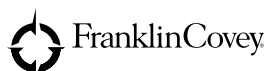




# Writing Advantage<sup>™</sup>

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Plan



# INTRODUCTION

- Focus on the Reader as a Customer
- Develop Quality Writing Standards
- Use an Effective Process and a Tool to Write Quality Documents

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### WRITING ADVANTAGE WILL HELP YOU:

#### OUR END IN MIND:

1. Focus on the reader as a customer.
2. Develop quality writing standards.
3. Use an effective process and a tool to write quality documents.

*Writing Advantage is not a course in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.*

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LIST YOUR WRITING CHALLENGES

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### 1. FOCUS ON THE READER AS A CUSTOMER

Stepping into the shoes of the reader will revolutionize how you write. Your success as a business writer depends on your ability to inspire readers to read what you've written.

Habit 5: Seek First  
to Understand, Then  
to Be Understood®

*Good Writing = Good Customer Service*

### 2. DEVELOP QUALITY WRITING STANDARDS

Your writing skills will improve immediately when you implement standards that underlie quality writing. You may already be aware of these standards but face challenges applying them consistently.

### EXERCISE

Put yourself in the shoes of the customer as you read the following email documents on pages 5–9.

On each document, please note:

1. The purpose or main point of the document.
2. What you like about the document.
3. What you would suggest the writer do to improve the document.

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A

**From:** Cindy Franson  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 14, XXXX 5:08 PM  
**To:** Louise Jacobsen  
**Subject:** Communication Standards

Louise,

Approximately 90 percent of our copying could be run off on letter-size paper. The only problem with this is that when these pages are put into a folder and the pages are hole punched, you cannot read the top three lines and the hole punch cuts through letters and numbers making them unreadable. This is unacceptable for company reports that are mostly numbers and cannot be cut out of the report for future referencing. It is possible that if we had reduction on our copier that they could be reduced down and be put into a folder without the hole punch cutting out the text to the message and you could also read the top three lines. Reduction on our copier should be checked into further before making this decision.

The 10 percent of the messages that are left are usually legal contracts that are sent over the fax, daily computer reports and the large documents that are sent over the fax, and daily computer reports and the large documents that are transmitted over mailway. One of my concerns is that the paper bins in the copier are small and do not hold very much paper. They have to be refilled three to four times just for the drilling reports in the morning. In order to keep things running smooth the paper bins would have to be filled with letter-size paper to run all reports and then after all the reports were run off, the legal-size paper could be inserted in one of the paper trays to run off the legal-size copies.

Cindy

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## B

**From:** Leah Dunn  
**Sent:** Friday, June 11, XXXX 3:24 p.m  
**To:** Fran Jacobsen  
**Subject:** Recommendation to Adopt New Procedures for Processing Claims Forms

Fran,

Last Wednesday you asked me to review the procedures for processing claims forms. This is my response. I strongly recommend you approve and implement the procedures in Appendix A at the beginning of the fiscal year, September 1.

The recommended procedures would benefit the company three ways:

- Reduce processing costs by 16 percent and save \$1,512 a month
- Increase customer service and satisfaction
- Increase office morale

**Reduce processing costs by 16 percent and save \$1,512 a month**

The current system costs an average of \$23.65 per document. The recommended system would cut that cost to \$19.87—a 16 percent savings. Since the company processes over 400 claims each month, this would save the company at least \$1,512 a month.

**Increase customer service and satisfaction**

The current system takes five working days to process a claim. The recommended system would cut that time to three days. We'd get the claims and the funds back to the customer faster. That would increase customer service and satisfaction.

**Increase office morale**

The current system includes three review loops. These loops take time, cost money, and restrict employee discretion. The recommended procedures reduce the review loops to one. My informal surveys indicate this will significantly increase office morale.

To save money, increase customer service, and increase office morale, I strongly recommend you approve and implement the new procedures beginning September 1. If you have questions, call me at x3564.

Leah

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C

**From:** John Morrow  
**Sent:** Monday, July 5, XXXX 10:16 AM  
**To:** Lou Jacobsen  
**Subject:** OUTSTANDING WARRANTY CLAIMS

LOU,

ON JAN 3 I REVIEWED ALL OUTSTANDING WARRANTY CLAIMS WITH RON WAITE, YOUR MOST RECENT OF FOUR SERVICE MANAGERS. YOU PRESENTLY SHOW ON YOUR December FINANCIAL STATEMENT (OUR MOST RECENT) \$37,525 IN OUTSTANDING WARRANTY RECEIVABLES. RON AND I RECONCILED AS MANY CLAIMS AS POSSIBLE GOING WELL OUTSIDE THE 30 DAY SUBMISSION LIMIT AND CORRECTED OR APPEALED MANY MORE BEYOND THE 15 DAY CORRECTION TIME LIMIT. THIS IS NOT A POLICY NORMALLY FOLLOWED BY ME AND WAS DONE ON A ONE TIME BASIS TO GET YOUR NEW SERVICE MANAGER "OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT." CURRENTLY IT APPEARS THAT YOU HAVE APPROXIMATELY \$14,000 OUTSTANDING IN CURRENT WARRANTY RECEIVABLES, LEAVING \$23,000 IN POSSIBLY DENIED, UNCORRECTED, OR PERHAPS UNPOSED ENTRIES. THE TURNOVER IN SERVICE MANAGERS AND OFFICE PERSONNEL HAS NOT HELPED THIS SITUATION AND THE LACK OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FROM YOU ON A TIMELY BASIS MAKES IT VERY DIFFICULT FOR ME TO MONITOR.

I URGE YOU TO RECONCILE THIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AS IT LEAVES YOU AN UNTRUE PICTURE OF WHERE YOU STAND FINANCIALLY. I DO KNOW THAT RON HAS THINGS WELL IN HAND AS FAR AS CLAIMS THAT HAVE BEEN HANDLED SINCE HIS ARRIVAL.

BEST REGARDS

JOHN MORROW

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### D

**From:** Glenda Johnson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 8, XXXX 2:07 p.m.  
**To:** Lou Jacobsen  
**Subject:** Bus Problems

Lou,

I am getting very concerned about our subscription bus. The driver has been complaining about the brakes for a couple of months. I called Janet about it when he first started to complain, and she called me back the same day to say they were fixed.

Apparently they weren't fixed good enough. Just two weeks ago we actually had to swerve off the road into the construction area on 249 to avoid hitting the cars in front of us because his brakes failed once again. He was lucky that there weren't construction workers on the other side of those barriers or we would have hit them or the cars in front of us.

The bus is constantly jerking—he says he has to adjust the shifting to compensate for the poor brakes.

This morning he came to pick us up almost 20 minutes late (then he drove like a maniac to make up some of the time) in a school bus because the brakes were not working on the coach. Needless to say there was no room for the legs of an adult in a school bus, not to mention the lack of air conditioning. And for all this I pay \$93 a month!

I would appreciate your looking into this matter before someone gets killed.

Glenda

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E

**From:** Max Tucker  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, XXXX 4:42 p.m.  
**To:** All Employees  
**Subject:** Security Procedures

---

Effective immediately no one is permitted to enter the warehouse unescorted. All courier items must be delivered to the consignee at the dock. All manipulations must be done by a BZ agent in the presence of the consignee or broker. The BZ agent must remove all uncleared items from the courier bag and secure the cargo in the cage. The courier company and BZ must log and initial the security book.

There have been several instances where unauthorized cargo has been released to the consignee. The above procedure will ensure that BZ maintains accountability for all cargo in our possession.

There are to be no exceptions for allowing any person into the bonded facility unless that person is escorted by a BZ agent. Escorted means that at all times the BZ agent is with the unauthorized individual.

I realize that the above procedure will delay the delivery of courier bags to the consignee, however due to security reasons this procedure must be adhered to at all times.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Max Tucker

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### QUALITY WRITING STANDARDS

Which document served you best?

Quality writing standards consist of:

- **Content**—what a document says
- **Layout/Emphasis**—how a document looks

**Quality writing standards apply to all written documents, including email, letters, memos, and technical reports.**

See “Exercise Keys” on pages 84–87 of the Appendix for suggested rewrites of Documents A, C, D, and E.

### 3. USE AN EFFECTIVE PROCESS AND A TOOL TO WRITE QUALITY DOCUMENTS

Now that you have identified quality writing standards, you will need a process and a tool to help you implement them.

Habit 1:  
Be Proactive®

#### *Writing Is a Proactive Process*

#### INEFFECTIVE WRITING PROCESS

- Increases stress
- Wastes time
- Decreases effectiveness
- Focuses on writer



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EFFECTIVE WRITING PROCESS

Plan  
Design  
Draft  
Revise



- Reduces stress
- Saves time
- Increases effectiveness
- Focuses on customer

EFFECTIVE WRITING TOOL

**DOCUMENT PLANNER**  
Plan Your Document

	File Name	Subject/Date	Date Due
<b>PURPOSE</b>	What I want to accomplish		
	What I want my readers to		
	Do _____ By (deadline) _____		
	Know _____		
	Feel _____		
Resources (who, what) _____			
<b>RESEARCH, PRIORITIES, INTERESTS, AND NOTES</b>	Reader 1	• • •	
	Reader 2	• • •	
	Reader 3	• • •	
	Reader 4	• • •	

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**Plan**  
**Design**  
**Draft**  
**Revise**



**Customer's  
Needs**

# PLAN YOUR DOCUMENT

*Begin With the End in Mind<sup>®</sup>*

- Use the Document Planner
- Apply Brainstorming Techniques

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USE THE DOCUMENT PLANNER

Many documents miss their mark because writers fail to plan before they write. The most important planning decisions involve your purpose and readers. The Document Planner will help you quickly and easily make decisions about your writing tasks.

