agreement with, 181
everyday / every day, 181
evidence
biased or suppressed, 328
evaluating, 67, 478–79
except / accept, 8
exclamation marks, 181
commas with, 83
for interjections, 181, 272
exclamatory sentences, 515
executive summaries, 182
in environmental impact statements, 176
in formal reports, 199, 206–7
in proposals, 435, 439
samples of, 206–7, 439
writer's checklist for, 182
experimentation
for research, 473–74
and technology, 12
explanations
in adjustment letters, 20
in bad-news patterns, 111
explanatory notes, in formal reports, 200
expletives, 182–83
subject position and, 513
wordiness and, 92
explicit / implicit, 183
exploded-view drawings. *See* drawings
exploration of origin, definition by, 123–24
exposition, 183
extended definitions, 122
external proposals, 433–48
external Web sites, 51, 510
eye contact, in presentations, 416

Facebook, 300, 510, 524
fact, 184
facts, vs. opinions, 184, 328

fair use, 102
fallacies. *See* logic errors
false cause, 67, 328
false impressions
  and ethics in writing, 179
  and job applications, 305
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), 184–86
  ethics in writing and, 185
  writer's checklist for, 186
fault, admitting. *See* adjustment letters
faxes, 509
feasibility reports, 186–89
  sample of, 187–88
  titles for, 547
federal résumés, 502
female / male, 189
few / a few, 189
fewer / less, 189
figuratively / literally, 190
figures, list of, 198, 572. *See also* numbering; visuals
figures of speech, 174, 190–91, 530
file sharing, 165
films
  APA documentation of, 140
  capitalization in titles of, 62, 548
  IEEE documentation of, 146
  italics for titles of, 293, 548
  MLA documentation of, 153
fine, 192
finite verbs, 565
first / firstly, 192
first names, in correspondence, 166, 277, 319
first person, 391
  antecedents and, 425
  in narration, 354
  point of view, 401–2
first words. *See* capitalization
Five Steps to Successful Writing, xiii–xx. *See also* writing process
flames, e-mail, 165
flammable / inflammable / nonflammable, 192
flip charts, 412
flowcharts, 192–94, 571. *See also* visuals
  samples of, 193–94
fonts, 311, 583–84. *See also* typography
footers. *See* headers and footers
footnotes / endnotes. *See also* documenting sources
  in formal reports, 200
  for graphs, 244
  for tables, 537
forced choice questions, 223
forceful / forcible, 195
foreign words in English, 195. *See also* Latin words
  affectation and, 23, 195
  italics for, 195, 292
foreword / forward, 195–96
forewords, in formal reports, 198–99
for example
  vs. *e.g. / i.e.*, 162–63
  in sentence fragments, 518
formal definitions, 120
formal internal proposals, 431–33
formal reports, 196–218. *See also* report elements; reports
  abstracts of, 6–8, 198
  back matter, 200–201
  body of, 199–200
  ethics in writing and, 200
  format for, 197–98
  front matter, 197–99
  functions of, 469
  sample of, 202–18
  technology for, 197
formal style, 530–31. *See also* style
  as affectation, 23
  in correspondence, 105–6, 277
format, 219. *See also* chapters and sections; layout and design
  for activity reports, 418
  for business letters, 316–21
  consistency in, 427
  for external proposals, 433
  for formal reports, 197–98
  for memos, 343

for newsletters, 360
for résumés, 496–502
templates for, 197–98, 317
for titles of works, 548
for trade journal articles, 553
former / latter, 219
forms, 219–23. *See also* application forms
ethics in writing and, 219
samples of, 220
forums, Web. *See* blogs and forums
fractions
numerals vs. words, 368
slashes in, 522
fragments. *See* sentence fragments
Frequently Asked Questions. *See* FAQs
front matter, for formal reports, 197–99
full adjustments, 19–20
full justification, 314
full-block-style letter, 317
sample of, 318
full-scale introductions, 289
functional résumé, 498
sample of, 492–95
functional shift, 223–24
funding. *See* grant proposals
further. See conjunctive adverbs
fused sentences, 391, 504–5
future perfect tense, 541, 542–43
future progressive tense, 541, 543
future tense, 542

Gantt charts, 240, 242
garbled sentences, 225. *See also* mixed constructions
gathering information. *See* research
gender, 226. *See also* sexist language
agreement in, 25, 28, 226, 425
ESL tips for assigning, 226
female / male, 189
in global graphics, 229–31
of nouns and pronouns, 226
unknown, in salutations, 319
general and specific methods of development, 227–28, 346
samples of, 227–28
generalizations, sweeping, 328
genre. *See* selecting the medium
geographic features
capitalization of, 61–62
commas with, 83
maps for, 334, 570
gerund phrases, 398
gerunds, 561–62, 565
ESL tips for, 172
object of, and pronoun case, 65
possessive pronouns with, 404–5
gestures
cultural differences in, 230
in presentations, 415–16
global communication, 229–31. *See also* cultural differences; international correspondence
context and, 230
idioms and, 253
punctuation for, 231
visuals and graphics for, 229–31
Web content and, 585
writer's checklist for, 229
global graphics, 229–31
samples of, 230
glossaries, 231–32
in environmental impact statements, 176
in formal reports, 201
in instructions, 266
in proposals, 429
goals. *See also* purpose
career, 297
in manuals, 332
gobbledygook, 232
as affectation, 23
ethics in writing and, 179
good / well, 232–33
good-news patterns, 109–10
sample of, 110
goodwill, establishing
with acknowledgment letters, 10–11
with adjustment letters, 17–20
blogs and forums for, 51
brochures for, 55
in closings, 110

goodwill, establishing (*continued*)
in correspondence, 107–8
in refusal letters, 9, 465, 467
social media for, 523
writer's checklist for, 108–9
"you" viewpoint for, 586
Google, search strategies, 477
government agencies
invitation for bids from, 433
job searches and, 301
government publications
APA documentation of, 141
IEEE documentation of, 147
MLA documentation of, 153
as public domain, 103
government specifications, 528–29
grammar, 233
grammar checkers, 426, 503
grant proposals, 233–38. *See also* proposals
writer's checklist for, 237–38
granularized content-management systems, 98–99
graphics. *See* visuals
graphs, 238–45. *See also* visuals
ethics in writing and, 238, 568
functions of, 570–71
for presentations, 414
for project schedules, 240
samples of, 239–43
vs. tables, 238, 536
writer's checklist for, 244–45

had / have, 541, 542, 563
handbooks
for research, 477
for technological tools, 13
hardly, 22, 156
hardware, adapting to new, 12–13
have / had, 541, 542, 563
he / she, 246. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; sexist language
he / him / his, 63–66, 391, 422–26
headers and footers, 246–47
on continuing pages, 321, 345
in page design, 314
samples of, 247, 321, 345
headings, 247–50
in brochures, 56
in correspondence, 113, 317, 319
in document design, 314
in forms, 221
in instructions, 268
italics for, 293
levels of, 247, 249, 379–80
in manuals, 331
in meeting minutes, 347–48
in newsletters, 360
numbering, 249
in outlines, 379–80
parallel structure for, 386
in résumés, 496
in sales proposals, 436
sample of, 248
style for, 249
in tables, 536
in tables of contents, 198, 536
in trade journal articles, 553
in trip reports, 556
typography for, 313
in Web design, 582–83
writer's checklist for, 249–50
headlines, in blogs and forums, 52
help menus and manuals, 13. *See also* instructions; manuals
helping verbs, 398, 514, 565
highlighting devices. *See* layout and design; typography
hooks, in openings, 287–88
however. See conjunctive adverbs
how-to guides, 13. *See also* instructions; manuals
humor
in global communication, 273, 277
malapropisms, 330
quotation marks and, 458
hyperbole, 191
hyperlinks. *See* links
hyphens, 250–52
clarity and, 251
for compound words, 91, 250
with modifiers, 251
with numbers, 120, 251
with prefixes, 251, 405
with suffixes, 251

I
  between you and . . ., 48, 406
  vs. *me*, 63–66
  me / my / mine, 391, 422–26
  in résumés, 499
  in technical writing style, 401–2
  vs. *you*, 107–8
icons, 316, 571
idioms, 253, 273, 277, 407
i.e. / e.g., 162–63
IEEE documentation, 136, 144–47
  for articles in periodicals, 145, 146
  for books, 144–45
  documentation models, 144–47
  for electronic sources, 145–46
  for in-text citations, 144, 148
  for miscellaneous sources, 146–47
  sample pages, 148–49
-ies endings for plurals, 366, 368
if and when, 576
IFB. *See* invitation for bids
illegal / illicit, 253
illusion / allusion, 31
illustrations. *See* visuals
IM. *See* instant messaging
image, business
  brochures for promoting, 55–58
  in newsletters, 358
imperative mood, 351
  for conciseness, 93
  for instructions, 266
  for manuals, 332
  for nonsexist language, 246
imperative sentences, 515. *See also* commands
impersonal point of view, 401–2
implicit / explicit, 183
imply / infer, 254
in / into, 254
in order to, 254
in spite of / despite, 127
in terms of, 254–55
incident reports, 255
increasing order-of-importance method of development, 346, 376
  sample of, 375
indefinite adjectives, 15
indefinite articles, 1, 41–42
indefinite pronouns, 422
  one, 372
  possessive case of, 404–5
  pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 425
  subject-verb agreement with, 25–26, 425
independent clauses, 71
  in comma splices, 78
  connecting with comma and coordinating conjunction, 78–79
  connecting with conjunctive adverb and semicolon, 21, 83, 97, 510–11
  in run-on sentences, 391, 504–5
  and sentence structure, 514
indexes to periodicals, 475–76. *See also* subject directories
indexing, 255–59
  for formal reports, 201
  for manuals, 333
  sample of, 257
  technology for, 258
  writer's checklist for, 259
indicative mood, 93, 351–52
indirect objects, 90, 371
  as complements, 90
  nouns as, 365
  pronoun case and, 65
indirect quotations, 458, 460. *See also* quotations
indiscreet / indiscrete, 259
industrial specifications, 528
infer / imply, 254
infinitive phrases, 397–98
infinitives, 562–63
  ESL tips for, 172
  with helping verbs, 565
  split, 562–63
  subject of, and pronoun case, 65
  to as sign of, 397, 562–63, 565
inflammable / nonflammable / flammable, 192
infographics, 260–61
  sample, 260
  writer's checklist, 261
informal definitions, 120

