

# COURSE'S OUTLINE

**QUIZ**

**1**

**PART 1 - Understanding the Foundations of Business Communication**



**PART 2 – Applying the Three-step Writing Process**



**QUIZ**

**2**

**PART 3 – Digital, Social, and Visual Media**



**PART 4 – Brief Messages**



**QUIZ**

**3**

**PART 5 – Reports and Proposal**



**PART 6 – Developing and Delivering Business Presentation**

## PART II – APPLYING ON **THREE SETEPS** WRITING PROCESS

### Chapter 4

- Planning Business Messages

### Chapter 5

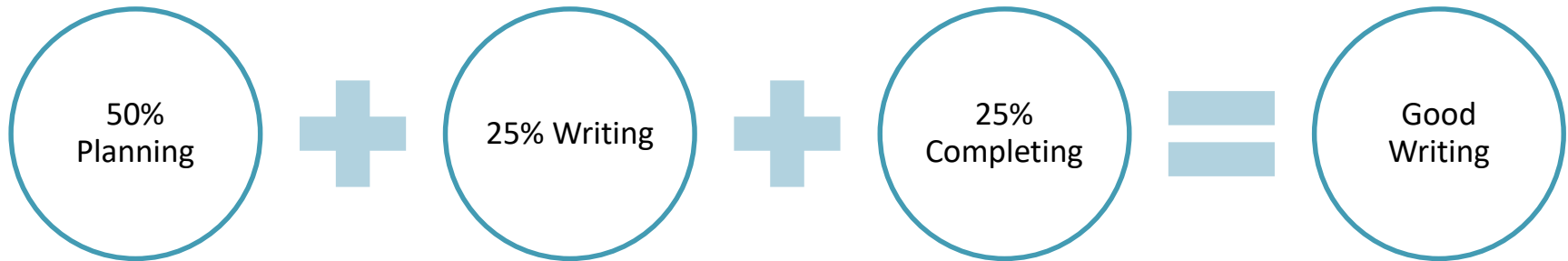
- Writing Business Messages

### Chapter 6

- Completing Business Messages



# UNDERSTANDING THE THREE STEP OF WRITING



Three steps to discuss this and next week!

- Planning your message
- Writing your message
- Completing your message

Spend more time on planning!! (50%)

- Most poor writing is due to lack of planning

# THREE STEP WRITING PROCESS

## Planning

Analyze the situation

Gather information

Choose medium and channel

Organize the information

## Writing

Adapt to your audience

Compose the message

## Completing

Revise the message

Produce the message

Proofread the message

Distribute the message

# THREE STEP WRITING PROCESS

## 1 Plan → 2 Write → 3 Complete

### **Analyze the Situation**

Define your purpose and develop an audience profile.

### **Gather Information**

Determine audience needs and obtain the information necessary to satisfy those needs.

### **Choose Medium and Channel**

Identify the best combination for the situation, message, and audience.

### **Organize the Information**

Define your main idea, limit your scope, select a direct or an indirect approach, and outline your content.

## 2 Write

### **Adapt to Your Audience**

Be sensitive to audience needs by using a “you” attitude, politeness, positive emphasis, and unbiased language. Build a strong relationship with your audience by establishing your credibility and projecting your company’s preferred image. Control your style with a conversational tone, plain English, and appropriate voice.

### **Compose the Message**

Choose strong words that will help you create effective sentences and coherent paragraphs.

## 3 Complete

### **Revise the Message**

Evaluate content and review readability, edit and rewrite for conciseness and clarity.

### **Produce the Message**

Use effective design elements and suitable layout for a clean, professional appearance.

### **Proofread the Message**

Review for errors in layout, spelling, and mechanics.

### **Distribute the Message**

Deliver your message using the chosen medium; make sure all documents and all relevant files are distributed successfully.



**This is done to ensure connection between the sender (writer) and the audience!**  
**You want to create an effective message!**