DOCUMENT PLANNER

Plan Your Document

File Name

Today's Date

Due Date

PURPOSE

What I want to accomplish:

What I want my readers to

Do: By (deadline):

Know:

Feel:

Resources (who, what):

READERS' PRIORITIES, INTERESTS, AND NEEDS

Reader 1

Reader 2

Reader 3

Reader 4

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## THE DOCUMENT PLANNER IS A THINKING TOOL

It is useful to:

### File Name

Distinguish this document from the others you'll write.

### Date and Due Date

Note the current date as well as the due date. The due date is not necessarily the day you need to finish writing it.

### Purpose

State what you want to accomplish as well as what your reader(s) should DO (include deadline), KNOW, and FEEL.

### Resources

Who can help you? Is there a file on the subject?

### Readers

List everyone who will read your document, not just the person you're addressing. (Your boss? Accounting? Legal?) Working from the list of readers, note their priorities, interests, and needs.

What is the purpose of this document? Who are the customers? How well did Les Hyland address the customers' needs?



June 9, XXXX

Mayor P. L. Smith and City Council  
City of Glendale  
3968 Elm Street  
Glendale, AZ 80611

Subject: The Comark Building

Dear Mayor Smith and City Council:

Our firm has a problem. We have a major engineering project to develop and there is no space in our facility to accommodate the laboratory equipment that will be necessary to carry out what we have in mind. We are wondering if the city would be so kind as to help us. The historic Comark Building at Fifth Street and Maple is presently under city ownership, and it is our understanding that the building is under consideration for the expansion of city offices. Cheaper accommodations for city offices can be found in other districts nearby. As taxpayers, we object to using the building in this way. Regardless of what may be planned for the building, we believe that it would meet our space requirements and would be convenient to our corporate headquarters located at Fourth and Maple. Our engineering staff would be able to move quickly from the labs they have established at headquarters to new labs in the Comark Building. Our budgets would accommodate the building too. We would be able to maintain it. It would be very much appreciated if a decision on this issue were forthcoming at the earliest possible date. If there are any further questions or comments, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

*Les Hyland*

Les Hyland, Vice-President of Operations

## DOCUMENT PLANNER

### Plan Your Document

Comark Building Proposal  
File Name

June 9, XXXX  
Today's Date

Aug. 1, XXXX  
Due Date

#### PURPOSE

**What I want to accomplish:**

Write a letter to the Mayor and City Council about leasing and renovating the Comark Building.

**What I want my readers to**

**Do:** Consider a proposal for Windstream to lease the Comark Building to renovate it for a research facility. **By (deadline):** Aug. 1, XXXX

**Know:** Windstream will renovate the building at no cost to the city.

**Feel:** Motivated—to let Windstream lease the building. Excited—for the renovation of a historic building at no cost. Determined—to help increase commercial activity in central city.

**Resources (who, what):** Council members Lowe and Calanoni

#### READERS' PRIORITIES, INTERESTS, AND NEEDS

Mayor Smith  
Reader 1

- Appropriate use of taxpayers' money
- Revitalization of downtown businesses
- New office space for city employees

Council Members  
Reader 2

- New office space for city employees
- Budget constraints of the Comark renovation project
- Keeping Windstream in the area

Taxpayers  
Reader 3

- No frivolous use of money by city officials
- Preserving a historical building
- More job opportunities

Windstream CEO  
Reader 4

- Windstream needs the Comark Bldg. for a research facility
- We are willing to invest in the renovation
- If we don't get approval, must move operations elsewhere

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- What do you want to accomplish?
- What do you want your readers to do?
- Who are all the possible readers or stakeholders?



June 9, XXXX  
 Mayor P. L. Smith and City Council  
 City of Glendale  
 3968 Elm Street  
 Glendale, AZ 80611

**Subject: Proposal to Lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City**

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal.

Please consider Windstream's proposal to lease the historic Comark Building and to renovate it **at no cost to the taxpayers**. Because we would like to take occupancy by October 1, we will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questions or to schedule a meeting if necessary.

We believe this proposed action would be mutually beneficial. Benefits of such a lease would:

- Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- Increase commercial activity in the central city.
- Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

**Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense**

Windstream will lease the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated for renovation to accommodate city offices; however, the expense to taxpayers would more than offset any benefit to the city administration. Obviously, the taxpayers are not happy about these expenses since office space for city officials is available at relatively low cost in surrounding buildings.

**Increase commercial activity in the central city**

Our proposed research facility would bring many new workers into the central city, an area in need of a commercial boost. Further, other neighborhood businesses would benefit from our presence there. For example, 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the central city, invigorating local businesses.

**Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community**

Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate headquarters building at Fourth and Maple. The decline of this district troubles us, and we feel obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response would mean a savings to taxpayers as well as renewed business development in the downtown district. I will contact you on June 25 to determine the next step, or if you wish to call me before then, my number is 556-6633.

Sincerely,

*Les Hyland*

Les Hyland, Vice-President of Operations

## Babcock & Wilcox Company

IR Generation Group

August 3, 1978

To: B. A. Karrasch, Manager, Plant Integration  
 From: D. F. Hallman, Manager, Plant Performance Services Section (1149)  
 Subject: Operator Interruption of High-Pressure Injection  
 References: 1. B. M. Dunn to J. Taylor, Operation Interruption of High-Pressure Injection, 9 February 1978  
 2. B. M. Dunn to J. Taylor, Operation Interruption of High-Pressure Injection, 16 February 1978

References 1 and 2 (attached) recommend a change in Babcock & Wilcox's philosophy of HPI system use during low-pressure transients. Basically, they recommend leaving the HPI pumps on, once HPI has been indicated, until it can be determined that the hot leg temperature is more than 50° F below T for the reactor cooling system (RCS) pressure. Nuclear Service believes this mode can cause the RCS (including the pressurizer) to be solid. The pressurizer reliefs will lift, with a water surge through the discharge piping into the quench tank.

We believe the following incidents should be evaluated:

1. If the pressurizer goes solid with one or more HPI pumps continuing to operate, would there be a pressure spike before the reliefs open which could cause damage to the RCS?
2. What damage would the water surge through the relief valve discharge piping and quench tank cause?

To date, Nuclear Service has not notified our operating plants to change HPI policy consistent with References 1 and 2 because of our above-stated questions. Yet the references suggest the possibility of uncovering the core if present HPI policy is continued. We request that Integration resolve the issue of how the HPI system should be used. We are available to help as needed.

*D. F. Hallman*

c: E. R. Kane  
 J. D. Phinney  
 B. W. Street  
 B. M. Dunn  
 J. F. Walters

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## Babcock & Wilcox Company

IR Generation Group

Date: 3 August 1978

To: B. A. Karrasch, Manager, Plant Integration

From: D. F. Hallman, Manager, Plant Performance Services Section (1149)

**Subject: Recommendation to Resolve Present HPI (High-Pressure Injection) Policy and Prevent Possibility of Uncovering the Core**

References: 1. B. M. Dunn to J. Taylor, 9 February 1978

2. B. M. Dunn to J. Taylor, 16 February 1978

Uncovering the core is a possibility if present HPI policy is continued. Analysts in my department and I recommend Plant Integration resolve the issue of how the HPI system should be used. I will call you on 7 August to discuss this issue and strategize what we can do to resolve it. Three recommendations follow:

### **Consider B. M. Dunn's view: Change HPI policy**

In References 1 and 2, B. M. Dunn suggests the possibility of uncovering the core under present HPI policy. He proposes a change in B&W's practice for HPI system use during the low-pressure transients. Specifically, Dunn recommends leaving the HPI pumps on, once HPI has been indicated, until hot leg temperature is more than 50° F below the saturation temperature for the RCS pressure.

### **Consider Nuclear Services' view: Proposed changes would be detrimental**

Nuclear Service believes the changes Dunn proposes would cause the RCS (including the pressurizer) to be solid, causing the pressurizer reliefs to lift and sending a water surge through the discharge piping into the quench tank.

### **Evaluate two incidents and notify plants**

We recommend that Plant Integration resolve the issue by evaluating the following scenarios:

1. If the pressurizer goes solid with one or more HPI pumps continuing to operate, would a pressure spike occur before the reliefs open?
2. What damage would the water surge through the relief valve cause?

Once these scenarios are evaluated, Nuclear Service should notify operating plants about the results.

Uncovering the core is a possibility until we resolve this issue. We are available to help in the analysis. You may call me anytime at 234-1234.



## EXERCISE

Now it's your turn. Practice using the Document Planner to plan a document. Here are some suggestions:

- Plan a document recently assigned to you.
- Plan a document you've been putting off for a while.
- Plan a document recommending a solution to a problem your department or company continues to have.
- Plan a document requesting a piece of equipment that will improve your effectiveness on the job.

Identify what you want your readers to DO, KNOW, and FEEL. Focus on the readers' priorities, interests, and needs.