informal internal proposals, 431
informal reports, 469
informal style, 531–32. *See also* style; technical writing style
informal tables, 537–38
information sources. *See* research
information technology (IT) specialists, 13
informational brochures, 55–58
informational interviews, 298–99. *See also* interviewing for information
informative abstracts, 7–8
  sample of, 7
informative writing, 183
-ing endings
  gerunds, 561–62, 565
  for present participles, 563
  in progressive form, 543
initialisms. *See* acronyms and initialisms
initials, 320, 390
inquiries and responses, 261–64
  for job searches, 302
  samples of, 262–63
  for unsolicited proposals, 434
inside address, 319
inside / inside of, 264
insoluble / insolvable, 264
instant messaging, 264–66
  abbreviations in, 2–3, 265
  ethics in writing and, 266
  functions of, 509
  sample of, 265
  social media and, 523
  writer's checklist for, 266
Institutional Review Board (IRB), 474, 553
instructions, 266–71. *See also* manuals
  chronological order for, 68–70
  for forms, 221–22
  infographics for, 260
  plain language for, 266
  point of view in, 401
  sample of, 269–70
  sequential method of development for, 267
  testing, 268, 558
  visuals for, 157–61, 268
  warnings in, 181, 268
  writer's checklist for, 271
insure / ensure / assure, 271
intensifiers, 271–72
  adverbs as, 271–72, 350
  for emphasis, 169
  overuse of, 6, 94, 271–72
  really and *actually*, 462
  very, 567
intensive pronouns, 423
interface, 272
interjections, 272
  commas with, 80
  exclamation marks with, 181
internal proposals, 431–33
  sample of, 432–33
internal Web sites, 51, 510
international correspondence, 272–77. *See also* global communication
  context and, 230
  cultural differences and, 229, 273
  dates in, 119, 277
  euphemisms and, 180
  figures of speech and, 191
  idioms and, 253, 273, 277
  indirect style for, 230, 273
  plain language for, 401
  punctuation for, 231
  salutations for, 273, 277
  samples of, 274–76
  visuals and graphics for, 229–31
  writer's checklist for, 277
International Organization for Standardization (ISO) symbols. *See* ISO symbols
International System of Units (SI), 4
Internet. *See* blogs and forums; Internet research; online postings; URLs; Web design; Web sites; writing for the Web
Internet research, 477–80. *See also* electronic sources; library resources; research
  evaluating sources, 478–79

for job searches, 299
message boards, 13
primary research, 473–74
search engines, 477–78
subject directories, 478
writer's checklist for, 477–78
internships, 301–2
interrogative adverbs, 21
interrogative pronouns, 422
interrogative sentences, 451, 515. *See also* questions
interrupting elements, commas with, 79
interviewing for a job, 280–85. *See also* employment process
application cover letters, 36–41
follow-up procedures, 8–10, 284–85
listening, 282, 322–24
professionalism and, 282
résumés and, 484
salary negotiations and, 283–84
sample thank-you note, 285
interviewing for information, 277–80
for job searches, 298–99
listening, 278, 322–24
for newsletter articles, 356
professionalism and, 278
questionnaires and, 452–53
for research, 474
for usability testing, 560
writer's checklist for, 279–80
interviews
APA documentation of, 141
IEEE documentation of, 146
MLA documentation of, 153
in-text citations. *See* citations, in-text
intranet, 51, 510
intransitive verbs, 308, 564–65
introductions, 285–90. *See also* openings
conclusions and, 96
context in, 101
for feasibility reports, 188–89
for grant proposals, 235
for literature reviews, 326
for manuals, 289–90
for newsletter articles, 358
for presentations, 409–10
for process explanations, 417
for progress reports, 418
for proposals, 431
for reports, 199, 208–10, 469
sample of, 208–10
setting tone with, 550
for specifications, 289–90
for trade journal articles, 552
for white papers, 578–79
introductory elements. *See also* sentence openings
commas with, 80
dangling modifiers as, 117
wordiness and, 93
inverted sentences
for emphasis, 515–16
subject-verb agreement and, 26
for variety, 520
investigative reports, 292
sample of, 292
invitation for bids, 433–34. *See also* requests for proposals
IRB (Institutional Review Board), 474, 553
irregardless, 468
is when / is where, 121
ISO symbols
for flowcharts, 192
for global communication, 230
for manuals, 333–34
samples of, 193, 231
for warnings, 268
it
as expletive, 182–83, 513
and *its*, 391, 422
as subject, 513
IT (information technology) specialists, 13
italics, 292–93
for emphasis, 170, 292, 314
for foreign words, 195, 292
for proper names, 293
for subheadings, 293
for titles of works, 292–93, 548

italics (*continued*)
for words, letters, and numbers, 293
its / it's, 294

jammed modifiers. *See* stacked modifiers
jargon, 295. *See also* technical terminology
abbreviations as, 2
as affectation, 23
buzzwords as, 58–59
ethics in writing and, 179
as functional shift, 224
in global communication, 273, 277
as gobbledygook, 232
in manuals, 332
vs. plain language, 399–400
job applications. *See* application forms; job search; résumés
job descriptions, 295–97
in résumés, 498–99
sample of, 296
writer's checklist for, 297
job interviews. *See* interviewing for a job
job search, 297–306. *See also* employment process; interviewing for a job
advertisements, 300
application cover letters, 36–41
application forms, 302–5
campus career services, 299
employment agencies, 301
ethics in writing and, 305–6
informational interviews, 298–99
inquiries, 302
internships, 301–2
networking, 298–99
online resources for, 500–502
personal brand and branding, 298, 300
professionalism and, 300
research for, 299
résumés, 484–502
social media and, 523
trade and professional listings, 300
writer's checklist for, 305
job titles
capitalization of, 63
in résumés, 497
journals. *See* articles in periodicals; periodicals; trade journal articles
justification, in page design, 314

key terms. *See also* keyword searches
in abstracts, 552
defining, 120–21
for indexing, 257, 552
repetition of, 169, 468, 554
in résumés, 300, 500
in Web content, 583
keys (legends)
for graphs, 244
for maps, 334
for symbols, 192, 569
keyword searches. *See also* key terms
for catalogs and databases, 475–76
for job listings, 300
for search engines, 477–78
for technical help, 13
kind of / sort of, 15, 29–30, 307
kind / type / sort, 15, 29–30
know-how, 307

labels
for drawings, 161
for flowcharts, 192–93
for forms, 223
for graphs, 240, 244
for maps, 334
for photographs, 394–95
laboratory reports, 308
chronological method of development for, 68
for research, 473
sample of, 309–10
vs. test reports, 544
language. *See also* English as a second language (ESL); word choice
biased, 48–49
deceptive, 179, 392, 403

plain, 399–400
pretentious, 23–24
sexist, 28, 48–49, 246, 425
Latin words. *See also* foreign words in English
abbreviations for, 5, 162–63, 178
ad hoc, 12
quid pro quo, 457
via, 567
latter / former, 219
lay / lie, 308, 310
layout and design, 310–16. *See also* format; Web design
for blogs, 52
for brochures, 55–57
captions, 316
color in, 315
columns, 315
for e-mail, 165–67
ethics in writing and, 179
for FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), 186
for forms, 221–23
headers and footers, 246–47, 314
headings, 247–50, 314
for instructions, 268
justification, 314
for letters, 316–21
lists, 315
for manuals, 331
medium and, 470
for newsletters, 360–61
page-design elements and, 314–15
persuasion and, 392
for presentation visuals, 412
for résumés, 484
rules for, 316
for technical documents, 539
templates for, 197–98
thumbnails and, 316
typography and, 312–14
usability testing for, 558–60
of visuals, 315–16, 569
for warnings, 268
for white papers, 579
white space and, 315, 317
writing process and, xviii
lectures, MLA documentation of. *See* presentations
left-justified margins, 314
legal cases, italics for titles of, 292, 548
legal terms
as affectation, 23
ethics in writing and, 179
illegal / illicit, 254
party, 389
vs. plain language, 400
quid pro quo, 457
legalese, 232
legends. *See* keys (legends)
lend / loan, 316
length
of paragraphs, 383
of résumés, 484
of sentences, 168, 519
less / fewer, 189
letterhead stationery, 317, 318, 507
letters, 316–21. *See also* correspondence; salutations
body of, 320
closings for, 111–12, 320
formatting, 316–21
functions of, 507
headings in, 317, 319
openings for, 111, 286, 319
samples of, 318
letters of the alphabet
capitalization of, 63
italics for, 293
in outlines, 379
plurals of, 35
library resources, 474–77. *See also* Internet research; research
catalogs, 474–75
databases and indexes, 475–76
library homepage, 474
reference works, 476–77
lie / lay, 308, 310
-like, 534
like / as, 321–22
limiting adjectives, 14–15, 41
line drawings. *See* drawings
line graphs. *See* graphs
LinkedIn.com, 299, 300, 510, 524

linking verbs, 64, 564–65
links
  in blog writing, 52
  in electronic résumés, 501
  in Web content, 584
listening, 322–24
  in interviews, 278, 282
  in meetings, 342
list-hosting service, 360
lists, 324–25
  of abbreviations and symbols, in reports, 199
  in brochures, 56
  bulleted, 113, 324–25
  colons before, 75–77, 324
  consistency in, 325
  contact, 264, 266
  in correspondence, 113
  in document design, 315
  of figures and tables, 198, 572
  formatting for, 325
  in inquiries, 263
  in instructions, 267
  numbered, 325, 390
  parallel structure for, 386
  periods in, 390
  in presentations, 325, 414
  sample of, 324
  in Web design, 470, 583
  writer's checklist for, 325
literally / figuratively, 190
literature reviews, 325–27
  in grant proposals, 235
  sample of, 326
  for trade journal articles, 551
litotes, 191
loaded arguments, 329
loaded sentences, 516
loan / lend, 316
localisms, 174
logic errors, 327–29
  biased or suppressed evidence, 328
  double negatives and, 156
  ethics in writing and, 327, 328
  fact vs. opinion, 184, 328
  false cause, 67, 328
  lack of reason, 327
  loaded arguments, 329
  mixed constructions, 349
  non sequiturs, 328
  in sentence construction, 518
  sweeping generalizations, 328
long quotations. *See* block quotations
long variants, 23, 232
loose / lose, 329
loose sentences, 520
-*ly* endings, 22, 250–51

magazines. *See* articles in periodicals; periodicals
mailing lists, 360
malapropisms, 330
male / female, 189
manuals, 330–34. *See also* instructions
  audience for, 331
  context of, 100
  decimal number heads in, 380
  introductions for, 289–90
  for research, 477
  sections in, 332
  for technological tools, 13
  types of, 330–31
  usability of, 558–60
  warnings in, 181, 333
manuscript preparation, for trade journal articles, 553
maps, 334–35. *See also* visuals
  functions of, 570
  IEEE documentation of, 146
  sample of, 335
  writer's checklist for, 334–35
margins
  for brochures, 56
  for letters, 317, 319
  in page design, 314
marketing. *See* promotional writing
mass nouns, 364
  articles and, 171–72
  ESL tips for, 170–71
  subject-verb agreement and, 25–26
mathematical equations, 336–37
  numbering, 336