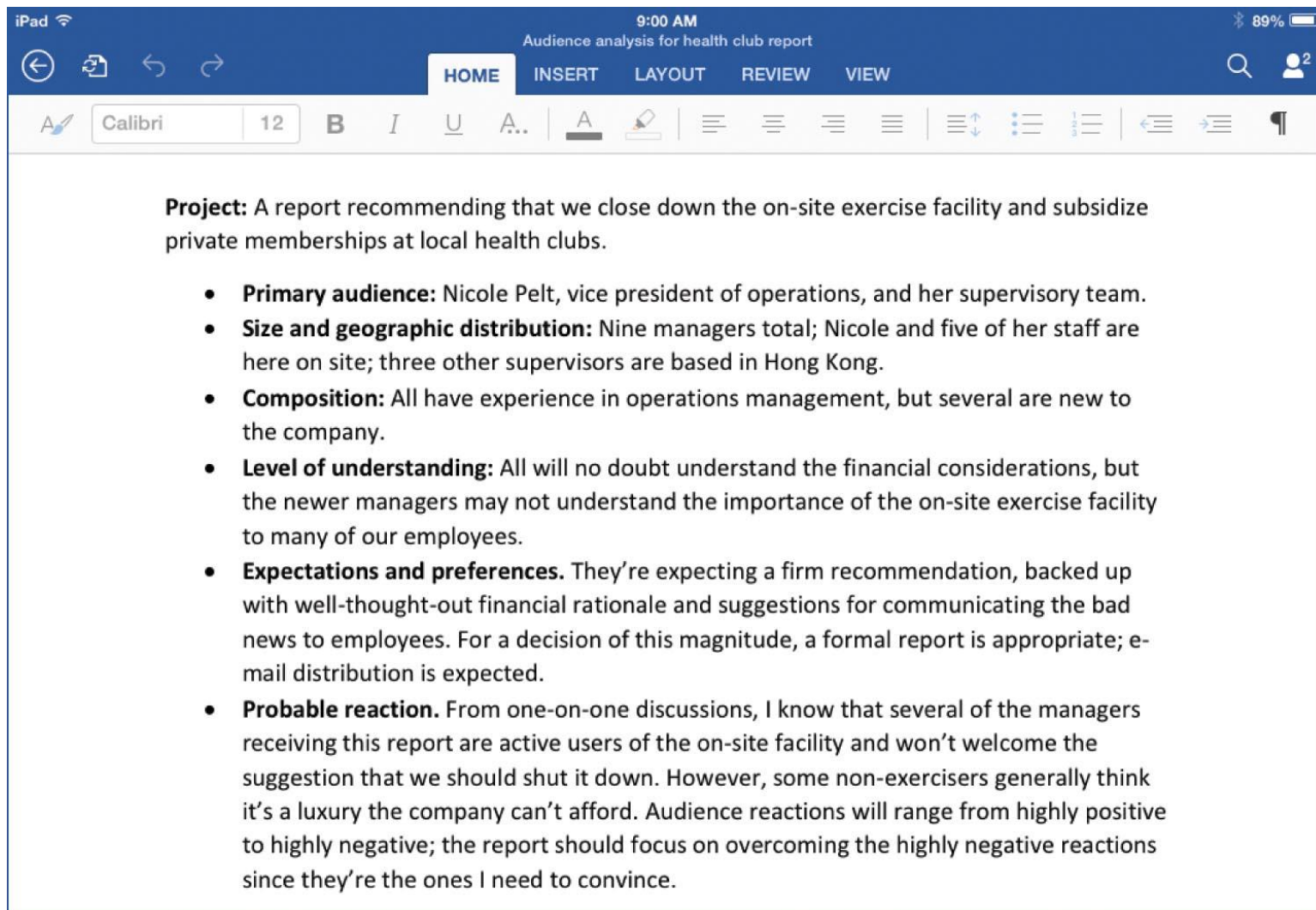
## Define the purpose

- Each message has its General purpose AND Specific purpose
  - **General**: to inform/ persuade/ collaborate
  - **Specific**: what your audience should do or think after receiving your message
- Test you purpose by asking:
  - Will anything **change** as a result of your message?
  - Is you purpose **realistic**?
  - Is the **time right**?
  - Is your purpose **acceptable** to your organization?

## Develop the audience profile

- Identify:
  - who they are
  - their size and geographic distribution
  - their composition (education level, age, language, beliefs, experience, expectations, etc.)
  - their level of understanding
  - Understand audience expectations and preferences
  - Forecast probable audience reaction
- If audience varied, aim for the most influential ones.

## Example of Audience Analysis



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "Audience analysis for health club report" on an iPad. The document is displayed in a blue-themed interface with a top navigation bar containing "HOME", "INSERT", "LAYOUT", "REVIEW", and "VIEW". The document content includes a project description and a bulleted list of audience analysis points.

**Project:** A report recommending that we close down the on-site exercise facility and subsidize private memberships at local health clubs.

- **Primary audience:** Nicole Pelt, vice president of operations, and her supervisory team.
- **Size and geographic distribution:** Nine managers total; Nicole and five of her staff are here on site; three other supervisors are based in Hong Kong.
- **Composition:** All have experience in operations management, but several are new to the company.
- **Level of understanding:** All will no doubt understand the financial considerations, but the newer managers may not understand the importance of the on-site exercise facility to many of our employees.
- **Expectations and preferences.** They're expecting a firm recommendation, backed up with well-thought-out financial rationale and suggestions for communicating the bad news to employees. For a decision of this magnitude, a formal report is appropriate; e-mail distribution is expected.
- **Probable reaction.** From one-on-one discussions, I know that several of the managers receiving this report are active users of the on-site facility and won't welcome the suggestion that we should shut it down. However, some non-exercisers generally think it's a luxury the company can't afford. Audience reactions will range from highly positive to highly negative; the report should focus on overcoming the highly negative reactions since they're the ones I need to convince.