**DOCUMENT PLANNER**  
Plan Your Document

File Name \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>PURPOSE</b>	What I want to accomplish:	_____
	What I want my readers to	_____
	Do: _____	By (deadline): _____
	Know: _____	_____
	Feel: _____	_____
	Resources (who, what): _____	_____

<b>READERS' PRIORITIES, INTERESTS, AND NEEDS</b>	Reader 1	• _____ • _____ • _____
	Reader 2	• _____ • _____ • _____
	Reader 3	• _____ • _____ • _____
	Reader 4	• _____ • _____ • _____

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## APPLY BRAINSTORMING TECHNIQUES

### Benefits:

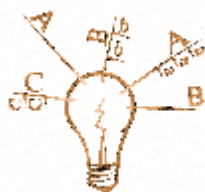
Brainstorming is a useful tool to:

- Capture ideas quickly.
- Clarify a complicated message.
- Overcome writer's block.
- Reduce information overload.
- Discover new ideas and alternatives.
- Organize long documents with multiple sections.

### Guidelines:

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## BRAINSTORMING TECHNIQUES



## GROUPING AND ARRANGING BRAINSTORMING NOTES

Group

Arrange

Discard

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NOTES

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# DESIGN YOUR DOCUMENT

*Well-Designed Documents  
Get Read*

- Use the Four-Box Format to Organize and Design Information
- Apply Organizational Principles

FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY

USE THE FOUR-BOX FORMAT TO ORGANIZE AND DESIGN INFORMATION

FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY

DOCUMENT PLANNER

Design Your Document (Four-Box Format)

Subject Line/Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Begin with signal word.

1

PURPOSE/  
DEADLINES

Setup (optional)

Purpose (do/know) and deadlines

2

PREVIEW

Introductory statement

Preview key supporting points (benefits, risks, highlights, overview)

3

DETAILS

Develop key supporting points with relevant details

Informative heading:  
Relevant details:

Informative heading:  
Relevant details:

Informative heading:  
Relevant details:

4

REVIEW

Restate purpose (do/know) and deadlines

Provide contact number

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IND060536 Version 1.0.1

## Design Information for Your Readers

The Four-Box Format will guarantee a well-designed and well-organized document that meets your readers' needs and expectations. Quality design, with sound organization, will help your readers decide, in 10 seconds or less, what is critical—what they should do and know, deadlines for action, etc.

### Subject Line/Title

Begin with a signal word. Summarize do/know statements.

### Box1—Purpose/Deadlines

Use setups only when necessary. Keep them short. Include purpose (do/know), deadlines for action, and anything important.

### Box 2—Preview

Provide an introductory statement. Prioritize key supporting points (benefits, risks, highlights, overview).

### Box 3—Details

Create informative headings that state the main idea for each section. Include relevant details that support your purpose and meet the needs of your readers.

### Box 4—Review

Restate your purpose with deadlines. Provide a contact number.

## DOCUMENT PLANNER Design Your Document (Four-Box Format)

Subject Line/Title: Proposal to Lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City

Begin with signal word.

1

PURPOSE/  
DEADLINES

Setup (optional)

Our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni

Purpose (do/know) and deadlines

Mayor and Council to consider leasing the Comark Building to Windstream to renovate at no cost to the taxpayers. Deadline: Call mayor on June 25 to answer questions. Decision by August 1. Windstream takes occupancy by October 1.

2

PREVIEW

Introductory statement

The proposed action would be mutually beneficial.

Preview key supporting points (benefits, risks, highlights, overview)

- Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- Increase commercial activity in the central city.
- Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

3

DETAILS

Develop key supporting points with relevant details

Informative heading: Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.

Relevant details:

- Windstream will renovate the Comark Building into a major research facility.
- The renovation will meet add value to the city.
- The city plans to renovate the building into office space for city officials.
- Taxpayers aren't happy about paying for the renovation when office space is available in surrounding buildings.

Informative heading: Increase commercial activity in the central city.

Relevant details:

- The new workers at Windstream's facility will provide a commercial boost to the area.
- 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the neighborhood businesses.

Informative heading: Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

Relevant details:

- Windstream has a long-standing investment with the corporate offices in the downtown district.
- The decline of the district troubles us.
- Windstream feels an obligation to contribute to the redevelopment of the area.

4

REVIEW

Restate purpose (do/know) and deadlines Thank you for considering the proposal. A favorable response would mean a savings to the taxpayers and renewed business in the downtown district. I will contact the mayor on June 25 to determine next steps.

Provide contact number My contact number is 556-6633.

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## BENEFITS OF USING THE FOUR-BOX FORMAT

1. Your purpose, deadlines, and important information will be up front and read in less than 10 seconds.
2. Longer documents should include a preview of content to help readers know what will follow.
3. Informative headings will introduce readers to relevant data.
4. The review draws the document to a close by restating the purpose and providing deadlines as well as contact information.

June 9, XXXX  
 Mayor P. L. Smith and City Council  
 City of Glendale  
 3968 Elm Street  
 Glendale, AZ 80611



### **Subject: Proposal to Lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City**

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal.

Please consider Windstream's proposal to lease the historic Comark Building and to renovate it **at no cost to the taxpayers**. Because we would like to take occupancy by October 1, we will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questions or to schedule a meeting if necessary.

We believe this proposed action would be mutually beneficial. Benefits of such a lease would:

- Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- Increase commercial activity in the central city.
- Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

### **Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense**

Windstream will lease the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated for renovation to accommodate city offices; however, the expense to taxpayers would more than offset any benefit to the city administration. Obviously, the taxpayers are not happy about these expenses since office space for city officials is available at relatively low cost in surrounding buildings.

### **Increase commercial activity in the central city**

Our proposed research facility would bring many new workers into the central city, an area in need of a commercial boost. Further, other neighborhood businesses would benefit from our presence there. For example, 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the central city, invigorating local businesses.

### **Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community**

Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate headquarters building at Fourth and Maple. The decline of this district troubles us, and we feel obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response would mean a savings to taxpayers as well as renewed business development in the downtown district. I will contact you on June 25 to determine the next step, or if you wish to call me before then, my number is 556-6633.

Sincerely,

*Les Hyland*

Les Hyland, Vice-President of Operations

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### EXERCISE

Select two or three of the following ideas and quickly practice using the Four-Box Format.

- Recommend a new fitness center at your workplace.
- Recommend a colleague for Employee of the Year.
- Suggest how to improve security at your workplace.
- Recommend training for you or your department.
- Request hiring additional seasonal staff for your department.
- Recommend a favorite restaurant to a co-worker.
- Request a promotion or a pay increase.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The Four-Box Format helps you apply seven organizational principles essential to designing customer-focused documents. They are:

### 1. Write Effective Subject Lines and Titles

- Begin with a signal word.
- Summarize your do/know statements.

### 2. Use Setups Sparingly

- Use setups only if necessary.
- When you use one, keep it short.

### 3. Put Purpose (Do/Know) and Deadlines Up Front

- Put your purpose (do/know) statements from your Document Planner up front so they can't be missed.
- Include deadlines and any other important information.

### 4. Preview Key Supporting Points

- Preview the key points that support your purpose (do/know).
- Prioritize with your readers' needs in mind.
- Make previews and lists parallel.

### 5. Write Informative Headings

- Make headings informative so readers can quickly understand the main idea of the section.
- Make headings parallel.

### 6. Include Complete but Only Relevant Details

- Include complete but only relevant details that support your purpose (do/know) and serve the needs of your readers.
- Prioritize supporting details to meet your readers' needs.

### 7. Review Purpose and Deadlines; Add Contact Number

- Restate your purpose (do/know) at the end of a long document.
- Include deadlines for action as well as a contact number.



Subject Line

## 1. Write Effective Subject Lines and Titles

An effective subject line provides a “hook” for your readers and indicates what is important in your document. Effective subject lines begin with a signal word and summarize your do/know statement.

### *Begin with a signal word.*

A signal word (noun) tells your readers what kind of document they are reading—a request, a warning, an agenda, etc. It signals readers about your purpose.

recommendation to...	report of...	highlights of...
request for...	invitation to...	procedures for...
warning about...	announcement/notice of...	suggestions for...
directions for...	evaluation of...	response to...
proposal to...	agenda for...	options for...
information about...	summary of...	justification for...

### *Summarize your do/know statements.*

Many times readers discard or delete documents and e-mails due to “so what” subject lines that say nothing. Subject lines that summarize your do/know statement will help ensure that customers read and take action on your document.

3968 Elm Street  
Glendale, AZ 80611

**Subject: Proposal to Lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City**

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal.

Please consider Windstream’s proposal to lease the historic Comark Building and to renovate it

Signal word

Summary of do/know statement

## TIPS FOR SUBJECT LINES

- Think of the subject line as a purpose line.
- Include “action requested” at the start of the subject line.
- Include deadlines and dates in the subject line.

**EXERCISE**

Rewrite the following ineffective subject lines. Use a signal word and summarize what your readers should do and know. See “Suggested Subject Lines” on page 88 for suggested rewrites.

**1. Subject: Copy Machine**

I recommend we request a new copier in the annual budget. For the past six months, we have had to repair our copy machine on an average of twice weekly. Needless to say, repair costs and productivity losses have been substantial.

Rewritten subject line:

**2. Subject: K38 Cabin-Pressurization System**

We were delighted to hear that International Aeronautics won the contract to develop the K38 Heavy Cargo Helicopter. As you initiate design studies for the K38, we hope you'll consider Sky Aviation to assist you in the cabin-pressurization design. As you know, Sky Aviation has done much of the pioneering work in cabin pressurization. Our pressurization systems are state of the art.