punctuation with, 337
slashes in, 522
technology for, 336
may / can, 60
maybe / may be, 337
me
between you and . . ., 48, 406
vs. *I*, 63–66
and *my / mine*, 63–66, 391, 422–26
mean / average / median, 45–46
measurements
abbreviations for, 4
average / median / mean, 45–46
in global communication, 277
numerals vs. words, 368
precision of, 10
subject-verb agreement with, 26
units of, 4
media, social. *See* social media
media / medium, 338
median / mean / average, 45–46
medium. *See* selecting the medium
medium / media, 338
meetings, 338–43. *See also* minutes of meetings
agendas for, 340–41
attendees, 338
closing, 343
conducting, 341–43
conference calls for, 509–10
conflict in, 342
face-to-face, 509–10
functions of, 509–10
planning for, 338–41
purpose of, 338
technology for, 339, 509–10
writer's checklist for, 343
memos, 343–45. *See also* correspondence
additional pages for, 345
bad-news patterns for, 112
chronological order for, 68
as cover letters, 196, 202, 454
format for, 343–44
functions of, 343, 507
as incident reports, 255
openings for, 112, 286
order-of-importance method of development for, 373–76
professionalism and, 345
protocols for sending, 343
samples of, 69, 202, 344–45, 374, 393, 454
subject line of, 62, 113–14, 547
tone for, 550
transmittals, 114–15
message boards, for technical help, 13
metadata, 133
metaphors, 191
metasearch engines, 478
methods of development, 345–47
cause-and-effect, 67
chronological, 68
clarity and, 68, 70–71
comparison, 86–88
definition, 121–24
division-and-classification, 130–32
general and specific, 227–28
order-of-importance, 373–76
for organization, 376
sequential, 521
spatial, 527–28
writing process and, xviii
metonyms, 191
metric system, 4
mind mapping, 53–54
minor sentences, 515
minutes of meetings, 347–48. *See also* meetings
assigning responsibility for, 341
chronological order for, 68
sample of, 347
writer's checklist for, 348
misplaced modifiers, 33, 350, 397
Miss / Mrs. / Ms., 352
mixed constructions, 349. *See also* garbled sentences
MLA documentation, 136, 150–55. *See also* documenting sources
for articles in periodicals, 151, 152
for books, 150–51
documentation models, 150–55
for electronic sources, 151–52

MLA documentation (*continued*)
in-text citations, 150, 154
for miscellaneous sources, 153
for multimedia sources, 153
sample pages, 154–55, 218
works-cited list, 136, 155
mobile phones, 508–9, 544
Modern Language Association. *See* MLA documentation
modifiers, 349–51. *See also* adjectives; adverbs
ambiguous use of, 33–34
dangling, 117
hyphens with, 251
misplaced, 33, 350
order of, 16–17
redundant, 92
restrictive and nonrestrictive, 483–84
sentence construction and, 512, 513–14
squinting, 351
stacked (jammed), 17, 350
money, numbers for, 368–69
monitoring social media, 525–26
months. *See* dates
mood, 351–52
ESL tips for, 352
helping verbs and, 565
imperative, 351
indicative, 351–52
shifts in, 566
subjunctive, 351–52
more / most
for comparison, 15, 22, 177
subject-verb agreement with, 25
more than / as much as, 44
moreover. See conjunctive adverbs
most / almost, 32
movies. *See* films
Ms. / Miss / Mrs., 319, 352
multilingual writers. *See* English as a second language (ESL)
multimedia sources
APA documentation of, 140–41
IEEE documentation of, 146
MLA documentation of, 153
multiple audiences, 44–45. *See also* audience
multiple authors
APA documentation of, 138
IEEE documentation of, 144
MLA documentation of, 150
multiple books by same author
APA documentation of, 138
MLA documentation of, 150
multiple-choice questions, 222
multivolume works
APA documentation of, 138
IEEE documentation of, 144–45
MLA documentation of, 151
musical works, titles of
italics for, 293, 548
quotation marks for, 458, 548
mutual / common, 352–53

names and titles. *See also* organization names; proper nouns
abbreviations for, 4–5
capitalization of, 62–63
commas with, 83
first names, 166, 319
initials for, 320, 390
in international correspondence, 273, 277
in letters, 319
Ms. / Miss / Mrs., 319, 352
on title pages, 198
unknown, 319
narration, 354–55
sample of, 355
narrative section, in grant proposals, 235–36. *See also* body
National Institute of Standards and Technology, 4
nationalities
bias toward, avoiding, 49
capitalization of names of, 61
nature, 356
navigational cues, in Web design, 583
needless to say, 356
negative definitions, 120–21, 124
negative messages. *See* bad-news patterns

negatives, double, 156–57, 402
neither . . . nor, 362
  as correlative conjunction, 97
  double negatives and, 156
  in parallel structure, 386
  pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 30
  subject-verb agreement with, 27–28
netiquette, 165
networking, 298–99, 509–10
networking connections, 523–24
nevertheless. *See* conjunctive adverbs
newsletter articles, 356–58. *See also* articles in periodicals
  sample of, 357
  titles for, 547
  writer's checklist for, 358
newsletters, 358–61
  blogs as, 51
  format and design for, 313, 360–61
  professionalism and, 360
  sample of, 359
newspapers. *See* articles in periodicals; periodicals
no, comma with, 79
no one / not one, 361
nominalizations, 361
nominative case. *See* subjective case
non sequiturs, 328
none, 361
nonfinite verbs, 565–66
nonflammable / flammable / inflammable, 192
nonrestrictive elements, 483–84. *See also* parenthetical elements
  commas with, 79, 483–84
  which with, 483–84, 544, 546
nonstandard English, 174–75
nonverbal communication, 415–16
nor / or, 362
  and pronoun-antecedent agreement, 30
  and subject-verb agreement, 27–28
not
  double negatives and, 156–57
  in verb phrases, 398
not only . . . but also, 40, 97
notes section, in formal reports, 200
note-taking, 362–64
  in active listening, 323
  drafting and, 581
  ethics in writing and, 362
  for interviews, 278
  for minutes of meetings, 341, 347–48
  paraphrasing, 387
  plagiarism and, 362
  for presentations, 416
  quotations and, 459
  for research, 473, 474
  writer's checklist for, 363–64
nouns, 364–66
  abstract, 364
  as adjectives, 17, 365, 404
  collective, 27, 364, 365
  common, 61, 364
  compound, 404
  concrete, 364
  coordinate, 404
  count, 15, 25–26, 170–71, 364
  ESL tips for, 170–71
  functions of, 365
  gender of, 226
  gerunds as, 565
  mass, 25–26, 170–71, 364
  as objects, 371
  participles as, 566
  phrases as, 395, 398
  plurals of, 366, 404
  possessive case of, 65, 403–4, 562
  pronouns modifying, 424
  proper, 60, 364
  as subjects, 512–13
  types of, 364
  verbals as, 561
number (grammar), 366–67. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; subject-verb agreement
number (word)
  vs. *amount*, 34
  subject-verb agreement with, 26
numbered lists. *See* lists

numbering
  in decimal headings, 249, 379–80
  for figures, 198, 370
  for maps, 334
  for mathematical equations, 336
  in outlines, 379–80
  for photographs, 394
  for tables, 198, 370, 536
numbers, 367–70. *See also* measurements; numerical data
  in addresses, 370
  as adjectives, 15
  cardinal, 15, 119
  for chapters and volumes, 370
  colons with, 76
  commas with, 82–83, 369
  in dates, 369
  ESL tips for, 369
  for figures and tables, 370
  fractions, 368
  hyphens with, 120, 251
  italics for, 293
  in mathematical equations, 336–37
  measurements, 368
  money, 368–69
  numerals vs. words, 15, 367–68
  ordinal, 15, 119, 192
  for pages, 370
  in parentheses, 370, 388
  percentages, 368, 389
  periods with, 369, 390
  plurals of, 35, 368
  slashes with, 522
  for time, 369
number-style method of documentation. *See* IEEE documentation
numerical data
  in grant proposals, 236
  in graphs, 238–45, 570–71
  in tables, 536–38, 570

object of preposition, 371
  gerunds as, 561
  no colon before, 77
  nouns as, 365
  pronoun case and, 65, 406
objective case, 65, 423
objective complements, 90, 365
objectives
  in grant proposals, 235–36
  opening with, 286
  in résumés, 496–97
objects, 371. *See also* direct objects; indirect objects; object of preposition
observation, in research, 473–74
of
  possessive case using, 403, 405
  redundant use of, 264, 380, 407
  with *this kind / these kinds / that type / those types*, 15, 29–30
of which / who's / whose, 580
OK / okay, 371
omissions
  apostrophes for, 35
  commas for, 82
  dashes for, 118
  ellipses for, 163, 460
  ethics in writing and, 179
  slashes for, 522
  telegraphic style and, 540
omnibus words, 561
on / onto / upon, 372
one, 372
one another, 423
one of those . . . who, 372–73
online chat sessions, 75
online forms. *See* forms
online postings. *See also* blogs and forums
  APA documentation of, 140
  MLA documentation of, 152
online resources. *See* Internet research; Web sites
online tutorials, 13
only, 22, 373
open-ended questions, 222
openings. *See also* introductions
  for adjustment letters, 17–20
  for application cover letters, 38
  for bad-news letters, 111
  for correspondence, 111
  good news in, 109

hooks in, 287–88
for international correspondence, 273
for investigative reports, 292
for refusal letters, 465–66
routine, 286
for test reports, 544
operator's manuals, 331
opinions
conflicting, 392
ESL tips for stating, 402
vs. facts, 184, 328
point of view for, 402
or / nor, 362
and pronoun-antecedent agreement, 30
and subject-verb agreement, 27–28
oral presentations. *See* presentations
order-of-importance method of development, 346, 373–76
ordinal numbers, 119
as modifiers, 15, 192
spelling out, 368
organization, 376. *See also* methods of development
coherence and, 72
outlining, 377–80
paragraphs and, 383
for presentations, 409–12
for résumés, 484, 496–500
for sales proposals, 435–36
for trade journal articles, 552
writer's checklist for, xxi
writing process and, xvii–xviii
organization description, in grant proposals, 236
organization names
abbreviations of, 3–4
ampersands in, 4, 34
capitalization of, 62
as singular nouns, 366
on title pages, 198, 435
organizational charts, 377, 571
organizational newsletters, 358
organizational sales pitch, in proposals, 448
sample of, 446
origins, definitions exploring, 123–24
orphans, 315
our / ours, 391, 422–26
outcomes, in grant proposals, 235–36
outlining, 377–80
abstracts and, 8
brainstorming and, 53–54
for clarity, 70
coherence and, 72
drafting and, 377–80, 383–84, 581
headings in, 247–50
and method of development, 346
numbers in, 249
for organization, 376, 378
parallel structure for, 379
technology for, 380
for trade journal articles, 552
types of, 378, 383–84
unity and, 558
visuals in, 376, 379, 569
for white papers, 578
writing process and, xviii
outside [of], 380
over [with], 381
overhead transparencies, 412
overview
in manuals, 331–32
in presentations, 409, 410
ownership. *See* possessive case

