****Effective Writing in the Workplace****

Writing plays a big role in the workplace, especially when it comes to sharing ideas and working with others. As a graphic designer working with an Emirati boss, I often use WhatsApp and email to talk about design projects. Through this, I’ve learned that writing isn’t just about sending messages—it’s also a way to organize my thoughts and improve communication. Two key writing principles that have helped me are: **writing to clarify thinking** and **writing as revision**, as explained in Thriving as a Graduate Writer by Rachael Cayley.

### Writing to Clarify Thinking

Sometimes, I have a clear idea in my head, but it doesn’t make sense until I write it down. Cayley writes, “You need principles because writing is a thing to think about as well as to do” (2023, p. 7). I experienced this when I was preparing a new brochure design. I had a vision in mind, but I couldn’t fully explain it until I started writing an email to describe the design style and colors. Writing helped me see what I was trying to say and made my message clearer to my boss. This shows how writing can help organize my thoughts and improve how I explain creative ideas.

### Writing as Revision

Another important principle is **writing as revision**. My first drafts—especially quick WhatsApp replies—are often too short or unclear. Cayley explains that writing is “a laborious process” where messy first drafts can be improved (2023, p. 7). For example, I once replied to a design change with, “Too busy today, can’t do.” But I realized that sounded unprofessional. So I rewrote it as: “I’ve seen the changes and will need more time to do them well. I’ll send the update tomorrow.” This version was more polite and helped avoid misunderstanding.

### Why It Matters in the Workplace

Clear writing is essential in the workplace because it helps reduce confusion and keeps projects moving smoothly. When I explain my ideas clearly and revise my messages to sound respectful, it builds trust. In design, many ideas are visual, so writing helps turn those ideas into something others can understand.

### Challenges in Writing and How to Overcome Them

Writing professionally isn’t always easy. One challenge is **explaining visual ideas in words**. To help with this, I now include sample images or sketches along with my messages.

Another challenge is **writing clearly on fast platforms like WhatsApp**. It’s easy to send rushed messages. To fix this, I write my reply in a Notes app first, then copy it into the chat after reviewing it.

A third challenge is **managing tone and expectations**. Instead of saying “I’m late,” I now say, “I’ll need until tomorrow to make sure it looks right.” This sounds more professional and shows I care about the work quality.

### Challenges in Giving Feedback

Giving feedback to peers also has its challenges. First, I worry about being too critical. To avoid this, I start with something positive before suggesting changes.

Second, I sometimes give vague advice. I’ve learned to be more specific, like saying, “Try aligning the heading to the center,” instead of “Make it better.”

Third, I don’t want to overwhelm others. Now, I focus on one or two main points and ask if they want more feedback later.

**References**

Cayley, R. (2023). Thriving as a Graduate Writer. University of Michigan Press.

**Note:** I tried to search for more resources through the University of the People’s library, but the LIRN portal gave a “401 Unauthorized Launch Request” error. I also checked JSTOR but could not find articles directly related to this topic.