Rewritten subject line:

**3. Subject: Management Meeting**

Please plan to present your proposal to hire three new auditors at the weekly management meeting on June 4 at 3 p.m. in the board room. You will have 20 minutes. An overhead projector, screen, and flip chart are available for your use. If you need anything else, call me at ext. 4874. Thanks.

Rewritten subject line:

**4. Subject: Form C82**

I have enclosed a draft of Form C82. Please review and edit the draft by Monday, July 8, so that we can get your perspective on its design and layout.

Rewritten subject line:



Box 1

## 2. Use Setups Sparingly

Setups are used when it isn't feasible to state your purpose up front. Setups are helpful in the following instances:

### *Stating bad news*

We appreciate your proposal to develop software for our division. You provided several excellent options. After considering many proposals, we selected one that meets our needs more closely than your proposal does.

### *Establishing a problem you are solving*

Because we're struggling to meet critical deadlines, we request your immediate approval to hire a computer programmer.

### *Providing background to help readers understand your purpose*

Over the last five years, our warehousing costs have doubled. Janet Jefferson, general manager of Finance, asked me to review the problem and report back by the end of the month. Please answer these eight questions and return your answers to me by March 21.

### *Establishing a relationship*

My name is Jordan Luu and I am a project manager at Images, Inc. I am contacting you because Lauren Fielding, my manager, recommended you as an expert in computer-generated animation.

Glendale, AZ 80611

**Subject: Proposal to Lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City**

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal.

Please consider Windstream's proposal to lease the historic Comark Building and to renovate it **at no cost to the taxpayers**. Because we would like to take occupancy by October 1, we will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questions or to

## TIPS FOR SETUPS

- Use only if necessary.
- Keep it short.

## EXERCISE

Underline the purpose in the following document. Was the setup used effectively?

## Snow Peak Ski and Summer Resort

September 10, XXXX  
1234 Gray Drive  
Vail, CO 81658

Dear Ms. Jones:

Thank you for applying for the recent opening in the Marketing department at Snow Peak Ski and Summer Resort. We had many applicants for this position.

Your application has been carefully reviewed by our Marketing and Human Resources departments. The selection process has been difficult, and we had to narrow the field to applicants who most closely met our present needs. Exciting plans for expansion at Snow Peak are now underway, which will present other employment opportunities. We hope you will consider these openings. Your interest will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Freida Johansen

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Box 1

### 3. Put Purpose (Do/Know) and Deadlines Up Front

Because most readers deal with information overload on a daily basis, your documents are competing for your readers' attention. To improve the chances that your documents will be read, place your purpose up front and make it very clear.

#### Subject: Proposal to Lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal.

Please consider Windstream's proposal to lease the historic Comark Building and to renovate it **at no cost to the taxpayers**. Because we would like to take occupancy by October 1, we will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questions or to schedule a meeting if necessary.

We believe this proposed action would be mutually beneficial. Benefits of such a lease would:

- Renovate an historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- Increase commercial activity in the central city.

### TIPS

- You have 10 seconds to clarify your purpose or your reader may never get it!
- Put your purpose (do/know) statements from your Document Planner up front so they can't be missed.
- Include deadlines and any other important information.



## EXERCISE

As you read Document A, time yourself to see how long it takes you to find the purpose (do/know). Record your time in the margin.

## A

Beginning January 18, a feasibility study of the prospects of a company child-care center was undertaken under the direction of the executive committee. Surveys of the industry and benchmarking studies have been conducted by this office, and considerable information has been collected, all of which has a bearing on whether or not the firm proceeds with the planning and development of a company child-care center. A child-care facility would probably increase efficiency in the workplace. Several studies indicate that efficiency increases 15 percent when companies add child-care centers. Parents—mothers, fathers, or both—would not have to take time off to check on their children or make a separate run to the day-care provider. Because the child-care facility would be run by the company, parents would feel comfortable with the quality of the care their children are receiving, and with that comfort, work more efficiently. Apex Electronics, a company similar to ours in size, mission, and location, reports a 23 percent rise in morale after building a company child-care center. Productivity is up, and absenteeism is down. A child-care facility would probably make the company more flexible. Because we could stipulate the hours, employees would not feel bound to leave the office at a certain time to get to the day-care facility before it closes. This flexibility would also support our proposed incorporation of flex-time. Parents could come to work at varied schedules and still have quality child care. With the attendant advantages of efficiency and flexibility, a child-care center would increase our attractiveness as a recruiter. The child-care center could not hurt us in recruiting; it could only help us in recruiting. With a child-care facility on site, and the opportunity for parents to visit with their children during breaks and during lunch, the nature of the work site would improve for its family atmosphere. Employees would feel more comfortable, more relaxed, and thus more productive. The inclusion of such policies (an onsite child-care center, flexibility, a family atmosphere) would make us look good in the national marketplace. If our estimates to this date are correct, it means that we should plan and develop a company center immediately. This is our principal recommendation. There are yet many variables. Many small details need yet to be worked out. There are many questions, such as whether we should charge the employees for the child care or if it should be included as an employee benefit, that need to be worked out. Long-range studies seem to indicate that a child-care center would pay for itself in employee morale and increased efficiency. Unclear yet are possible policies for the center, such as the age ranges of the children, the location of the site, and the overall hours of the center. The development of a center would involve not only logistical matters, such as equipment, toys, beds, and television sets (and videos), but also questions of the size of the staff that would include a director, teachers, nurses, attendants, and others.

Time:

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As you read Document B, time yourself to see how long it takes you to find the purpose (do/know). Record your time in the margin.

B

**Subject: Proposal to Develop and Build a Company Child-Care Center Immediately**

On January 18, the executive committee asked me to evaluate developing and building a company child-care center. This is my report.

We should develop and build a company child-care center immediately. All information indicates that the benefits outweigh the risks.

A company child-care center has at least three major benefits. We would:

- Increase company efficiency.
- Increase company morale.
- Increase our attractiveness as a major recruiter.

**Increase Company Efficiency**

Several studies—done by reputable research firms—indicate that efficiency increases 15 percent when companies add child-care centers. Parents who worry about their children are distracted employees. Parents who have to make separate runs to the child-care center or take time to find quality child care are employees who are not at their jobs.

**Increase Company Morale**

Apex Electronics—a company similar to ours in size, mission, and location—reports a 23 percent rise in morale after building a company child-care center. Productivity is up; absenteeism and tardiness are down. The same will hold for us. The family atmosphere and ready access to loved ones will dramatically improve morale.

**Increase Our Attractiveness as a Major Recruiter**

Single parents who want to do well in the work force will want to come here. Working couples who cannot find quality child care will want to come here. Our current program in flex-time has already increased our recruiting power. A child-care facility will augment and support flex-time.

I've attached—as Appendices A through C—further discussion (staff, logistical matters, and unresolved issues).

In summary, we should build a company child-care center now because it will increase efficiency, morale, and recruiting power. Please contact me by Friday at extension 4804 with questions or responses.

Time:

1. Time “A”
2. Time “B”
3. Difference between A and B
4. Reduction in cycle time (line 3 ÷ line 1)  
%

## 4. Preview Key Supporting Points

In documents exceeding one page and in e-mail messages exceeding one screen, preview key supporting points. Previews may also be useful in one-page or one-screen documents, but are critical in longer documents.

### *Previews include:*

- Benefits
- Risks
- Overviews of main sections
- Recommendations
- Highlights
- Steps in a procedure



**Box 2**

at no cost to the taxpayers. Because we would like to take occupancy by October 1, we will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questions or to schedule a meeting if necessary.

We believe this proposed action would be mutually beneficial. Benefits of such a lease would:

- Renovate an historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- Increase commercial activity in the central city.
- Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

**Renovate an historic structure at private rather than public expense**

Windstream will lease the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated

### *Parallelism*

In previews:

If the first item begins with a verb, begin other items with a verb.

If the first item begins with a noun, begin other items with a noun.

If the first item is constructed as a phrase, construct other items as phrases.

If the first item is a complete sentence, construct other items as complete sentences.

### *Previews as a Paragraph List*

The executive board decided to appoint a safety director, establish a budget to develop a safety department, rewrite safety procedures, and appoint a safety committee.

### *Previews as a Displayed List*

Before you leave, please be sure to:

- Unplug all electrical appliances.
- Lock windows and patio doors.
- Set the security alarm.
- Drop all keys in the Key Return box at the main office.

## TIPS

- Preview the key points that support your purpose (do/know) and serve the needs of your readers.
- Prioritize with your readers' needs in mind.
- Make previews and lists parallel.
- Use hyphens instead of bullets for key points in e-mail. Coding for bullets doesn't always transfer.

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**EXERCISE**

The items in the following list are not parallel. In the space provided below, rewrite the items to make them parallel. See “Suggested Parallel Steps” on page 88 for suggested rewrites.

1. Read all the instructions before assembling the kit.
2. Rubber gloves are helpful and are included.
3. Unwrap materials packaged in green shrink wrap.
4. Solution may cause burning if it gets in eyes, cuts, or scratches.
5. Cut out all patterns with scissors (included).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



See PARALLELISM under Index in the style guide.

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## EXERCISE

Based on a company's plan to build an employee fitness center, work with your partner to preview key supporting points for the following scenarios. Make your lists parallel. See "Suggested Supporting Points" on page 88 for suggested rewrites.

1. Subject: Recommendation to Build a New Fitness Center for Employees

We recommend that Tri Star, Inc., conduct a study to determine the feasibility of building a state-of-the-art fitness center in the vacated warehouse west of the Administration Building.