pace, 382
clarity and, 70
in presentations, 416
regulating, 254, 520
page design. *See* layout and design
page numbers, 370
commas with, 369
in formal reports, 198
in headers or footers, 246, 314
in indexes, 258–59
paintings, italics for titles of, 293, 548
pamphlets
APA documentation of, 141
IEEE documentation of, 147
italics for titles of, 292, 548
MLA documentation of, 153

panels, brochure, 57
paragraphs, 382–85
  coherence in, 72, 384–85
  drafting, 383–84, 581
  in e-mail, 166
  functions of, 382
  length of, 383
  outlining, 378, 383–84
  topic sentence of, 382–83
  transitions and, 554–56
  unity in, 384–85, 558
  in Web content, 583
parallel structure, 385–87
  with *both . . . and*, 52
  faulty parallelism, 386–87
  for headings, 249
  in lists, 325
  for nonsexist language, 49
  in outlines, 379
  in sentence construction, 516
paraphrasing, 387
  in active listening, 323
  documenting sources and, 135, 399
  ethics in writing and, 387
  indirect quotations as, 458
  in meeting minutes, 347
  note-taking and, 362
parentheses, 387–88
  brackets within, 53
  commas with, 83, 388
  for enclosing elements, 118, 511
  in mathematical equations, 337
  numbers in, 370, 388
  periods with, 388, 390
parenthetical citations. *See* citations, in-text
parenthetical elements
  brackets for, 52, 388
  capitalization of, 63
  commas with, 79, 483–84
  dashes for, 118, 511
  nonrestrictive elements as, 483–84
  parentheses for, 388, 511
part-by-part method of comparison, 87
partial adjustments, 19, 20
participial phrases, 396–97
participles, 563–64, 566
  ESL tips for, 16
parts of speech, 388–89
party, 389
passive voice, 574–75
  vs. active voice, 567, 572–73
  bad news and, 112
  ethics in writing and, 179, 574
  infinitives and, 562
  in laboratory reports, 308
  responsibility and, 179, 574
  in technical writing, 539
  wordiness of, 93, 572–73
past participles, 16, 563
past perfect tense, 541, 542
past progressive tense, 541, 543
past tense, 173, 541
patents, 103–4
PDF files, 501, 585
per, 389
percent / percentage, 389
percentages, numbers in, 368
perfect / equal / unique, 177–78
perfect participles, 563
perfect tense, 541
periodic sentences, 515, 520
periodicals. *See also* articles in periodicals
  currency of, 474
  indexes to, 475–76
  italics for titles of, 293, 458, 548
periods, 390–91
  with abbreviations, 3
  commas with, 83
  with ellipses, 163
  with numbers, 369
  with parentheses, 388, 390
  period faults, 391
  with quotation marks, 390, 459
  for run-on sentences, 391
permissions, for copyrighted material, 52, 102, 199, 551
person, 391. *See also* point of view
  agreement in, 25, 566–67
  in narration, 354
  point of view and, 401–2
  pronouns and, 426

person / party, 389
personal brand, and job search, 298, 300
personal communications
  APA documentation of, 141
  IEEE documentation of, 147
  MLA documentation of, 153
personal names and titles. *See* names and titles
personal pronouns, 422–26
  antecedents and, 426
  forms of, 391
  point of view and, 401–2
personal social-media accounts, 525–26
personalities, difficult, 342
personification, 191
persuasion, 392
  in application cover letters, 36
  ethics in writing and, 392
  in grant proposals, 234, 235–36
  in inquiry letters, 262
  in openings, 289
  in proposals, 429
  in résumés, 485
  sample of, 393
  in white papers, 577–78
  "you" viewpoint and, 586
phenomenon / phenomena, 392
photographs, 392, 394–95. *See also* visuals
  ethics in writing and, 394–95
  functions of, 570
phrases, 395–98
  commas with, 80
  functions of, 395
  gerund, 398
  infinitive, 397–98
  noun, 398
  participial, 396–97
  prepositional, 396
  restrictive and nonrestrictive, 483–84
  verb, 398
pictorial symbols. *See* symbols
picture graphs. *See* graphs
pie graphs. *See* graphs
place names. *See* geographic features
plagiarism, 398–99. *See also* copyrights, patents, and trademarks
  consequences of, 200
  documenting sources and, 135
  ethics in writing and, 179, 200, 399
  note-taking and, 362
  repurposing and, 470–71
plain language, 399–401
  clarity and, 70–71
  for environmental impact statements, 176
  for instructions, 266
  point of view and, 402
  positive writing and, 402–3
  for Web content, 582
  writer's checklist for, 400
plain-text résumés, 501
planning, in collaborative writing, 73. *See also* outlining; preparation
platform, social media, 523–24
plays, titles of
  capitalization of, 62, 548
  italics for, 293, 548
pluperfect, 542
plurals. *See also* number (grammar)
  of abbreviations, 3, 35
  apostrophes for, 35
  of compound words, 91, 366
  of foreign words, 195
  of nouns, 366
  of numbers, 35, 368
  possessive case of, 65, 404
podcasts
  APA documentation of, 141
  MLA documentation of, 153
poems, titles of
  italics for, 293, 548
  quotation marks for, 548
point of view, 401–2. *See also* "you" viewpoint
  consistent use of, 70, 384–85
  for correspondence, 107–8
  ethics in writing and, 402

point of view (*continued*)
in narration, 354
person and, 391
politeness
in correspondence, 108
in global communication, 273, 277
in job interviews, 282
in meetings, 341–43
portfolios, for résumés, 499–500
position, and emphasis, 168
position descriptions. *See* job descriptions
positive writing, 402–3
for defining terms, 120–21
for double negatives, 157
ethics in writing and, 403
in job applications, 305
and plain language, 400
"you" viewpoint, 586
possessive adjectives, 15, 171
possessive case, 403–5
apostrophes for, 35, 403–5
for compound words, 91
ESL tips for, 425
of nouns, 65, 403–4
of plurals, 65
of pronouns, 65, 403, 404–5, 423
post hoc, ergo propter hoc, 328
postal abbreviations, 5, 317
posting to the Web. *See* blogs and forums
practicing, for presentations, 414–16
precision / accuracy, 10
predicate adjectives, 17
predicate nominative, 514
predicates, 513–14
complements in, 90
preface, in formal reports, 199
prefixes, 405
affectation and, 23
hyphens with, 251, 405
preparation, 405–6
analyzing audience needs, 44, 406
determining purpose, 449
determining scope, 506
for information interviews, 278
for job interviews, 280–82
for research, 473
for specifications, 528
for trade journal articles, 550–51
for white papers, 578
writer's checklists for, xxi, 406
writing process and, xiv–xvi
prepositional phrases, 396
commas with, 84
as modifiers, 406
objects and, 371
overuse of, 396
showing possession, 403, 406
prepositions, 406–7. *See also* object of preposition
and agreement in number, 15, 29–30
in idioms, 253
present participle, 16, 563
present perfect tense, 541, 542
ESL tips for, 173
infinitives and, 562
present progressive tense, 541
ESL tips for, 173, 543
present tense, 541, 542
ESL tips for, 174
infinitives and, 562
for instructions, 266
presentation software, 412–13
presentations, 408–17
anxiety and, 416
audience for, 408
delivery techniques for, 415–16
ethics in writing and, 412
infographics for, 260
lists in, 325, 414
order-of-importance method of development for, 373–76
practicing, 414–16
professionalism and, 414
purpose of, 408
research for, 409
slides in, 412–13
structuring, 409–12
technology for, 412
typography for, 414
visuals for, 412–13
writer's checklists for, 414, 416

pretentious language. *See* affectation
previews, in introductions, 289
primary research, 473–74
principal / principle, 417
privacy, social media and, 525
privacy statements, for Web sites, 585
problem statement
  opening with, 286–87
  in presentations, 409
  in proposals, 429, 431, 436
  in white papers, 578–79
process explanation, 417. *See also* writing process
  flowcharts for, 192–94, 571
  instructions, 266–71
  sample of, 539
  sequential method of development for, 521
product description
  in brochures, 55
  in sales proposals, 435, 440
  sample of, 440
  in white papers, 577
professional brand, and job search, 298, 300
professional journals. *See* trade journal articles; trade journals, job listings in
professional organizations, online, 299
professionalism notes
  acceptance / refusal letters, 10
  adjustment letters, 20
  biased language, 48
  collaborative writing, 73, 74
  e-mail, 164–65
  interviewing for a job, 282
  interviewing for information, 278
  job search, 300
  memos, 345
  newsletters, 360
  presentations, 413
  proofreading, 426
  résumés, 497, 500, 502
  style, 532
  telegraphic style, 540
prognosis / diagnosis, 127
progress and activity reports, 417–20
  samples of, 419–20
  titles for, 547
progressive tense, 541
  ESL tips for, 173, 543
project description
  in grant proposals, 235–36
  in requests for proposals, 471–72
  in sales proposals, 436
project management, for proposals, 430
projection, in presentations, 416
promotional writing
  blogs and forums, 50–52
  brochures, 55–58
  newsletters, 359
  white papers, 577–79
pronoun reference, 33, 421. *See also* antecedents
pronoun-antecedent agreement, 25, 28–30. *See also* agreement
  with collective nouns, 29, 365
  with compound antecedents, 30
  with *data / datum*, 119
  with *each / every*, 28, 162
  with *everybody / everyone*, 29, 181
  in gender, 28, 226, 425
  with *he / she*, 226
  with indefinite pronouns, 426
  with *none*, 361
  in number, 24–25, 29–30
  with possessive pronouns, 425
  with *this / that / these / those*, 14, 29–30
pronouns, 422–26. *See also* personal pronouns; pronoun-antecedent agreement
  as adjectives, 15
  case of, 63–66, 423–24
  compound, 66, 424
  demonstrative, 422
  gender of, 28, 226, 425
  indefinite, 406, 422
  intensive, 423
  interrogative, 422
  number and, 29–30, 425–26
  as objects, 65