**Research before you write by clarifying the vague, broaden your horizons and understanding others' viewpoints:**

Consider audience's perspective

Listen to community

Read report and other company documents

Talk with supervisors, colleagues, customers

Ask your audience input!

**Find your focus and provide the required information!**

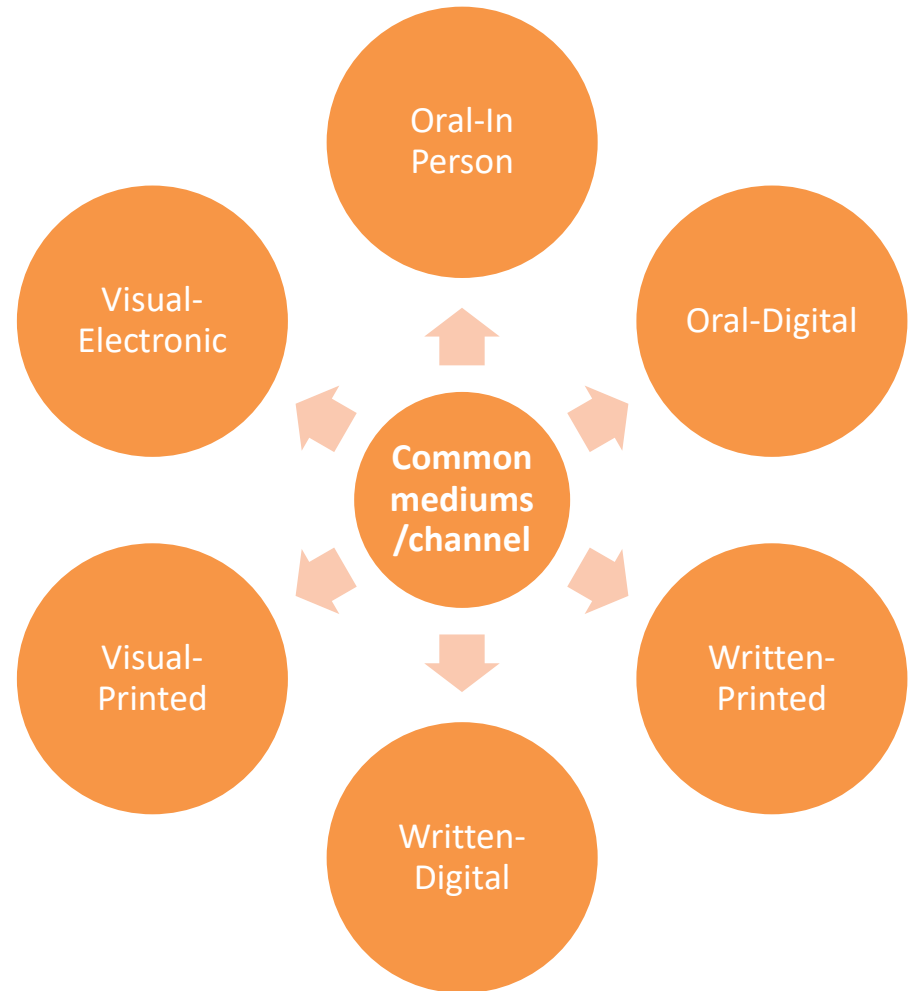
Remember the **REQUIRED!** Not more not less.

Journalistic approach : Who what when where why how.

Make sure your information are **RIGHT**, and within **ETHICAL** corridors, and it is **PERTINENT**

Medium varies, and each has its advantages. Please consider:

- Richness
- Formality
- Media Limitations
- Urgency
- Cost
- Audience Preference
- Security and Privacy