Three benefits of this recommendation are immediately obvious:

2. Subject: Recommendation to Locate Safer Facilities for Our Proposed Fitness Center

We recommend looking into facilities other than the vacated warehouse for our proposed state-of-the-art fitness center. Our preliminary studies indicate that the warehouse is unsafe and would put us at considerable risk.

We discovered two safety hazards:

3. Subject: Recommendations for Equipment for the Employee Fitness Center

The Facilities Committee has completed its study on equipment for the new fitness center. We polled all employees and held four focus groups to determine what employees would use. We also visited two other corporate fitness centers.

We recommend including the following equipment in the fitness center:

## 5. Write Informative Headings

Think *headline* as you develop headings. Avoid one- or two-word headings like “Introduction” or “Project Summary” because they communicate little to readers. Use informative headings to state the main idea of the section they represent.

- Increase commercial activity in the central city.
- Expand Windstream’s investment in the economic well-being of the community.

### **Renovate an historic structure at private rather than public expense**

Windstream will lease the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated for renovation to accommodate city offices; however, the expense to taxpayers would more than offset any benefit to the city administration. Obviously, the taxpayers are not happy about these expenses since office space for city officials is available at relatively low cost in surrounding buildings.

### **Increase commercial activity in the central city**

Our proposed research facility would bring many new workers into the central city, an area in need of a commercial boost. Further, other neighborhood businesses would benefit from our presence there. For example, 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the central city, invigorating local businesses.

### **Expand Windstream’s investment in the economic well-being of the community**

Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate headquarters building at Fourth and Maple. The decline of this district troubles us, and we feel obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response



Box 3

## TIPS:

- Make headings informative so readers can quickly understand the main idea of the section.
- Make headings parallel.



See HEADINGS under Index in the style guide.

### EXERCISE

Rewrite the following ineffective internal headings. Make them informative and parallel. See “Suggested Headings” on page 89 for suggested rewrites.

Subject: Recommendation to Hire Three New Auditors for Next Fiscal Year

I recommend we hire three new auditors for the next fiscal year. I recognize the impact on our budget will be significant, but two benefits will immediately offset the increase in budget.

#### **Cycle Time**

Three new auditors would enable us to shorten our cycle time from 90 to 57 days. During the last two years we have lost five significant clients because our cycle time is so long. Our major competitors can complete an audit in less than 67 days.

#### **Accuracy**

Three new auditors would ensure improved accuracy in our work. We are making costly mistakes because we do not have sufficient personnel to properly review our reports. These mistakes are embarrassing and currently have us in legal trouble with A.J. Masterson Co.

Rewritten heading:

Rewritten heading:

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## 6. Include Complete but Only Relevant Details

Brainstorm complete details to support your headings. Focused brainstorming will help you generate a lot of detail. You can then select what is relevant and prioritize it to support your purpose and help your readers. (For more information on brainstorming, see pages 22–23.)

- Increase commercial activity in the central city.
- Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

### **Renovate an historic structure at private rather than public expense**

Windstream will lease the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated for renovation to accommodate city offices; however, the expense to taxpayers would more than offset any benefit to the city administration. Obviously, the taxpayers are not happy about these expenses since office space for city officials is available at relatively low cost in surrounding buildings.

### **Increase commercial activity in the central city**

Our proposed research facility would bring many new workers into the central city, an area in need of a commercial boost. Further, other neighborhood businesses would benefit from our presence there. For example, 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the central city, invigorating local businesses.

### **Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community**

Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate headquarters building at Fourth and Maple. The decline of this district troubles us, and we feel obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response would mean a savings to taxpayers as well as renewed business development in the downtown district. I will contact you on June 25 to determine the next step, or if you wish to call me

at 556-6622.

## TIPS

- Include complete but only relevant details that support your purpose and serve the needs of your readers.
- Prioritize supporting details to meet your readers' needs.



Box 3

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Box 4

## 7. Review Purpose and Deadlines; Add Contact Number

A review will give your readers closure and reemphasize your purpose. Close your document by restating the purpose (do/know) as well as other important information. Include deadlines for action. Other than your contact number, do not add new information.

Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate headquarters building at Fourth and Maple. The decline of this district troubles us, and we feel obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response would mean a savings to taxpayers as well as renewed business development in the downtown district. I will contact you on June 25 to determine the next step, or if you wish to call me before then, my number is 556-6633.

Sincerely,

*Les Hyland*

### TIPS:

- Restate your purpose (do/know) at the end of a long document.
- Include deadlines for action as well as a contact number.

## EXERCISE

Now it's your turn.

Use the Four-Box Format and the following organizational principles to “four-box” your document:

1. Write effective subject lines and titles.
2. Use setups sparingly.
3. Put purpose (do/know) and deadlines up front.
4. Preview key supporting points.
5. Write informative headings.
6. Include complete but only relevant details.
7. Review purpose and deadlines; add contact number.

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NOTES

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Plan  
Design  
**Draft**  
Revise



Customer's  
Needs

# DRAFT YOUR DOCUMENT

*Do One Thing at a Time*

- Follow Drafting Guidelines
- Cool Before You Revise
- Apply Peer-Review Techniques
- Use the *FranklinCovey Style Guide*

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## FOLLOW DRAFTING GUIDELINES

Writing is a creative task. Revising is critical. If you try to do both at the same time, you will do neither well.

Do **not** write and revise at the same time. Use the following guidelines for drafting your documents.

### Drafting Guidelines

## EXERCISE

Use the space on the following pages to draft your workshop document. Refer to the Four-Box Format of your Document Planner to keep yourself focused.

Subject Line/Title:

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## COOL BEFORE YOU REVISE

Let your draft cool for a while. Cooling allows you to see your writing with increased objectivity and some good humor.

Low-hanging branches  
and unsound or unsightly  
branches on trees or  
shrubs designated to  
remain shall be removed  
as directed.

We are pleased with the glowing report you've  
given the Nuclear Refueling Team in your  
annual review of Reactor Operations.

*I like to hike  
and fish in the  
the Rocky Mountains.*

People are slipping and  
falling in the freight  
compartments due to  
their curved bottoms.

**Red tags are for the blind. Please  
do not disturb them.**

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## ACCIDENT REPORT EXAMPLES

Did the writers convey what they intended?

1. The guy was all over the road; I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him.
2. I had been driving my car for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident.
3. The pedestrian had no idea which way to go, so I ran over him.
4. An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my vehicle, and vanished.
5. I collided with a stationary bus coming the other way.
6. If the driver had stopped a few yards behind himself, the accident would not have happened.
7. Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don't have.
8. I was on my way to the doctor with rear-end trouble when my universal joint gave way, causing me to have an accident.

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## USE PEER-REVIEW TECHNIQUES

Peer review is a useful tool in assessing whether or not your document does what you intend. Timing is important in peer review—it should happen early if it is to be effective.

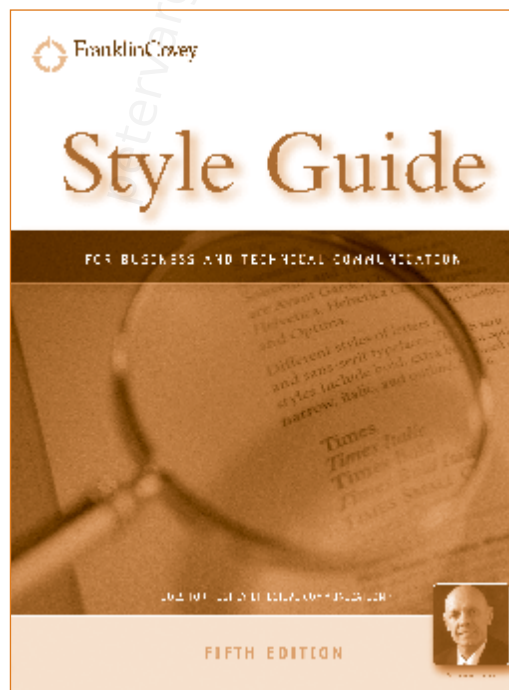
Peer review is most effective when writers and reviewers understand their respective roles.

Peer review should not typically focus on editing. Rather, it should challenge higher-level issues like clarity of purpose, organization, design, etc. (For more information on conducting peer reviews, see “Peer-Review Tips” on page 96 in the Appendix.

## USE THE FRANKLINCOVEY STYLE GUIDE

You will find the *FranklinCovey Style Guide* an invaluable resource as you implement what you have learned today. This style guide provides a number of benefits. It will help you:

- Access information quickly and easily.
- Discover and prioritize information.
- Create documents from start to finish.
- Design documents that reflect quality writing standards.
- Design effective, understandable graphics.



## STYLE GUIDE GAME

For each question, jot down the page number(s) where you found the answer.

1. What kind of information is worth repeating?
2. What is the difference between style and tone?
3. In the following sentences, how do you write the number?
  - a. Where are the five/5 books?
  - b. Meet me at five/5 p.m.
4. How are periods, commas, exclamation marks, and question marks used in relation to quotation marks?
5. What is a bias-free term for “manpower”?
6. When do you use the word “fewer” and when do you use the word “less”?
7. Should the word “data” be used as a singular term or a plural term?
8. When should visuals be introduced in the text?
9. In technical and business writing, how long should sentences be?
10. If a sentence begins with a number, should it be written out or should it be a numeral?
11. Where would you find an explanation for commonly confused words, such as council/counsel or principal/principle?
12. Find a matrix that will help you choose graphics for displaying various kinds of data.
13. What are the main points to remember about appendices and attachments?
14. Is it inappropriate to end a sentence with a preposition?