pronouns (*continued*)
person and, 391, 426, 566
plurals of, 367
point of view and, 401–2
possessive, 65, 404–5, 562
reciprocal, 423
reflexive, 422–23
relative, 422
sexist language and, 28, 49, 246, 425
as subjects, 64, 512
telegraphic style and, 540
for transitions, 554
pronunciations, in dictionaries, 127
proofreaders' marks, 428
proofreading, 426–28
application cover letters, 41
e-mail, 164
professionalism and, 426
proofreaders' marks, 426–28
résumés, 484
revision and, 503
social media posts, 525
technology for, 427
writer's checklist for, 427
proper nouns, 364
capitalization of, 60
italics for, 297
proposals, 428–49. *See also* grant proposals; requests for proposals; sales proposals
appendixes for, 36
audience and purpose for, 429
conclusions, 94–96
context in, 101, 430
cover letters for, 114–15
description of, in requests for proposals, 471–72
documenting sources in, 431
environmental impact statements for, 175–77
ethics in writing and, 435, 436
evaluation criteria for, 472
executive summaries in, 182
external, 433–48
feasibility reports for, 186–89
formal, 431–33
informal, 431
internal, 431–33
persuasive writing for, 429
project management for, 430
research, 233–38
sales, 434–36
samples of, 95, 432–33, 437–47
solicited and unsolicited, 433–34
titles for, 547
writer's checklist for, 430
protocol
method of usability testing, 559
for sending memos, 343
pseudo- / quasi-, 448
public domain, 103, 470–71
publication clearance
for trade journal articles, 553
for white papers, 579
publication dates. *See also* dates
in headers or footers, 246–47, 314
in report titles, 198, 547
publishing. *See* trade journal articles
punctuation, 448–49
apostrophes, 35
brackets, 53
colons, 75–77
commas, 78–84
dashes, 118
ellipses, 163
exclamation marks, 181
for global communication, 231
hyphens, 250–52
with mathematical equations, 337
parentheses, 388
periods, 390–91
question marks, 451–52
quotation marks, 457–59
semicolons, 510–12
slashes, 522
purpose, 449–50
audience and, 44
of brochures, 55
clarity and, 70
design and, 311
establishing, xiv, 406
for feasibility reports, 187–88
of introductions, 289

of listening, 323
in manuals, 331–32
of meetings, 338
for presentations, 408
of proposals, 429
repurposing, 470
for requests for proposals, 471–72
scope and, 506
selecting the medium and, 506–7
in social media, 525
style and, 106, 530
tone and, 549
unity and, 558
usability testing and, 558–59
visuals and, 568

quasi- / pseudo-, 448
question marks, 451–52
commas with, 83
questionnaires, 452–57. *See also* forms
ethics in writing and, 454, 474
sample of, 454–56
for usability testing, 560
writer's checklist for, 457
questions
in forms, 222–23
frequently asked (FAQs), 184–86
in inquiry letters, 263
for interviewing for information, 278
in job application forms, 305–6
in job interviews, 282–83
punctuation for, 451–52
for questionnaires, 452, 457
for research, 474
rhetorical, 409, 504, 547
for trade journal articles, 550–51
for transitions, 554, 555
wording, 223
quid pro quo, 457
quotation marks, 457–59. *See also* quotations
for direct quotations, 457–59
ethics in writing and, 458
punctuation with, 181, 459–60, 512
for titles of works, 292, 458–59, 548
for words and phrases, 458
quotations, 459–61. *See also* citations, in-text; documenting sources
block, 137, 150, 461
capitalization of, 61, 459
colons with, 76, 459
commas with, 80–81, 83, 459–60
direct, 457–59
ellipses for omissions in, 163, 460
ethics in writing and, 458, 459
incorporating into text, 461
indirect, 458, 460
inserting words into, 53, 460
long, 137, 150, 461
in note-taking, 362, 363, 473
opening with, 288, 410
paraphrasing, 387
periods in, 390, 459
plagiarism and, 398–99, 459
question marks with, 452
quotation marks with, 457–59
within quotations, 458
semicolons with, 459, 512
sic for errors in, 53, 461

racial groups
bias toward, avoiding, 49
capitalization of names of, 61
radio programs
APA documentation of, 141
MLA documentation of, 153
quotation marks for titles of, 458, 548
ragged-right margins, 314
raise / rise, 462
rambling sentences, 517
ranked-choice questions, 223
readers, 462. *See also* audience
really, 462
reason is [because], 462
reasoning. *See* logic errors
reciprocal pronouns, 423
recommendation letters. *See* reference letters

recommendation reports, 186, 292
recommendations
  in abstracts, 6
  in conclusions, 94
  in cover letters, 435
  in feasibility reports, 189
  opening with, 287
  in reports, 200, 215–17, 469
  samples of, 95, 215–17
  in test reports, 544
redundancy. *See also* repetition
  with abbreviations, 3
  eliminating, 92, 93
  of and, 264, 380, 407
  one and, 372
  reason is [because], 462
  up and, 407, 558
refer / allude / elude, 31
reference letters, 462–64
  ethics in writing and, 464
  sample of, 463
reference works, 476–77
  abbreviations in, 5
references. *See also* reference letters
  in job applications, 305
  in résumés, 499–500
references list (APA), 136. *See also* APA documentation; documenting sources
  documentation models for, 138–41
  in formal reports, 200
  in grant proposals, 235
  sample page, 143
  in trade journal articles, 553
reflexive pronouns, 422–23
refusal letters, 465–67
  bad-news patterns for, 110–11
  context and, 100
  for employment offers, 8–10
  samples of, 10, 466
regarding / with regard to, 467–68
regardless, 468
regionalisms, 174
rejections. *See* bad-news patterns; refusal letters
relative adjectives, 92
relative pronouns, 422
  in adjective clauses, 173
  for connecting clauses, 71–72
  in sentence fragments, 518
  subject-verb agreement with, 27
  in subordination, 533
  wordiness and, 92
religious groups
  bias toward, avoiding, 49
  capitalization of names of, 61
repetition, 468
  for emphasis, 169, 468
  for transitions, 468, 554
  wordiness from, 93, 468
report elements, 469. *See also* layout and design; reports
  abstract, 6–8, 198, 204
  appendixes, 36, 200
  back matter, 200–201
  bibliography, 50, 201
  body, 199–200, 211–15
  conclusion, 94–96, 200, 215–17
  cover letter, 114–15, 196, 202
  executive summary, 182, 199, 206–7
  explanatory notes, 200
  foreword, 198–99
  front matter, 197–99
  glossary, 201, 231–32
  headers and footers, 246–47, 314
  headings, 247–50, 314
  index, 201, 255–59
  introduction, 199, 208–10, 285–90
  list of abbreviations and symbols, 199
  list of figures and tables, 198
  page numbers, 198
  preface, 199
  problem statement, 286–87
  recommendations, 200, 215–17
  references / works-cited list, 200, 218
  samples of, 202–18
  table of contents, 198, 205, 536
  text, 199
  title, 546–49

title page, 198, 203
visuals, 315–16, 394
reports, 469. *See also* report elements
activity, 418
APA documentation of, 141
feasibility, 186–89
formal, 196–218
IEEE documentation of, 147
investigative, 292
laboratory, 308
MLA documentation of, 153
progress, 417–20
quotation marks for titles of, 548
recommendation, 186, 292
test, 544
tone for, 550
trip, 556
repurposing, 469–71
boilerplate material, 103
and content management, 98
ethics in writing and, 470–71
reputation, personal, 298
requests for proposals, 471–73. *See also* invitation for bids
ethics in writing and, 473
format for, 433–34
government specifications in, 528–29
requirements in, 233–38, 434
research, 473–80. *See also* documenting sources; Internet research; library resources
for collaborative writing, 73–74
ethics in writing and, 474
evaluating sources, 478–79
formal reports of, 196–218
interviews, 277–80
for job interviews, 280–81
laboratory reports, 308
literature reviews, 325–27, 551
methods of, xvii
for newsletters, 356, 360
note-taking for, 362–64
observation, 473–74
for presentations, 409
primary, xvii, 473–74
proposals, 233–38
questionnaires for, 452–57
reference works for, 476–77
secondary, xvii, 474
for specifications, 528
strategies, 474–78
technology for, 475–78
for trade journal articles, 551
writer's checklist for, xxi
writing process and, xvi–xvii
resignation letters, 480–82
samples of, 481
respective / respectively, 482
response letters. *See* inquiries and responses
responses
to e-mail, 165–67
in form design, 222–23
to inquiries, 262
to job-interview questions, 282–83
in manuals, 333
responsibility
ethics in writing and, 179, 574
statement of, in sales proposals, 436, 445
restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, 483–84. *See also* parenthetical elements
résumés, 484–502
application cover letters and, 36–41, 484
background and, 485, 495
electronic, 500–502
e-mail and, 500
ethics in writing and, 484
length of, 484
LinkedIn as, 524
organization for, 496–500
plain-text, 501
posting online, 299
professionalism and, 497, 500, 502
for returning job seekers, 495
salary negotiations and, 500
samples of, 485–94
scannable, 501
sections in, 496–500

return address, in letters, 317
returning job seekers, 495
reviewing, xix–xx, 74, 177. *See also* literature reviews
revision, 502–4
  in collaborative writing, 74
  proofreading and, 426–28
  technology for, 504
  writer's checklists for, xxii, 502–3
  writing process and, xix–xx
RFP. *See* requests for proposals
rhetorical questions, 504
  opening with, 409, 504
  in titles, 504, 547
rise / raise, 462
Roman numerals, in outlines, 379
rules
  in page design, 316
  run-on sentences, 391, 504–5
  in tables, 536–37

-*s* endings
  for plurals, 366, 368, 404
  for verbs, 367, 567
salary negotiations. *See also* interviewing for a job
  acceptance / refusal letters (for employment) and, 8–10
  job applications and, 305
  job interviews and, 283–84
  research for, 299
  résumés and, 500
sales brochures, 55–58
sales proposals, 434–48
  conclusions for, 94–96, 448
  ethics in writing and, 435, 436
  repurposed content for, 436, 470
  sample of, 437–47
  structure for, 434–36
salutations
  in business letters, 319
  capitalization in, 61
  colons in, 76
  commas in, 83
  for e-mail, 166
  first names in, 166, 277, 319
  for international correspondence, 273, 277
  for unknown gender, 319
sans serif typeface, 313, 583
scarcely, 156
schedules
  charting, 240
  chronological order for, 68
  for collaborative writing, 73, 240
  delivery, in proposals, 436, 442, 472
  sample of, 242
  work, in grant proposals, 236
scheduling meetings, technology for, 339
schematic diagrams. *See* drawings
scholarly abbreviations, 5
scope, 506
  determining, xvi, 406
  of environmental impact statements, 176
  in introduction, 287
  in literature reviews, 327
  of white papers, 578
  of work, in requests for proposals, 472
screen names, 225
screening
  in graphs, 238, 240
  in maps, 335
  in page design, 315
sculptures, italics for titles of, 293, 548
search engines, 477–78
second pages. *See* continuing pages
second person, 391. *See also* "you" viewpoint
  antecedents and, 426
  point of view, 401
secondary research, 474
sections. *See* chapters and sections
security protocols for documents, 133
selecting the medium, 506–10
  repurposed content and, 470–71
  scope and, 506–7