**TABLE 4.1 Medium/Channel Combinations: Advantages and Disadvantages**

Medium/Channel	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Oral, In-person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunity for immediate feedback</li> <li>• Easily resolve misunderstandings and negotiate meanings</li> <li>• Involve rich nonverbal cues (both physical gesture and vocal inflection)</li> <li>• Allow you to express the emotion behind your message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict participation to those physically present</li> <li>• Unless recorded, provide no permanent, verifiable record of the communication</li> <li>• Reduce communicator's control over the message</li> </ul>
<b>Oral, Digital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can provide opportunity for immediate feedback (live phone or online conversations)</li> <li>• Not restricted to participants in the same location</li> <li>• Allow time-shifted consumption (e.g., podcasts)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack nonverbal cues other than voice inflections</li> <li>• Can be tedious to listen to if not audience focused (recorded messages)</li> </ul>
<b>Written, Printed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow writers to plan and control their messages</li> <li>• Can reach geographically dispersed audiences</li> <li>• Offer a permanent, verifiable record</li> <li>• Minimize the distortion that can accompany oral messages</li> <li>• Can be used to avoid immediate interactions</li> <li>• Deemphasize any inappropriate emotional components</li> <li>• Give recipients time to process messages before responding (compared to oral communication)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer limited opportunities for timely feedback</li> <li>• Lack the rich nonverbal cues provided by oral media</li> <li>• Often take more time and more resources to create and distribute</li> <li>• Can require special skills in preparation and production if document is elaborate</li> </ul>
<b>Written, Digital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, all the advantages of written printed documents plus:</li> <li>• Fast delivery</li> <li>• Can reach geographically dispersed audiences</li> <li>• Flexibility of multiple formats and channels, from microblogs to wikis</li> <li>• Flexibility to structure messages in creative ways, such as writing a headline on Twitter and linking to the full message on a blog</li> <li>• Ability to link to related and more in-depth information</li> <li>• Can increase accessibility and openness in an organization through broader sharing</li> <li>• Enable audience interaction through social media features</li> <li>• Ease of integrating with other media types, such as embedded videos or photos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be limited in terms of reach and capability (e.g., on Twitter you can reach only those people who follow you or search for you)</li> <li>• Require Internet or mobile phone connectivity</li> <li>• Vulnerable to security and privacy problems</li> <li>• Are easy to overuse (sending too many messages to too many recipients)</li> <li>• Create privacy risks and concerns (exposing confidential data; employer monitoring; accidental forwarding)</li> <li>• Entail security risks (viruses, spyware; network breaches)</li> <li>• Create productivity concerns (frequent interruptions; nonbusiness usage)</li> </ul>
<b>Visual, Printed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can convey complex ideas and relationships quickly</li> <li>• Often less intimidating than long blocks of text</li> <li>• Can reduce the burden on the audience to figure out how the pieces of a message or concept fit</li> <li>• Can be easy to create in spreadsheets and other software (simple charts and graphs), then integrate with reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can require artistic skills to design</li> <li>• Require some technical skills to create</li> <li>• Can require more time to create than equivalent amount of text</li> <li>• Can be expensive to print</li> </ul>
<b>Visual, Digital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, all the advantages of visual printed documents and all the advantages of written digital formats plus:</li> <li>• Can personalize and enhance the experience for audience members</li> <li>• Offer the persuasive power of multimedia formats, particularly video</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential time, cost, and skills needed to create</li> <li>• Can require large amounts of bandwidth</li> </ul>

## Why is good organization important?

Start by defining your MAIN IDEA

- Brainstorm
- Journalistic
- QA chain
- Story-telling
- Mind map

Comply to scope limit

- No definition, this is your intuition

Choose your approach:

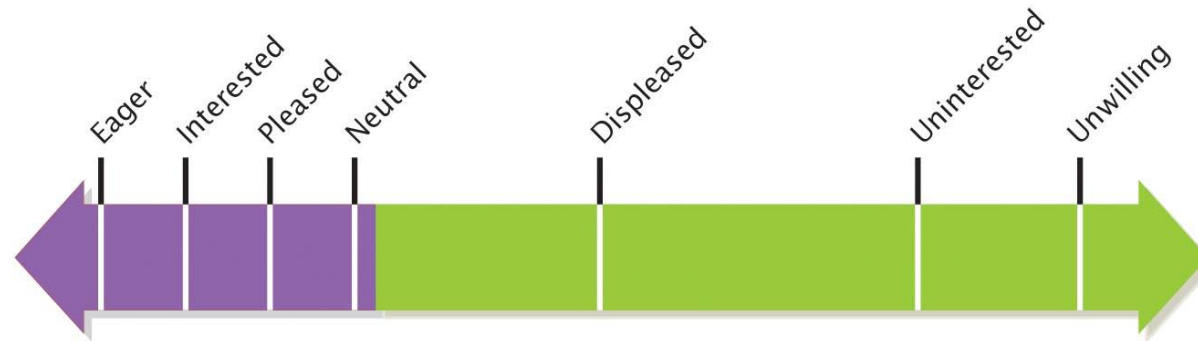
- **Direct approach** → Positive message 😊
  - When your audience will eager, interested, pleased, and neutral
- **Indirect approach** → Negative message ☹️
  - When your audience will displeased, uninterested, and unwilling



## Defining the Main Idea

**TABLE 4.2** Defining Topic and Main Idea

General Purpose	Example of Specific Purpose	Example of Topic	Example of Main Idea
To inform	Teach customer service representatives how to edit and expand the technical support wiki	Technical support wiki	Careful, thorough edits and additions to the wiki help the entire department provide better customer support.
To persuade	Convince top managers to increase spending on research and development	Funding for research and development	Competitors spend more than we do on research and development, enabling them to create more innovative products.
To collaborate	Solicit ideas for a companywide incentive system that ties wages to profits	Incentive pay	Tying wages to profits motivates employees and reduces compensation costs in tough years.



	Direct Approach	Indirect Approach	
<b>Audience Reaction</b>	Eager/interested/ pleased/neutral	Displeased	Uninterested/unwilling
<b>Message Opening</b>	Start with the main idea, the request, or the good news.	Start with a neutral statement that acts as a transition to the reasons for the bad news.	Start with a statement or question that captures attention.
<b>Message Body</b>	Provide necessary details.	Give reasons to build up to the negative answer or announcement. State or imply the bad news, and make a positive suggestion.	Arouse the audience's interest in the subject. Build the audience's desire to comply.
<b>Message Close</b>	Close with a cordial comment, a reference to the good news, or a statement about the specific action desired.	Close cordially.	Request action.