(Answers on page 89.)

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# REVISE YOUR DOCUMENT

*Revising Is More Than Spelling and Grammar Check*

Revise in three stages:

- Stage 1 Revision: Be Clear
- Stage 2 Revision: Be Concise
- Stage 3 Revision: Be Correct

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## REVISE IN THREE STAGES

**Stage 1 Revision: Be Clear**

**Stage 2 Revision: Be Concise**

**Stage 3 Revision: Be Correct**

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## Stage 1 Revision: Be Clear

At this stage, you ensure that your readers will be able to determine what's important quickly. You check your writing against planning and focusing on:

### *Organization*

Seven Organizational Principles (pages 31–47)

### *Tone/Feel*

- Supports purpose
- Is courteous

### *Design*

- Is based on the Four-Box Format
- Uses a readable layout
  - Readable font style and size
  - Headings, subheadings
  - Lists
  - White space
  - Boldface, underlining, italics, capitals, color
  - Clear visuals with informative captions

### TIPS:

- Stage 1 deals with big-picture issues.
- If your document doesn't hold up at this stage, revisit the Document Planner.



See TONE, EMPHASIS, and PAGE LAYOUT under Index in the style guide.

## Stage 2 Revision: Be Concise

Stage 2 focuses on paragraphs, sentences, and words. You are working to make your document concise by eliminating unnecessary verbiage.

### *Write Effective Paragraphs*

- Use one major idea per paragraph.
- Include the topic in your opening sentence.
- Include lists when possible.
- Keep paragraphs short—six to eight lines maximum.

### *Write Clear Sentences*

- Keep sentences short.
- Use active voice.
- Use strong verbs.
- Avoid false subjects.

### *Simplify Word Usage*

- Avoid gobbledygook.
- Cut wordy phrases.
- Avoid redundant words.
- Solve word problems.



### *Write Effective Paragraphs*

Paragraphs are units of thought. Well-written paragraphs help writers organize their thoughts. They also help readers move through a document quickly and easily.

To write effective paragraphs:

#### **Use one major idea per paragraph.**

Each paragraph should develop only one idea. When you have a new idea, start a new paragraph.

#### **Include the topic in your opening sentence.**

The first sentence in a paragraph should introduce the topic—the main idea. The sentences that follow should develop that idea.

#### **Include lists when possible.**

Lists help readers see and remember “how many” items are important. Use lists to simplify your paragraphs.

#### **Keep paragraphs short—six to eight lines maximum.**

Use a maximum of six lines per paragraph for general readers, and eight for more informed readers. Long paragraphs give readers an excuse to “check out” rather than find the information.



See PARAGRAPHS under Index in the style guide.

*Write Clear Sentences***Keep Sentences Short**

The sentence is the basic unit of thought in language. The best business writers strive to impress readers with precise, clearly stated ideas rather than long-winded sentences.

Long sentences place an unnecessary burden on readers. Effective writers limit sentence length to about 20 words.

The following example demonstrates a failure to communicate because the writer did not state the idea clearly and simply. The passage comes from air-raid instructions written during World War II.

**Such preparations shall be made as will completely obscure all Federal buildings and non-Federal buildings occupied by the Federal Government during an air raid for any period of time from visibility by reason of internal or external illumination. Such obscuration may be obtained either by blackout construction or by termination of the illumination.**

Franklin Roosevelt was so outraged by this piece of bureaucratic obscurity that he ordered the passage rewritten:

**In buildings where you have to keep the work going, put something over the windows; and in buildings where you can let the work stop for a while, turn out the lights.**

See SENTENCES under Index in the style guide.



## Use Active Voice

Use active voice to write clear, concise sentences. Think, “Who/what does what?”

Passive Voice	Active Voice
What was done by whom?	Who/what does what?
The game was won by John. (6 words)	John won the game. (4 words)

In a particular sentence, the passive voice may not be a problem. However, when the passive voice dominates a paragraph or document, it becomes difficult to read and understand.

For example, read the following paragraphs written in the passive voice. In 10 seconds, try to understand what the message is about.

**Incoming message numbers are monitored for those locations that have a sequential numbering system for Plattsville-bound messages. If a missing number is identified, a request is made for a retransmission of this message. Communication problems are identified and solved by termination at these tracked numbers. Identifying a message is also made easier by this system when retransmission are requested due to garbled or incomplete messages.**

**Messages classified as “urgent” are given priority handling. The recipient is advised by telephone that this item is available and an advanced copy is electronically provided, whenever possible.**

Note how much more readable the paragraphs are when they are written in the active voice with a list included:

**This system makes it easier for us to:**

- **Monitor incoming message numbers for locations with sequential numbering systems for Plattsville-bound messages.**
- **Identify missing numbers and request retransmission.**
- **Identify and solve communication problems using the tracked numbers.**
- **Identify messages that need retransmission because they are garbled or incomplete.**

**We give messages classified as “urgent” priority handling. We telephone the recipient to: (1) advise that the item is available, and (2) transmit an advance copy whenever possible.**

See ACTIVE/PASSIVE  
under Index in the  
style guide.



**EXERCISE**

Rewrite these sentences using active voice. Think “who/what does what?” See “Suggested Rewrites” on page 90 for suggested rewrites.

1. The meetings were attended by the training director.
2. The medicine should be taken with food at eight-hour intervals.
3. These items have been discussed with Mr. T. Smith by our operations manager.
4. Beginning December 6, weekly meetings have been scheduled by Product Engineering to be held at 1 p.m. in the Manufacturing Division conference room.
5. Art LeGrange, at 765-4321, may be contacted if further assistance is needed.
6. These amounts are thought to be insignificant in comparison to the totals.
7. Eliminate or reduce the number of times that safety glasses are removed during cleanup.
8. The following is a list of recommendations that were implemented by Janice Kessen, the service engineer.
9. When a work order is completed, please inform your safety supervisor of the date of completion.

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Use Strong Verbs

Our language is filled with verbs that don’t say much, such as am, are, is, was, were, and be. Use strong verbs when you have the opportunity. Keep them in their most simple form.

Not This	This
make an announcement	announce
am in agreement with	agree
am in receipt of	received

EXERCISE, PART A

The following phrases suffer from weak verbs. Make them more forceful and concise by using strong verbs. See “Suggested Rewrites, Part A” on page 90 for suggested rewrites.

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| She made reference to              | Can you make a determination of |
| He has the qualification for       | We gave authorization for       |
| We made an attempt to              | We are in concurrence on        |
| This is a reflection of            | This bears a relation to        |
| She issued a rejection of          | Provide documentation of        |
| Who will be the representative for | Will you make improvements on   |
| Make preparation for               | We came to the realization that |

**EXERCISE, PART B**

Rewrite the following sentences using strong verbs to make them clear and concise. See “Suggested Rewrites, Part B” on page 90 for suggested rewrites.

1. I am in agreement with your decision to make an evaluation of our current policies.
2. I made an evaluation of the problem and provided documentation of the results for headquarters.
3. I have been in contact with Earl Jones of USC&E. According to him, it is the intention of the Cleveland Regional Office to suspend payment immediately.
4. This letter is in response to your inquiry of May 5. If you are in agreement with the provisions set forth below, please so indicate by placing your signature in the space provided below.
5. I am making the assumption that your office will have no objections to the task items listed in the project plan. The plan is a reflection of your recommendations.

See **STRONG VERBS** under Index in the style guide.



## Avoid False Subjects

False subjects (it, there) delay the purpose of your sentences. Avoid using false subjects at the beginning of sentences and phrases.

Not This	This
It is apparent that the report will be late.	Apparently, the report will be late.
There are five people as candidates for one position.	Five people are candidates for one position.

## EXERCISE

Eliminate the false subjects in the following sentences. Make the sentences as clear and concise as possible. See “Suggested Rewrites” on page 91 for answers.

1. Due to higher freeway speeds, it is a fact that more accidents have occurred this year.
2. It is evident that there are too few accountants in your department.
3. With the extension of the scheduled date, there exists the possibility that Engineering may exceed personnel limitations.
4. There have been discussions with several gas suppliers other than OG&E that indicate gas prices will rise next year.
5. It is of the utmost importance that these reports be printed.

See FALSE SUBJECTS under Index in the style guide.





## Simplify Word Usage

Writers often erroneously believe that more complicated language makes them appear more intelligent. Remember, readers are less concerned about the writer's intelligence than they are in their ability to understand and act quickly. Simple word usage usually facilitates their needs best.

## Avoid Gobbledygook

Gobbledygook is language that is so pompous and abstract that it is hard to understand. Some writers are tempted to use long or unfamiliar words to impress readers; however, clarity impresses readers even more.

Not This	This
demonstrate	show
apprise	tell
locate	find
component	part

## EXERCISE

Substitute simpler words for these bureaucratic words. See “Suggested Words” on page 91 for answers.

accordingly	adhere
commence	fabricate
utilization	concur
evacuate	modification
manipulate	sophisticated
perspective	transmit
ramification	initiate
terminate	additional

See  
GOBBLEDY-  
GOOK  
under Index  
in the style  
guide.



Cut Wordy Phrases

Eliminate all unnecessary words to make your writing clear. Avoid wordy phrases.

Not This	This
as a matter of fact	in fact
at regular intervals	regularly
due to the fact that	because

EXERCISE, PART A

This exercise will help you practice identifying and simplifying standard wordy phrases. See “Suggested Simplifications, Part A” on page 92 for answers.