for social media, 523–24
technology for, 510
writing process and, xvi

-self / *-selves*, 422

semi- / *bi-*, 48

semicolons, 510–12
for clarity, 511
for comma splices, 78
in compound sentences, 514
with conjunctive adverbs, 21–22, 83
for items in series, 81, 83
for linking independent clauses, 21–22, 510–11
with quotation marks, 459, 512
for run-on sentences, 391, 504–5
with transitions, 511

sentence construction, 512–16. *See also* sentence faults; sentence types
clauses, 71–72
coherence and, 399–400
effective, 515–16
elliptical, 82
emphasis and, 168, 512
ESL tips for, 513, 516
in formal style, 530
for global communication, 277
predicates, 513–14
stylistic use, 515
subjects, 512–13
subject-verb-object pattern, 513, 515–16
variety in, 519–21

sentence endings
in lists, 325
within parentheses, 388, 389–90
prepositions at, 407
punctuation for, 181, 389–90, 451–52

sentence faults, 516–18
comma splices, 77
faulty logic, 518
faulty subordination, 516
fragments, 518
garbled sentences, 225
loaded sentences, 516
missing subjects, 517
missing verbs, 517
mixed constructions, 349
period faults, 391
rambling sentences, 517
run-on sentences, 391, 504–5

sentence fragments, 518
with participles, 563–64
period faults, 391

sentence openings. *See also* introductory elements
also at, 32
commas with, 80
conjunctions as, 96
dangling modifiers at, 117
numbers at, 367–68

sentence outlines, 378

sentence types
complex, 514
compound, 514
compound-complex, 514
declarative, 515
emphasis and, 169
exclamatory, 515
imperative, 515
interrogative, 515
loose, 515, 520
minor, 515
periodic, 515, 520
simple, 169, 514

sentence variety, 169, 519–21. *See also* sentence types; subordination

sequential method of development, 346, 521
in flowcharts, 192–94
in instructions, 267
in narration, 354

series of items
commas with, 81, 84
etc. with, 178
parallel structure for, 386–87
question marks with, 451
semicolons with, 81, 511

serif typeface, 313

service, 521
service manuals, 331
service marks, 104
set / sit, 521
sexist language, 48–49. *See also* biased language
female / male, 189
imperative mood for avoiding, 246
Ms. / Miss / Mrs., 319, 352
occupational descriptions and, 49
parallel terms for avoiding, 49
pronoun usage and, 49, 246
and pronoun-antecedent agreement, 28, 425
shading. *See* screening
shall / will, 522, 542
she / he, 246. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; sexist language
she / her / hers, 63–66, 391, 422–26
shifts
functional, 223–24
in mood, tense, or voice, 543, 566
ships, italics for names of, 293
short stories, quotation marks for titles of, 458
SI (International System of Units), 4
sic, 5, 53, 461
sight / site / cite, 70
signatures
for e-mails, 166–67
for letters, 320
for memos, 345
similes, 191
simple sentences, 169, 514
since / as / because, 43
single-source publishing, 469n
sit / set, 521
site / cite / sight, 70
site preparation, in sales proposals, 436
sample of, 443
slang
as nonstandard English, 174–75
quotation marks and, 458
slashes, 522
slides, for presentations, 412–13
sample of, 413
so / so that / such, 522–23
social media, 523–26
choosing a platform, 523–24
for job searches, 298–300
privacy considerations of, 525
for professional networking, 510
writer's checklist for, 525–26
writing style for, 525
software. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
solicited proposals, 433–34
solutions, in sales proposals, 436
sample of, 441
some / somewhat, 526
some time / sometime / sometimes, 526
songs. *See* musical works, titles of
sort / kind / type, 15, 29–30
sort of, 15, 29–30, 307
source lines, for visuals, 244, 537, 569
sources, citing. *See* citations, in-text; documenting sources
sources, of information. *See* research
spacing
for brochures, 56
for forms, 223
for letters, 317, 319
white space, 315, 317
spam, e-mail, 165
spatial method of development, 346, 527–28
sample of, 527
special-purpose manuals, 331
specifications, 528–29
decimal number heads for, 249
government, 528–29
industrial, 528
introductions for, 289–90
specific-to-general method of development, 228, 346
sample of, 228
speeches, MLA documentation of. *See* presentations
spell checkers, 426, 503, 529

spelling, 529
dictionaries for, 127
hyphens and, 251
split infinitives, 562–63
squinting modifiers, 351
stacked modifiers, 17, 232, 350
standard English, 174, 530. *See also* grammar; usage
statement of need, in grant proposals, 235
statistics. *See* numerical data
status reports. *See* progress and activity reports
status updates, 523
steps. *See* instructions; process explanation; sequential method of development
stereotypes. *See* biased language; sexist language
strata / stratum, 530
stubs, in tables, 536
style, 530–32. *See also* plain language; technical writing style; telegraphic style
contractions and, 101–2
formal and informal, 530–32
professionalism and, 532
social media and, 525
standard vs. nonstandard English, 174–75
writer's checklist for, 532
style manuals, 136
stylistic use, in sentence construction, 515
subheadings. *See* headings
subject dictionaries, 128
subject directories, 478
subject lines
capitalization in, 62, 113–14
for e-mail, 113–14, 165, 547
in letters, 319
for memos, 113–14, 547
for test reports, 544
for trip reports, 556
subjective case, 64
subjective complements, 90
adjectives as, 16
gerunds as, 561
nouns as, 365
pronouns as, 64
subjects, 512–13. *See also* subject-verb agreement
active-voice naming, 573
compound, 513
ESL tips for, 513
gerunds as, 561
missing, 517
nouns as, 365
position of, 513
subject-verb agreement, 25–27, 566–67. *See also* agreement
with abstract nouns, 27
with collective nouns, 27, 365
with compound subjects, 27–28
with *data / datum*, 119
with *each / every*, 28, 162
with *everybody / everyone*, 181
with indefinite pronouns, 25, 425–26
with intervening words and phrases, 25
with inverted word order, 26
with measurements, 26
with *none*, 361
with *nor / or*, 362
with *number*, 26
with *one of those . . . who*, 372–73
with subjective complements, 25
with *this / that / these / those*, 14
with titles of works, 27
with *who / which / that*, 27
subject-verb-object pattern, 513, 515–16
subjunctive mood, 351–52
subordinate clauses, 71. *See also* dependent clauses
subordinating conjunctions
for connecting clauses, 71–72, 97
list of common, 97
in sentence fragments, 518
for subordination, 533
subordination, 532–34
for clarity, 70
for comma splices, 78

subordination (*continued*)
for conciseness, 93
effective, 71, 516–17
faulty, 516
vs. parentheses, 388
for run-on sentences, 504–5
for sentence variety, 519, 533
subscription newsletters, 359
substantives, 513
such as, in sentence fragments, 518
such / so / so that, 522–23
suffixes, 534
affectation and, 23
hyphens with, 251
summaries
abstracts and, 6–8
in conclusions, 94, 95
executive, 182
in grant proposals, 235
in meeting minutes, 347–48
for note-taking, 362, 459
opening with, 287
for transitions, 554
summary list, in manuals, 331
superlative form
of adjectives, 15
of adverbs, 22
supplement / augment, 45
supporting documents. *See* appendixes
surveys. *See* questionnaires
sweeping generalizations, 328
symbols
in flowcharts, 192–94
functions of, 571
for global communication, 229–31
for graphs, 241, 245
keys for, 569
list of, in reports, 199
in manuals, 333–34
proofreaders' marks, 428
samples of, 193–94
standardized, 192–94, 333–34
in tables, 536–38
for warnings, 268
synonyms, 534
coordinated, 92
for defining terms, 120
in dictionaries, 127
repetition and, 468
in thesaurus, 546
word choice and, 580
syntax, 535

tables, 536–38. *See also* visuals
for comparisons, 87
functions of, 570
vs. graphs, 238, 536
informal, 537–38
list of, 198, 572
numbering, 198, 370, 536
samples of, 88, 537–38
screening (shading) in, 315
in trade journal articles, 552
tables of contents, 536, 538
decimal headings in, 249
for FAQs, 185
in formal reports, 198, 205
in newsletters, 361
parallel structure for, 386
sample of, 205
in white papers, 578
taglines, in résumés, 485, 496–97
sample of, 485
tags, Web, 52
team writing. *See* collaborative writing
technical manuals. *See* manuals
technical terminology
affectation and, 23
audience and, 539
defining for readers, 176, 290
in environmental impact statements, 176
ethics in writing and, 179
in global communication, 277
in glossaries, 231–32
in instructions, 266
jargon, 295
in manuals, 31, 331
plain language for, 399–400
in proposals, 429
in white papers, 578
word choice and, 580

technical writing style, 183, 538–39. *See also* IEEE documentation; style
ethics in writing and, 179
plain language and, 399–400
sample of, 539
technology. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
teleconferences, 509–10
telegraphic style, 540
caution with, 92
in instructions, 267
professionalism and, 540
telephone calls, 279, 509–10
television programs
APA documentation of, 141
italics for titles of, 293, 548
MLA documentation of, 153
quotation marks for titles of, 458, 548
templates, 197–98, 317
temporary employment agencies, 301
tenant / tenet, 540
tense, 541–43, 566. *See also* verbs; voice
ESL tips for, 173, 543
helping verbs and, 565
for infinitives, 562
in narration, 354
shifts in, avoiding, 543, 566
test reports, 544
for research, 473
sample of, 545
testing. *See* usability testing
text. *See* body
text messaging, 508, 544
than / as, and pronoun case, 65, 66
thank-you notes, 285
that
with indirect quotations, 458, 460
with *one of those* . . . , 372–73
as pronoun, 422
for restrictive clauses, 483–84
that / those
and agreement in number, 14, 26, 29–30
as demonstrative adjectives, 14, 422
that / where, 576
that / which / who, 26, 544, 546
the, 14, 41–43
then. See conjunctive adverbs
there, as expletive, 182–83, 513, 546
there / their / they're, 546
therefore. See conjunctive adverbs
thesaurus, 534, 546
they / them / their / theirs, 63–66, 391, 422–26
third person, 391
antecedents and, 426
in narration, 354
point of view, 401–2
this / these
and agreement in number, 14, 29–30
as demonstrative adjectives, 14, 422
pronoun references with, 421, 422
thumbnails, in page design, 316
thus. See conjunctive adverbs
time
in global communication, 277
numbers for, 369
title page
in formal reports, 198, 203
in grant proposals, 234
in sales proposals, 435
sample of, 203
titles, 546–49. *See also* names and titles
capitalization of, 62, 548
colons in, 76
in headers or footers, 246–47, 314
italics for, 293, 548
for memos, e-mails, and Internet postings, 547
for newsletter articles, 358
question marks in, 451
quotation marks for, 292, 458–59, 548
for reports, 198, 203, 547
rhetorical questions in, 504, 547
setting tone with, 547, 550