## Choosing between the Direct and Indirect Approach

**Finally, you can start your OUTLINE.  
Outline is important... why?**

## **Basic Outlining Rules**

**Main  
idea**

What you want  
your audience to  
do

**Major Points**

This will clarify  
your main idea

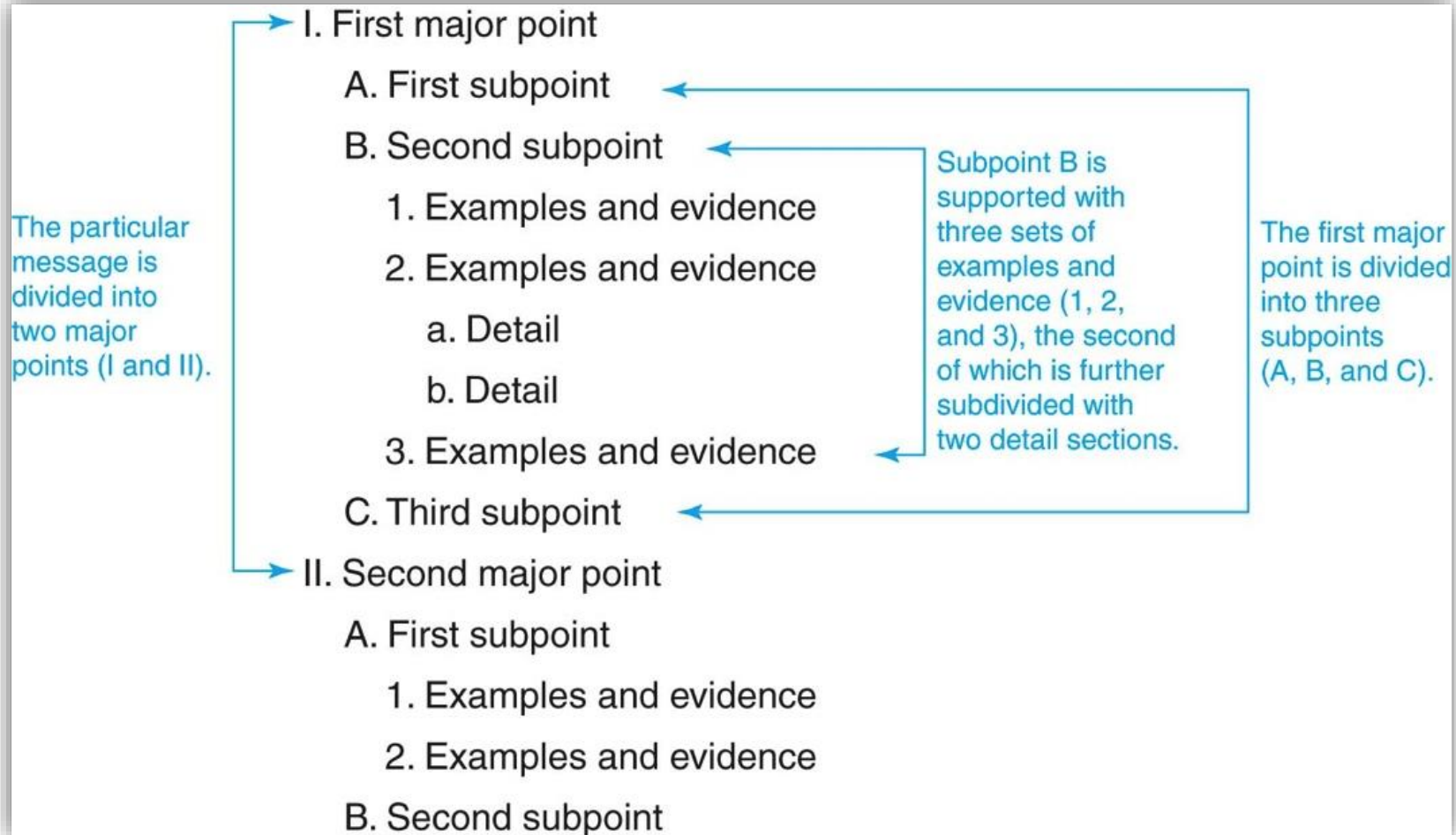
**Evidence**

Multiple major  
points may be  
needed

Illustrate each  
major point with a  
specific evidence

**Technology can help you visualize!**

## Structuring an Outline







# WRITING BUSINESS MESSAGE

Chapter 5

# THREE STEP WRITING PROCESS

## Planning

Analyze the situation

Gather information

Choose medium and channel

Organize the information

## Writing

Adapt to your audience

Compose the message

## Completing

Revise the message

Produce the message

Proofread the message

Distribute the message

## ***Catch your audience!***

### Using the “YOU” attitude



Speaking and writing in terms of your audience's wishes, interests, hopes, and preferences.