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| afford an opportunity  | is in a position to   |
| all of a sudden        | in most cases         |
| at a later date        | in order to           |
| at that time           | in the absence of     |
| based on the fact that | in the amount of      |
| by way of illustration | despite the fact that |
| during the course of   | it is apparent that   |
| for the purpose of     | for this reason       |
| from time to time      | until such time as    |
|                        | separate into         |
| if that were the case  | two equal parts       |
| in the                 | in the majority       |
| environment of         | of cases              |

**EXERCISE, PART B**

Your style guide lists many common wordy phrases and more concise equivalents. Use the style guide to review the following sentences. See “Suggested Simplifications, Part B” on page 92 for suggested rewrites.

1. Our research personnel are few in number; for this reason, we must actively recruit.
2. In the majority of cases, making changes in corporate culture takes a long period of time.
3. Assuming that Keller joins our research team, we are of the opinion that in excess of 20 of his colleagues might make applications to accompany him.
4. In the absence of a formal offer, Jones will probably give no consideration to verbal assurances, notwithstanding the fact that during the course of our negotiations, he appeared eager to make a decision in the near future.

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See WORDY PHRASES under Index in the style guide.

## Avoid Redundant Words

Avoid redundant words unless you need them for emphasis.

Not This	This
consensus of opinion	consensus
same identical	identical
surround on all sides	surround
a total of ten	ten
true fact	fact

## EXERCISE

Cross out the redundant terms in each of the expressions listed below. See “Suggested Terms” on page 92 for answers.

absolutely essential	hidden pitfall	accidentally stumbled
joint partnership	advance planning	large in size
basic fundamentals	mix together	close proximity
mutual cooperation	completely destroyed	one particular example
contributing factor	past experience	empty cavity
plan ahead	enclosed herewith	postponed until later
end result	same identical	filled to capacity
surprising upset		

See REDUNDANT WORDS and WORD PROBLEMS under Index in the style guide.



## Solve Word Problems

Most of us have word problems—words we confuse or misuse.

**The NAVEL officer said that the long, cigar-shaped object in the western sky was only an optical ALLUSION.**

**Americans take water for GRANITE.**

**My son has been ill and should not take PE. Please EXECUTE him.**

## EXERCISE

Circle the correct word. See “Correct Word” on page 93 for answers.

1. The principle/principal reasons for the selection were availability and low cost.
2. Representatives from seven departments comprise/compose the study team.
3. The advantage of adjacent/adjoining/contiguous properties is ease of access because you don’t need permission to cross property lines.
4. Biannual/Biennial/Semiannual reports are due in January and July.
5. His continual/continuous complaining drives me crazy.
6. The manual should incorporate examples that/which will clarify each concept.
7. Only eminent/imminent writers were invited to attend the symposium.
8. Johnson implied/inferred from my report that I disagreed with Production’s position.
9. We can’t predict what affect/effect the new advertising campaign will have on sales.
10. The training manager asked me to deliver an impromptu/extemporaneous presentation with only five minutes notice.

**Use revising techniques to cut excess verbiage.**

A concise message is a relief to information-overloaded readers. These simple steps will help you use the techniques you have learned to cut unnecessary verbiage.

1. Read the sentence and mark key words.
2. Think “who/what does what?”
3. Rebuild and reorganize the sentence using only key words. Simplify words, if possible.
4. Check the new sentence against the original to ensure the meaning has not changed.

Watch how it's done:

**Read the sentence and mark key words.**

It is fortunate that strategies for the reduction of costs were implemented by the Department of Finance at an early date. (21 words)

**Think “who/what does what?”**

Finance implemented strategies.

**Rebuild and reorganize the sentence using only key words.  
Simplify words, if possible.**

Fortunately, Finance implemented cost-reduction strategies early. (6 words)

**Check the new sentence against the original to ensure the meaning has not changed.**

**EXERCISE**

Rewrite the following paragraphs to cut excess verbiage. See “Suggested Rewrites” on page 93 for suggested rewrites.

1. The effectiveness of the program was assessed by the team charged with maintaining quality assurance. (15 words)
2. It is apparent that somewhere in the neighborhood of 70 percent of an executive’s time is spent in scheduled meetings, while another 10 percent or thereabouts is devoted to holding or participating in meetings that are unscheduled. (37 words)
3. Special emphasis must be given by the staff of the Inspector General to the process of evaluating the question as to whether conducting further investigations might be deemed necessary. (29 words)

### Stage 3 Revision: Be Correct

When you are confident your document meets the criteria for Stages 1 and 2, you are ready to proofread. At this stage, you will focus on the skills of proofreading and accuracy of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

The writers of these headlines should have proofread carefully before making themselves the butt of readers' jokes.

**Great Deal! 2,000 lb. Electric Wench for Sale**

**Squad Helps Dog Bite Victim**

**State Says Cost of Saving Money Too High**

When you are confident that your document meets the criteria for Stages 1 and 2, you are ready to proofread. Be sure to:

- **Check Your Spelling**
- **Check Your Punctuation**
- **Check Your Grammar**

### *Check Your Spelling*

To avoid spelling errors, consider the following suggestions:

- Use a spell checker, but remember that it will not catch all spelling mistakes.
- Use a current dictionary or spelling guide.
- Read words in reverse order to isolate spelling from context.
- Create memory aids to improve your visual spelling memory.

See SPELLING  
under Index in the  
style guide.





## Check Your Punctuation

Follow the punctuation standards for:

- Apostrophes
- Colons
- Commas
- Dashes
- Hyphens
- Quotation marks
- Semicolons

For these and other punctuation concerns, see the “PUNCTUATION” section of the Table of Contents (topical) in the *FranklinCovey Style Guide*.

## Check Your Grammar

Avoid common grammar problems by asking:

- Does your verb agree in number with the subject?
- Have you used the correct verb tense?
- Is your pronoun reference clear?
- Have you used the appropriate pronoun case?
- If appropriate, have you written in complete sentences?
- Have you used dangling or misplaced modifiers?
- Do you have any run-on sentences?



See PUNCTUATION and PARTS OF SPEECH under Contents (Topical) in the style guide.

## EXERCISE

Proofread the following document carefully. Identify spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors that need fixing. A version showing proofreading marks is found on pages 94–95.

## Proofreading Symbols



Delete or take out.



Insert a phrase, word, or punctuation mark.



Transpose letters, words, or phrases.



Move to the right.



Move to the left.



Use capital letter(s).



Use lower case letter(s).



Close up a space.



Add a space.



Make a new paragraph.

June 9, XXXX

Mayor P. L. Smith and City Council

City of Glendale

3968 Elm Street

Glendale, AZ 80611



**Subject; Proposal to lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City**

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal

Please consider Windstream's proposal to leaes the historic Comark Building and to renovate it **at no cost to the taxpayers**. Because wewould like to take occupancy by October 1. We will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questins or to schedule a meeting if necessary

We believe this proposed action would be mutually beneficial. Benefits of such a leaes would:

- renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- increase commercial activity in central city.
- expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

**Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.**

Windstream will leaes the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated for renovation to accomodate city offices however the expense to taxpayers would more than offset any benefit to the city administraiton. Obviously, they are not happy bout these expenses since office space for city officials are available at relatively low cost in surrounding buildings.

**Increase commercial activity in the central city.**

Our proposed research facility would bring many new workers into the central city, an area in need of a commercial boost. Further, other neighborhood businesses would benefit from our presence there. For example, 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the central city, invigorating local businesses.

**Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.**

Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate headquarters building at Fourth and Maple. The decline of this district troubles us and we feel obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response would mean a savings to taxpayers as well as renewed business development in the downtown district. I will contact you on June 25 to determine the next step, or if you wish to call me before then, my number is 626-6633.

Sincerely,



See EDITING and PROOFREADING under Index in the style guide.

## REVISION CHECKLIST

### Revise Your Document in Three Stages

#### 1. Be Clear

##### Organization

- Subject line/title
  - Includes signal word
  - Summarizes do/know
- Setup
  - Is necessary
  - Is short
- Purpose (do/know)
  - Is clear
  - Is up front
  - Includes deadlines
- Preview
  - Supports purpose (do/know)
  - Is prioritized for readers
  - Is parallel
- Headings/subheadings
  - Are informative
  - Are parallel
- Details (content)
  - Are relevant to purpose and readers
  - Are prioritized for readers
  - Are complete
- Review
  - Restates purpose (do/know)
  - Restates deadline
  - Includes contact number

##### Tone (feel)

- Supports purpose
- Is courteous

##### Design

- Is based on Four-Box Format
- Uses emphasis/highlights
  - Readable font style and size
  - Headings, subheadings
  - Lists
  - White space
  - Boldface, underlining, italics
  - capitals, color
  - Clear visuals with informative captions

#### 2. Be Concise

##### Paragraphs

- Use one major idea per paragraph
- Include topic in opening sentence
- Include lists when possible
- Use six lines maximum

##### Sentences

- Keep short
- Use active voice
- Use strong verbs
- Avoid false subjects

##### Words

- Avoid gobbledygook
- Cut wordy phrases
- Avoid redundant words
- Solve word problems

#### 3. Be Correct

##### Spelling

- Use a spell checker
- Use a current dictionary
- Read words in reverse order
- Create memory aids

##### Punctuation

- Check accuracy of:
  - Apostrophes
  - Colons
  - Commas
  - Dashes
  - Hyphens
  - Quotation marks
  - Semicolons

##### Grammar

- Use:
  - Correct subject-verb agreement
  - Correct verb tense
  - Clear pronoun reference
  - Appropriate pronoun case
  - Complete sentences
- Avoid
  - Dangling/misplaced modifiers
  - Run-on sentences

## CONCLUSION

Proactively choosing to use an effective writing process together with an effective tool will help you write well-designed and well-organized documents. By applying quality writing standards and organizational principles, you focus on your readers as customers, and your documents will get read.