titles (*continued*)
special cases, 548–49
subject-verb agreement with, 27
to
in prepositional phrases, 397
as sign of infinitive, 397, 562–63, 565
to / too / two, 549
tone, 549–50
in abstracts, 8
for adjustment letters, 17
for complaint letters, 88
context and, 100
for correspondence, 105–6
for e-mail, 549
goodwill and, 107–8
for memos, 550
for refusal letters, 466
for reports, 550
for technical documents, 538
of titles, 547, 550
writer's checklist for, 108–9
"you" viewpoint and, 586
topic outlines, 378, 383–84
topic sentences, 382–83
paragraph unity and, 384–85
placement of, 383
topics
in headers or footers, 246–47, 314
in headings, 247, 249
in indexes, 258
track changes, 75, 504
trade journal articles, 550–53
abstracts for, 6–8
ethics in writing and, 551
literature reviews in, 325–27, 551
manuscript preparation, 553
publication clearance for, 553
research for, 551
sections of, 552–53
trade journals, job listings in, 300
trademarks, 104–5
sample, 105
training manuals, 330–31
training requirements, in sales proposals, 436
sample of, 444
trains, italics for names of, 293
transition, 554–56
for clarity, 70
for coherence, 72, 384–85
commas with, 79
conjunctions as, 97
enumeration for, 385, 554, 555
methods of, 554
in narration, 354
between paragraphs, 555–56
in presentations, 411
in process explanations, 417
for quotations, 461
repetition for, 468, 554
semicolons with, 511
between sentences, 554–55
telegraphic style and, 540
unity and, 558
for Web content, 582–83
words and phrases for, 554
transitive verbs, 371, 564
transmittals. *See* cover letters (or transmittals)
transparencies, overhead, 412
trip reports, 556
chronological order for, 68
sample of, 557
trouble reports, 255
chronological order for, 68
sample of, 355
try to, 556
tutorials
manuals as, 330
online and video, 13
Twitter, 300, 524
two / to / too, 549
type / sort / kind, 15, 29–30
typographical errors, 426, 503
typography, 312–14
for brochures, 57
for e-mail, 166
for emphasis, 170, 313–14
ethics in writing and, 179
for presentation visuals, 414
for résumés, 501
typeface and type size, 312–13
for warnings, 268
in Web design, 583–84

unabridged dictionaries, 128
underlining
  for emphasis, 170
  for italics, 292
understatement, 191
uninterested / disinterested, 129
unique / perfect / equal, 177–78
unity, 558
  in paragraphs, 384–85
  transitions and, 556
unknown authors
  APA documentation of, 139
  IEEE documentation of, 145
  MLA documentation of, 151, 152
unpublished data, APA documentation of, 141
unsolicited proposals, 434
up, 407, 558
upon / on / onto, 372
uppercase. *See* all-capital letters
URLs
  APA documentation of, 139
  hyphens in, 252
  IEEE documentation of, 145
  slashes in, 522
us / our / ours, 63–66, 391, 422–26
usability engineering, 558n
usability testing, 558–60
  for forms, 221
  for global graphics, 231
  for instructions, 268
  for manuals, 333
usage, 560
  clarity and, 70
  grammar and, 233
user manuals, 13, 330
user-centered design, 558n
utilize, 560

vague words, 561
  clichés as, 72
  as gobbledygook, 232
  and word choice, 580
vendor description and qualifications
  in requests for proposals, 472
  in sales proposals, 436, 448
  sample of, 446
verbals, 561–64
  ESL tips for, 172
  gerunds, 561–62
  infinitives, 562–63
  as nonfinite verbs, 565–66
  participles, 563–64
  in sentence fragments, 518
verbs, 564–67. *See also* mood; subject-verb agreement; tense; voice
  action, 64, 65, 499
  as adjectives, 16, 519
  agreement with subject, 25–27, 566–67
  conjugation of, 567
  finite and nonfinite, 565–66
  forms of, 565–66
  in idioms, 407
  intransitive, 308, 564–65
  linking, 564–65
  missing, 517
  mood of, 351–52
  phrases as, 395, 398
  plurals of, 367
  as predicates, 514
  properties of, 566–67
  tense of, 541–43
  transitive, 371, 564
  types of, 564–65
  voice of, 572–75
  weak, 361
very, 567
via, 567
video tutorials, 13
videoconferencing, 339, 510
videos
  APA documentation of, 140
  IEEE documentation of, 146
  MLA documentation of, 153
visual logic, in page design, 314
visuals, 568–72. *See also* labels; numbering
  APA documentation of, 141
  boxes for, 316
  in brochures, 56
  captions for, 316, 394–95
  copyright and, 159, 394–95, 569

visuals (*continued*)
for description, 125
distortion in, 238, 568
drawings, 157–61, 570
ethics in writing and, 394–95, 568, 569
flowcharts, 192–94, 571
for global communication, 229–31
graphs, 238–45, 570–71
guidelines for selecting, 570–71
icons, 316, 571
indexing, 257
infographics, 260–61
for instructions, 157–61, 268
integrating with text, 569
in layout and design, 315–16
list of figures and tables, 198, 572
for manuals, 331, 333
maps, 334–35, 570
MLA documentation of, 153
for newsletters, 358, 360
organizational charts, 377, 571
outlining and, 376, 379, 569
permission for using, 159
photographs, 394, 570
for presentations, 412–13
source lines for, 244, 537, 569
in spatial method of development, 527–28
symbols, 571
tables, 536–38, 570
in technical documents, 539
in trade journal articles, 552, 553
types of, 568
for Web design, 583
in white papers, 579
writer's checklist for, 569, 572
voice, 567, 572–75. *See also* active voice; passive voice
active, 572–75
ESL tips for, 575
ethics in writing and, 574
helping verbs and, 565
passive, 574–75
in presentations, 416
shifts in, avoiding, 566
voice mail, 509
volunteer work, on résumés, 495

wait for / wait on, 576
warnings
exclamation marks for, 181
in instructions, 181, 268
italics for, 314
in manuals, 333
sample of, 270
was / were, 351–52
we
in technical writing style, 402
us / our / ours, 63–66, 391, 422–26
weak verbs, 361. *See also* nominalizations; voice
Web addresses. *See* URLs
Web conferencing, 510
Web content-management systems, 98
Web design. *See also* layout and design; writing for the Web
for forms, 219–23
headings for, 582–83
icons, 315–16
links in, 584
lists for, 583
posting documents, 584
for résumés, 501–2
typography for, 313, 583–84
usability testing for, 558–60
Web forums. *See* blogs and forums
Web logs. *See* blogs and forums
Web research. *See* Internet research
Web sites. *See also* blogs and forums; Internet research; writing for the Web
APA documentation of, 139
copyright and, 102–3
currency of, 474
evaluating, 478–80, 584
FAQs on, 184–86
functions of, 510
IEEE documentation of, 145–46
as information sources, 280, 474

internal and external, 51
italics for titles of, 547
MLA documentation of, 151, 152
résumés on, 299, 501–2
white papers on, 577
well / good, 232–33
were / was, 351–52
when and if, 576
when / where / that, 576
where . . . at, 576
where / that, 576
whether, 576–77
whether . . . or, 97
which
for nonrestrictive clauses, 483–84, 544, 546
as pronoun, 422
subject-verb agreement with, 27
vs. *who / that*, 27, 544, 546
while, 577
white papers, 577–79
ethics in writing and, 579
layout and design for, 579
persuasion in, 577–78
sections in, 578–79
white space, in page design, 315, 317. *See also* spacing
whiteboards, 412
who
with *one of those . . .* , 372–73
who / that / which, 27, 422, 544, 546
who / whom, 422, 579
whole-by-whole method of comparison, 86
who's / whose / of which, 580
widows, 315
Wikipedia
copyright and, 103, 399
as information source, 476
wikis
APA documentation of, 140
for collaborative writing, 75
MLA documentation of, 152
will / shall, 522, 542
with regard to / regarding, 467–68
word choice, 580–81
abstract / concrete words, 6
in adjustment letters, 19
affectation and, 23
ambiguity and, 34
buzzwords, 58–59
clichés, 72
colloquialisms, 174
connotation / denotation and, 97
deceptive language and, 179
dictionaries for, 127–28, 581
ethics in writing and, 179
figures of speech, 190–91
for global communication, 273, 277
gobbledygook, 232
idioms, 253
jargon, 295
localisms, 174
malapropisms, 330
outdated words, 23
slang, 174–75
standard vs. nonstandard English, 174–75
thesaurus for, 546
tone and, 550
usage conventions and, 233, 560
vague words, 561
word divisions, hyphens in, 252
word meanings. *See also* definitions
capitalization and, 60
connotation / denotation in, 97
dictionaries for, 127–28
word order. *See also* sentence construction
emphasis and, 515–16
and sentence variety, 519–20
subject-verb-object pattern, 513, 515–16
syntax, 535
wordiness. *See also* conciseness
as affectation, 23
causes of, 92
as gobbledygook, 232
of passive voice, 93, 572–73
rambling sentences, 517
that and, 544

word-processing software. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
words used as words
  italics for, 293
  plurals of, 35
work plan, in sales proposals, 436
workflow management for documents, 133
works-cited list (MLA), 136. *See also* documenting sources; MLA documentation
  documentation models for, 150–55
  in formal reports, 200, 218
  in grant proposals, 235
  samples of, 155, 218
  in trade journal articles, 553
workscope description, in requests for proposals, 472
writer's checklists
  abbreviations, 3
  awkwardness, eliminating, 46
  brochures, 57–58
  collaborative writing, 74
  conciseness, 93–94
  correspondence, 108–9, 114
  drawings, 161
  e-mail, 165, 167
  ethics in writing, 180
  evaluating sources, 479–80
  executive summaries, 182
  FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), 186
  global communication, 229
  goodwill, establishing, 108–9
  grant proposals, 237–38
  graphs, 244–45
  headings, 249–50
  indexing, 259
  infographics, 261
  instant messaging, 266
  instructions, 271
  international correspondence, 277
  interviewing for information, 279–80
  job applications, 305
  job descriptions, 297
  lists, 325
  manuals, 333–34
  maps, 334–35
  meetings, 343
  minutes of meetings, 348
  naming files, 134
  netiquette, 165
  newsletter articles, 358
  note-taking, 363–64
  plain language, 400
  preparation, 406
  presentations, 414, 416
  proofreading, 427
  proposals, 430
  questionnaires, 457
  research, 477–80
  revision, 502–3
  social media, 525–26
  style, 532
  tone, 108–9
  visuals, 569, 572
  writing a draft, 581–82
  writing process, xxi–xxii
writing a draft, 581–82. *See also* writing process
  collaborative writing and, 73–74
  conclusions, xix, 94–96
  introductions, xix, 285–90
  outlining, xviii, 377–80
  visuals and, 569
  writer's checklists for, xxi–xxii, 581–82
writing block, in forms, 223
  sample of, 223
writing for the Web, 582–85. *See also* blogs and forums; Web design
  ethics in writing and, 584
  technology for, 585
writing line, in forms, 223
writing process
  drafting, xix, 581–82
  organization, xvii–xviii, 376
  preparation, xiv–xvi, 405–6
  research, xvi–xvii, 473–80

reviewing, xix–xx, 74, 177
revision, xix–xx, 502–4
steps to success in, xiii–xx
writer's checklist for, xxi–xxii
writing style. *See* style; technical writing style

years. *See* dates
yes, comma with, 79

"you" viewpoint, 586
audience and, 44
in correspondence, 107–8
in FAQs, 186
in persuasive writing, 392
in white papers, 577–78
you / your / yours, 63–66, 391, 422–26
your / you're, 587