Avoid using “you” if it:  
(1) sounds dictatorial  
(2) makes someone guilty  
(3) against your organization style

F: Tuesday is the only day that we can promise quick response to purchase order requests, we are swamped the rest of the week. We offer MP3 players with 50, 75, or 100 GB of storage capacity.

T: If you need a quick response, please submit your purchase order requests on Tuesday. You can choose an MP3 player with 50, 75, or 100 GB of storage capacity.

F: You failed to deliver the customer's order on time. You must correct all five copies by noon.

T: The customer didn't receive the order on time. All five copies must be corrected by noon.

## ***Ethics?***

### Maintaining Standards of Etiquette

Even if a situation calls for you to be brutally honest, express the facts of the matter in a kind and thoughtful manner

F: Once again, you've managed down the entire website through your incompetent programming.

T: Let's review the last website update to explore ways to improve the process.

Use extra tact when communicating with people higher up!



## ***Be positive!***

Emphasizing  
the Positive



Communicate negative  
news without being  
negative

F: It is impossible to repair your laptop today

T: Your computer can be ready by Tuesday. Would you like a loaner until then?

Show audience how  
they will benefit

F: We will notify all three credit reporting agencies if you do not pay your overdue bill within 10 days

T: Paying your overdue bill within 10 days will prevent a negative entry on your credit record

Use euphemisms to  
make your words  
milder

F: Old people

F: Layoff

T: Senior citizens

T: Restructuring, streamlining, improving efficiency, etc.

## ***Avoid bias!***

### Using Bias-Free Language



#### Gender Bias

F: Businessman

T: Executive, manager, etc.

#### Racial and Ethnic Bias

F: Not surprisingly, Shing-Tung Yau excels in mathematics

T: Shing-Tung Yau excels in mathematics

#### Age Bias

F: Mary Kirazy, 58, has just joined our trust department

T: Mary Kirazy has just joined our trust department

#### Disability Bias

F: Disabled workers face many barriers on the job

T: Workers with physical disabilities face many barriers on the job

## ***Develop your credibility!***

### Establishing Credibility



Credibility can take a long time to establish and it can be wiped out in an instant.

---

**Honesty**

Demonstrating honesty will earn you the respect

---

**Objectivity**

Show that you can distance yourself from emotional situations

---

**Awareness of audience**

Let your audience members know that you understand what's important to them

---

**Expertise**

Audiences need to know what you have to back up your message

---

**Endorsements**

Endorsement from an expert

---

**Performance**

People need to know they can count on you to get the job done

---

**Sincerity**

Don't use hyperbole. Be specific.

---

F: We hope this recommendation will be helpful

T: We're please to make this recommendation

## ***Create a conversational tone!***

Understand the  
**difference**  
between **texting**  
and **writing**

Avoid **stale** and  
**pompous** language

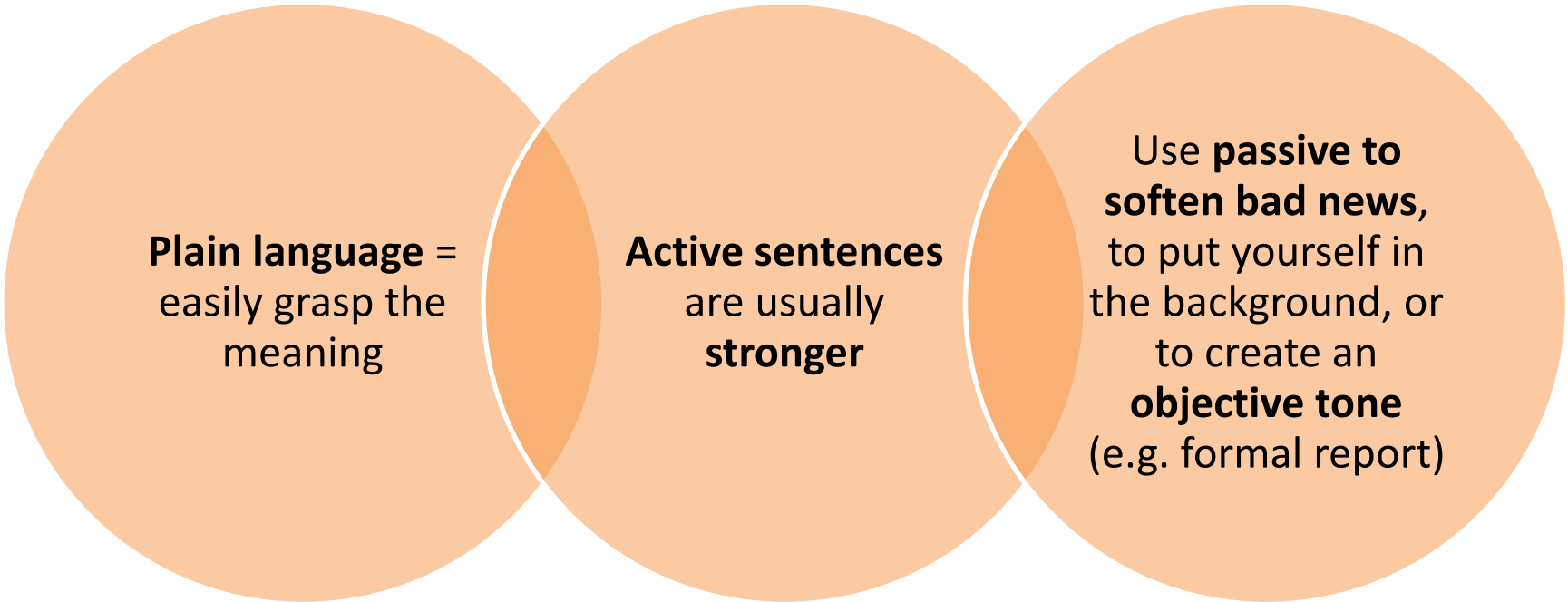
Avoid **preaching**  
and **bragging**

Be careful with  
**intimacy** (sharing  
personal details,  
casual, etc.)

Be careful with  
**humor**



***Use plain language and select active/passive voice wisely!***



**Plain language** =  
easily grasp the  
meaning

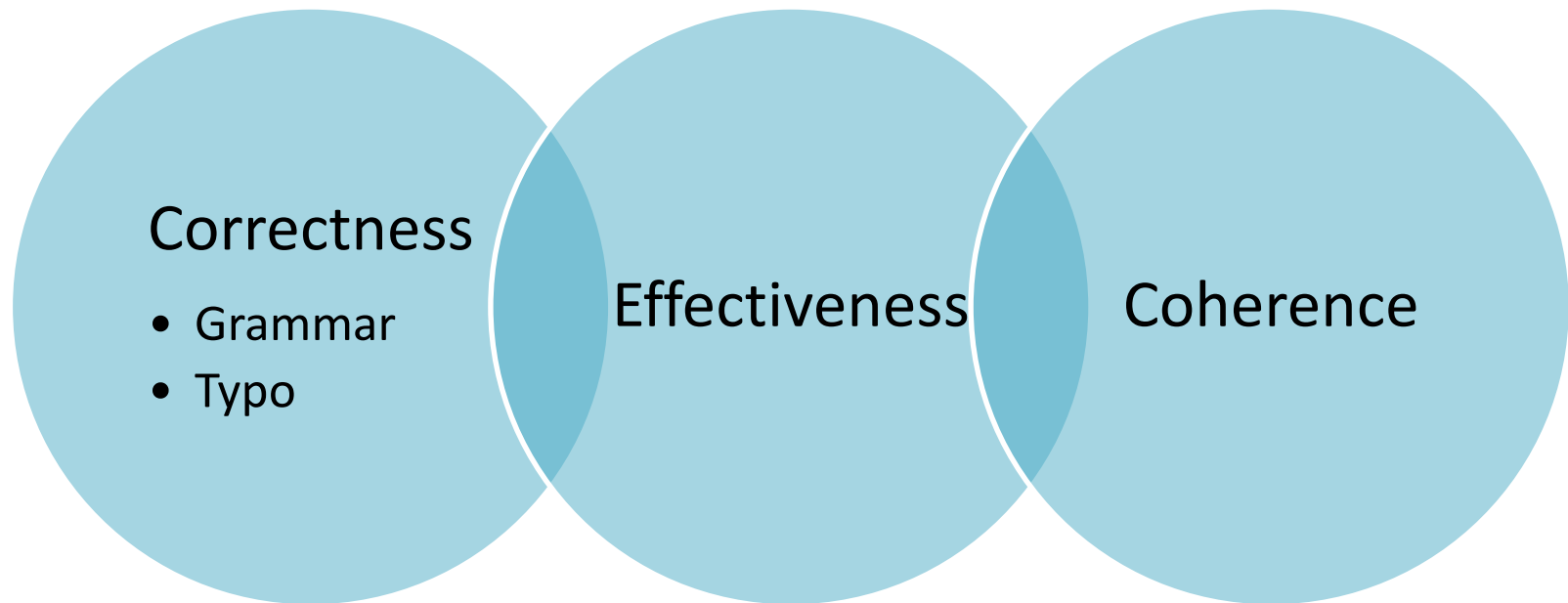
**Active sentences**  
are usually  
**stronger**

Use **passive** to  
**soften bad news**,  
to put yourself in  
the background, or  
to create an  
**objective tone**  
(e.g. formal report)