Commonly Misused Words and Phrases

A
a / an 1
a lot 2
above 5
absolutely 6
accept / except 8
accuracy / precision 10
activate / actuate 11
ad hoc 12
adapt / adept / adopt 12
affect / effect 23
affinity 24
all ready / already 30
all right 31
all together / altogether 31
allude / elude / refer 31
allusion / illusion 31
almost / most 32
also 32
amount / number 34
and/or 34
as / because / since 43
as much as / more than 43
as such 44
as well as 44
augment / supplement 45
average / median / mean 45
awhile / a while 46

B
bad / badly 47
be sure to 47
beside / besides 47
between / among 47
between you and me 48
bi- / semi- 48
biannual / biennial 48
both . . . and 52

C
can / may 60
cannot 60
center on 68
cite / sight / site 70
compare / contrast 84
complement / compliment 89
compose / constitute / comprise 91
consensus 98
continual / continuous 101
credible / creditable 115
criteria / criterion 115
critique 116

D
data 119
defective / deficient 120
definite / definitive 121
despite / in spite of 127
diagnosis / prognosis 127
differ from / differ with 128
different from / different than 129
discreet / discrete 129
disinterested / uninterested 129
due to / because of 161

E
each 162
economic / economical 162
e.g. / i.e. 162
equal / unique / perfect 177
etc. 178
everybody / everyone 180
everyday / every day 181
explicit / implicit 183

F
fact 184
female / male 189
few / a few 189
fewer / less 189
figuratively / literally 190
fine 192
first / firstly 192
flammable / inflammable / nonflammable 192
forceful / forcible 195
foreword / forward 195
former / latter 219

G
good / well 232

H
he / she 246

I
illegal / illicit 253
imply / infer 254
in / into 254
in order to 254
in terms of 254
indiscreet / indiscrete 259
inside / inside of 264
insoluble / insolvable 264
insure / ensure / assure 271
interface 272
its / it's 294

K
kind of / sort of 307
know-how 307

L
lay / lie 308
lend / loan 316
like / as 321
loose / lose 329

M
maybe / may be 337
media / medium 338
Ms. / Miss / Mrs. 352
mutual / common 352

N
nature 356
needless to say 356
none 361
nor / or 362

O
OK / okay 371
on / onto / upon 372
one 372
one of those . . . who 372
only 373
outside [of] 380
over [with] 381

P
party 389
per 389
percent / percentage 389
phenomenon / phenomena 392
principal / principle 417
pseudo- / quasi- 448

Q
quid pro quo 457

R
raise / rise 462
really 462
reason is [because] 462
regarding / with regard to 467
regardless 468
respective / respectively 482

S
service 521
set / sit 521
shall / will 522
so / so that / such 522
some / somewhat 526
some time / sometime / sometimes 526
strata / stratum 530

T
tenant / tenet 540
that / which / who 544
there / their / they're 546
to / too / two 549
try to 556

U
up 558
utilize 560

V
very 567
via 567

W
wait for / wait on 576
when / where / that 576
whether 576
while 577
who / whom 579
who's / whose / of which 580

Y
your / you're 587

Model Documents and Figures by Topic

Use the following list as a quick reference for finding selected samples of technical writing and visuals by topic. See also the complete Contents by Topic on the inside front cover of this book. For additional models, see the LaunchPad Solo at ***macmillanhighered.com/alredhandbooks11e***.

Technical Writing Documents and Elements

A–1 Informative Abstract (for an Article) 7
B–3 Brochure Template 57
F–1 Feasibility Report 187
F–5 Formal Report 202
I–1 Incident Report (Using Printed Memo) 256
I–7 Illustrated Instructions 269
I–8 Warning in a Set of Instructions 270
I–12 Investigative Report 291
J–1 Job Description 296
L–1 Laboratory Report 309
L–7 Literature Review 326
N–2 Newsletter Article 357
N–3 Company Newsletter (Front Page) 359
P–4 Progress Report (Using Letter Format) 419
P–5 Activity Report (Using E-mail Format) 420
P–7 Special-Purpose Internal Proposal 432
P–8 Sales Proposal 437
T–4 Test Report 545
T–5 Trip Report Sent as E-mail (with Attachment) 557

Design and Visuals

D–13 Schematic Diagram of Particulate-Removal Process 160
F–2 Flowchart Using Labeled Blocks (Depicting Electric Utility Power Restoration Process) 193
F–3 Flowchart Using Pictorial Symbols 194
F–4 Common ISO Flowchart Symbols (with Annotations) 194
F–6 Form (for a Medical Claim) 220
G–3 Graphics for U.S. and Global Audiences 230
G–4 International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Symbols 231
G–5 Double-Line Graph (with Shading) 239
G–6 Distorted and Distortion-Free Expressions of Data 239
G–7 Bar Graph (Quantities of Different Items During a Fixed Period) 240
G–8 Bar (Column) Graph (Showing the Parts That Make Up the Whole) 241
G–9 Gantt Chart Showing Project Schedule 242
G–10 Pie Graph (Showing Percentages of the Whole) 243
G–11 Picture Graph 243
H–2 Headings Used in a Document 248
I–3 Infographic 260
M–1 Map 335
T–1 Elements of a Table 537
V–1 Chart for Choosing Appropriate Visuals 570

Correspondence

A–4 Acknowledgment 11
A–5 Adjustment Letter (When Company Takes Responsibility) 18
A–6 Partial Adjustment (Accompanying a Product) 19
C–6 Complaint Letter (Sent as E-mail) 89
C–9 A Direct-Pattern Message 110
C–10 A Courteous Indirect-Pattern Message 112

C–11 Cover Message 115
I–4 Inquiry 262
I–5 Response to an Inquiry 263
I–9 Inappropriate International Correspondence (Draft Marked for Revision) 274
I–10 Appropriate International Correspondence 275
L–4 Full-Block-Style Letter (with Letterhead) 318
L–5 Alternative Headers for the Second Page of a Letter 321
M–4 Typical Memo Format (Printed or Attached to an E-mail) 344
R–1 Reference Letter (Printed on Letterhead Stationery) 463
R–2 Refusal with Low Stakes 465
R–3 Refusal with High Stakes 466
S–3 Choosing the Appropriate Medium 508

Job Search and Application

A–2 Acceptance Letter (for Employment) 9
A–3 Refusal (for Employment) 10
A–8 Application Cover Letter (Graduate Applying for a Graphic Design Job) 38
A–9 Application Cover Letter Sent as an E-mail (College Student Applying for an Internship) 39
A–10 Application Cover Letter (Applicant with Years of Experience) 40
I–11 Follow-up Correspondence 285
J–2 Sections from a Job-Application Form 303
R–4 Resignation Letter (to Accept a Better Position) 481
R–5 Resignation Memo (Under Negative Conditions) 482
R–6 Student Résumé (for an Entry-Level Position) 486
R–7 Résumé (Highlighting Professional Credentials) 487
R–8 Recent Graduate Résumé (for Graphic Design Job) 488
R–9 Résumé (Applicant with Management Experience) 489
R–10 Résumé (Experienced Applicant Seeking Career Change) 491
R–11 Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements) 492

Presentations and Meetings

M–2 Meeting Agenda 340
M–3 E-mail Announcing a Meeting with an Attached Agenda 341
M–6 Minutes of a Meeting (Partial Section) 347
P–3 Presentation Slides 413

Research and Documentation

D–4 APA Sample Page (from a Report) 142
D–5 APA Sample List of References 143
D–6 IEEE Sample Page (from a Report) 148
D–7 IEEE Sample Bibliography 149
D–8 MLA Sample Page (from a Report) 154
D–9 MLA Sample List of Works Cited 155
Q–1 Questionnaire (Cover E-mail Message) 454
Q–2 Long Quotation (APA Style) 461

Organization, Writing, and Revision

C–2 Chronological Method of Development 69
G–1 General-to-Specific Method of Development 227
G–2 Specific-to-General Method of Development 228
N–1 Narration from an Accident Report 355
O–1 Decreasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development 374
O–2 Increasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development 375
P–1 Persuasive Memo 393
S–3 Spatial Description with Precise Measurements 527

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Instructors may assign the online materials that accompany this text.
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Inside LaunchPad Solo for the *Handbook of Technical Writing*, Eleventh Edition

Digital Tips

The Writing Process
Reviewing Collaborative Documents
Using Collaborative Software
Using Wikis for Collaborative Work
Creating an Outline
Proofreading for Format Consistency
Incorporating Tracked Changes

Workplace Technology
Professional E-mail
Assessing Hardware and Software
Sharing Electronic Files
Synchronizing Information
Using PDF Files

Research and Documentation
Report with Sources

Correspondence
Modified-Block-Style Letter

Business Writing Documents and Elements
Feasibility Report
Digitally Enhancing Formal Reports

Formal Reports
Report Presented as a Web Site
Creating Styles and Templates
Creating an Index

Design and Visuals
Report with Figures

Presentations and Meetings
Presentation Slides
Scheduling Meetings Online
Conducting Online Meetings

Job Search and Application
Application Cover Letter

Sample Documents

Correspondence

Proposals

Reports

Résumés and Job Application Letters

Other Documents (including Questionnaire, Brochure, Exploded-View Drawing, and Flowchart using Pictorial Symbols)

Research Checklists

Tutorials

Critical Reading
Active Reading Strategies
Reading Visuals: Purpose
Reading Visuals: Audience

Documentation and Working with Sources
Do I Need to Cite That?
How to Cite an Article in MLA Style
How to Cite a Book in MLA Style
How to Cite a Database in MLA Style
How to Cite a Database in APA Style
How to Cite a Web Site in MLA Style
How to Cite a Website in APA Style

Digital Writing
Photo Editing Basics with GIMP
Audio Editing with Audacity
Presentations
Word Processing
Online Research Tools
Job Search/Personal Branding

LearningCurve

Critical Reading
Topic Sentences and Supporting Details
Topics and Main Ideas
Working with Sources (MLA)
Working with Sources (APA)
Commas; Fragments; Run-ons and Comma Splices; Active and Passive Voice; Appropriate Language; Subject-Verb Agreement

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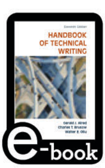

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