***Writers block is common. Take a break! Then START!***



## ***What should be considered?***



## ***Choose appropriate words!***

### Chosen Words

---

Denotation vs Connotation

---

Abstract vs Concrete Words

---

Strong and Precise Words

---

Familiar Words

---

Be careful with buzzwords

---

Use jargon only when audience familiar

---

## Choosing types of sentences

- Simple sentence
- Compound sentence
- Complex sentence
- Compound-complex sentence

## Emphasizing key thoughts by:

- Devoting more words to them
- Putting the description at the beginning or at the end of sentence
- Making them the subject of the sentence

SIMPLE SENTENCE	Profits increased in the past year.
COMPOUND SENTENCE	<u>Wage rates have declined</u> by 5 percent, and employee <u>turnover has been high</u> .
COMPLEX SENTENCE	When the cost goes up, <u>customers buy less clothing</u>
COMPOUND COMPLEX SENTENCE	<u>Profits increased 35 percent in the past year, so although the company faces long-term challenges, I agree</u> that its short-term prospects look quite positive.

## Creating elements of paragraph

- Topic sentence
- Support sentence
- Transitional sentence

## Developing paragraph

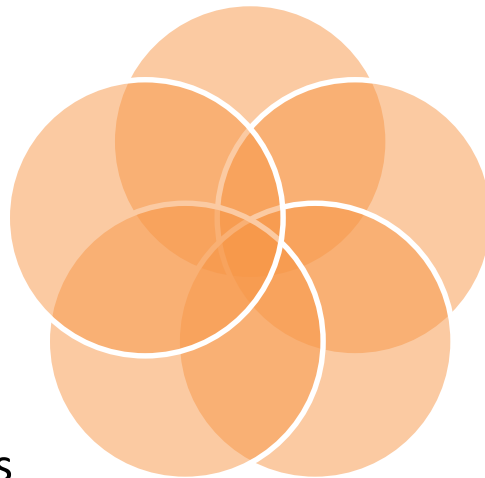
- Five ways to develop paragraph
  - Illustrations
  - Comparison/contrast
  - Cause and effect
  - Classification
  - Problem and solution

# Writing Message for Mobile Devices

Use a linear organization

Use short paragraphs

Use short subject lines and headings



Prioritize information

Write short, focused messages



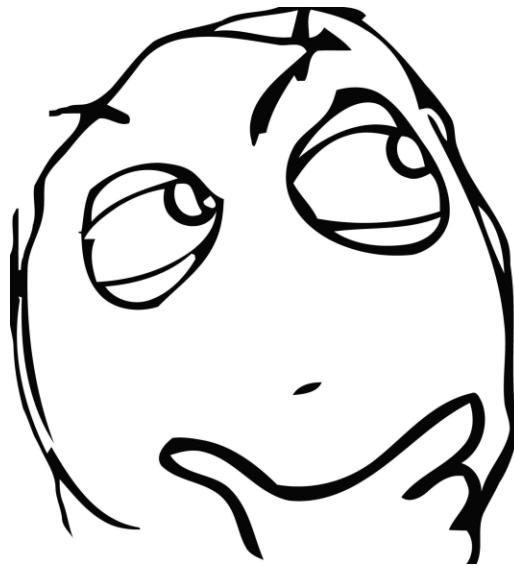




# COMPLETING BUSINESS MESSAGES

Chapter 6

**At this point, do you think that  
you are DONE?**



# Revise!

Take breaks, different pair of eyes.  
Pay attention to special areas.

## ***Evaluate content, organization, style and tone!***

### Content

- Accuracy
- Information relevancy
- Enough information
- Balance between general and specific information

### Organization

- Ordered logically
- Important information emphasized
- Already convincing?
- Are any points repeated unnecessarily?

## ***Check for readability!***

- Vary your sentence length
- Keep paragraphs short and to ONE idea
- Use lists and bullets (when appropriate)
- Ensure correct headings and tabs

## ***Make it clear and concise!***

readability

- Sometimes graphics, sound, video and hypertext are appropriate
- You may **HIGHLIGHT** your text for emphasis
  - White spacing
  - Margins
  - Fonts Styles
- Pay attention to **consistency, balance, restraint** and **detail**!

*Times*  
is a *New* **Roman**  
serif typeface designed  
by *Stanley Morrison* &  
of *Victor Lardent*  
Monotype for the **British**  
*The Times* newspaper  
which debuted on  
October 3<sup>rd</sup>, **1932.**

- What can you do with a common word processor today?
  - Almost everything!
- Don't know how to write a memo?
  - Lets see if Microsoft word can guide you

**WordPerfect**



- Adobe InCopy.
- Corel WordPerfect (u
- Hang
- Ichtai
- Kingsoft
- Microsoft Word.
- Scrivener.
- StarOffice Writer.

More items...

List of word processors - Wikipedi  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_word\\_](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_word_)

- Use a methodical approach to **proof-reading**
  - Multiple passes, perceptual tricks, high priorities
  - Be vigilant, **take a break**, and stay focused
  - Review **electronically**?
- Distribution
  - Many ways of distribution
  - Main considerations include cost, convenience and time as we've learned last week 😊