## Process



## Tool

The image shows two overlapping forms titled 'DOCUMENT PLANNER'. The left form is 'Plan Your Document' and the right form is 'Design Your Document (Four-Box Format)'. Both forms have sections for 'What I want to accomplish', 'What I want my reader to', 'By when', 'Where', 'How', and 'References (who, what, when)'. The right form also has a section for 'Design Your Document (Four-Box Format)' with three numbered boxes for '1. Topic/Issue', '2. Audience', and '3. Purpose/Goal'. Each box has a list of questions to guide the design process.

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NOTES

*petervarga @ rocketmortgage . com*



# APPENDIX

- Exercise Keys
- Peer-Review Tips

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EXERCISE KEYS

Here are suggested rewrites of e-mail documents A, C, D, and E (pages 5–9).

A

**From:** Cindy Franson  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 14, XXXX 5:08 p.m.  
**To:** Louise Jacobsen  
**Subject:** Recommendation to Upgrade Current Copier or Purchase New Copier with Reduction Capability and Multiple Paper Trays

Louise,

Please consider my recommendation to (1) purchase equipment to upgrade our current copier or (2) purchase a new copier. We badly need reduction capability as well as multiple paper trays to hold a variety of paper sizes. I would appreciate your response by June 25 so we can plan how to distribute our work load starting next month.

Following are the difficulties we are experiencing with our current copier:

- We are losing critical information when we copy on letter-size paper because we do not have reduction capability.
- We are wasting valuable time reloading paper because we do not have multiple paper trays.

**We are losing critical information when we copy on letter-size paper because we do not have reduction capability.**

About 90 percent of our copying could be run on letter-size paper. However, when we put letter-size documents in folders, we lose the top three lines. Further, the paper punch cuts through letters and numbers, making them unreadable. Because most of our reports consist mainly of numbers we need for future referencing, this is unacceptable. Reduction capability on our copier would solve this problem.

**We are wasting valuable time reloading paper because we do not have multiple paper trays.**

The remaining 10 percent of our documents are legal contracts, daily computer reports, and large documents sent over fax, as well as the daily computer reports and large documents transmitted over mailway.

The paper bins in our current copier are too small to hold sufficient paper. We have to refill them three or four times each morning just to copy the drilling reports. We would be much more efficient if we could load paper bins with enough letter-size paper to copy all the reports. We could then add enough legal-size paper in another tray to copy the legal-size documents.

Thank you for considering this recommendation. We desperately need upgrades or new equipment so we don't lose valuable information and waste time reloading paper. Again, your response by June 25 will help us plan our work load. Call me at (201) 655-3465 if I can provide additional information.

Cindy

Subject line begins with signal word and contains important information.

Purpose (do/know) stated clearly in first paragraph. Deadline included.

Key points previewed.

Informative headings state section's main idea.

Complete but only relevant detail is included.

Purpose (do/know) reviewed with deadline and contact number included.

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## C

**From:** John Morrow  
**Sent:** Monday, July 5, XXXX 10:16 a.m.  
**To:** Lou Jacobsen  
**Subject:** Request Reconciliation of Outstanding Warranty Receivables by June 30

---

Subject line begins with a signal word and includes a deadline.

Lou,

Currently you have approximately \$14,000 outstanding in current warranty receivables, leaving \$23,000 in denied, uncorrected, or unposted entries. Please reconcile this problem by June 30 so that you have an accurate picture of where you stand financially.

Purpose (do/know) stated clearly in the first paragraph. Deadline included.

On May 30 Ron Waite (your new service manager) and I reviewed all outstanding warranty claims. Your May financial statement shows \$37,525 in outstanding warranty receivables. Ron and I made the following adjustments:

1. We reconciled as many claims as possible beyond the 30-day correction submission limit.
2. We corrected or appealed many claims beyond the 15-day correction time limit.

List helps readers digest important information quickly.

We have had a difficult time helping you monitor your financials because we have not been receiving your statements in a timely manner. I recognize that your recent turnover in service managers and office personnel has contributed to this problem.

Short paragraphs with relevant detail help readers skim and scan.

I was happy to help Ron this time by sidestepping my normal policy. He has done a good job of handling claims since his arrival and appears to have things well in hand.

Again, please reconcile outstanding warranty receivables by June 30 so that you have good information about your financial status. Let me know if I can help (extension 4345).

Purpose (do/know) reviewed with deadline and contact number included.

Best regards,

John Morrow

D

Subject line begins with a signal word and contains urgent information.

Purpose (do/know) stated clearly in the first paragraph. Deadline is included.

Key points previewed.

Informative headings state section's main idea.

Complete but only relevant detail is included.

Purpose (do/know) reviewed with deadline and contact number included.

**From:** Glenda Johnson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 8, XXXX 2:07 p.m.  
**To:** Lou Jacobsen  
**Subject:** Request Immediate Action to Repair Faulty Brakes on the Subscription Bus Before Someone Is Hurt or Killed

Lou,

Please take immediate action to repair the faulty brakes on the subscription bus. I am very concerned that someone will be hurt or killed if you don't address this problem at once. This serious safety problem has been ongoing for several months despite repeated warnings. I will call you on Thursday, June 12, to find out how and when you will resolve this problem.

Consider the following:

- The bus poses a serious safety hazard.
- The bus is unreliable in providing the service we depend on.

**The bus poses a serious safety hazard**

The brakes on the bus have failed several times in the last two months. The most recent incident occurred two weeks ago when we had to swerve off the road into the construction area on I-249 to avoid hitting cars. Luckily, construction workers were on break, or we would have hit them.

The driver has been complaining about the brakes for a couple of months. I notified Janet early on, and she got back to me the same day to say they were fixed. However, they weren't fixed then, and they are still not fixed today.

**The bus is unreliable in providing the service we depend on**

We depend on the bus to get us to work on time. This morning the driver arrived in a school bus—almost 20 minutes late. To make up the time, he drove like a maniac.

I am currently paying \$93 per month for this service. For my money, I expect safe, reliable service with conveniences like air conditioning and adequate leg room. A school bus lacks those conveniences.

Please, please, please fix the brakes on the subscription bus NOW before someone is hurt or killed. I look forward to our discussion on Friday.

Glenda

## E

**From:** Max Tucker  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, XXXX 4:42 p.m.  
**To:** All Employees  
**Subject:** Notification of New Security Procedures

---

Subject line begins with a signal word.

Recently we have noted several instances where unauthorized cargo has been released to the consignee. To ensure that BZ maintains accountability for all cargo in our possession, we must adopt the following security procedures.

Purpose (do/know) is stated clearly in the first paragraph. Deadline is included.

**Effective this date,** BZ agents must:

1. Escort all consignees who enter the warehouse.
2. Deliver all courier items to consignees at the dock.
3. Conduct all manipulations in the presence of the consignee or broker.
4. Remove all uncleared items from the courier bag and secure the cargo in the cage.
5. Include his/her initials as well as the courier's initials in the log book.

List helps readers quickly understand and remember how many action items are required.

No consignee or broker, under any circumstances, may enter the bonded facility without the escort of a BZ agent. The BZ agent must remain with the visitor for the duration of their business.

Complete but only relevant detail is included.

Although this procedure will delay the delivery of courier bags to the consignee, security demands that we adhere to it without exception.

Thank you for your cooperation. (Call me at extension 4322 if you need clarification.)

Tone is direct but courteous.

Contact number is included.

Max Tucker

**Page 33**  
Write Effective  
Subject Lines and  
Titles

## EXERCISE KEYS

### Suggested Subject Lines

1. Recommendation to Request New Copier in Annual Budget
2. Request for Consideration to Assist in Designing the K38 Pressurization System
3. Request for Presentation of Your Proposal to Hire New Auditors in Management Meeting June 4 at 3 p.m.
4. Request for Review and Edit of Draft Form C82 by July 8

**Page 41**  
Make Previews  
and Lists Parallel

### Suggested Parallel Steps

Step 2. Wear rubber gloves (included).

Step 4. Avoid contact with eyes, cuts, or scratches.

**Page 42**  
Preview Key  
Supporting Points

### Suggested Supporting Points

1. Three benefits of this recommendation are immediately obvious:
  - A decrease in health insurance premiums.
  - An increase in employee morale.
  - Use of a building that now sits vacant and is unsightly.
2. We discovered two safety hazards:
  - An unsound structure that will not meet city codes.
  - Faulty wiring that would be very costly to replace.
3. We recommend including the following equipment in the fitness center:
  - Racquetball courts
  - Aerobics dance room
  - Treadmills, stair-steppers, weight machines, and free weights

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## Suggested Headings

1. Adding auditors would save time, preserve customer relations.
2. Adding auditors would improve accuracy, prevent legal problems.

## Answers to Style Guide Game

1. See REPETITION, Rules 1, 2, 3, and 4; also see Emphasis, Rules 4 and 5.
2. See STYLE AND TONE. Style refers to writing techniques that create tone. Tone refers to the feeling or impression conveyed to the reader.
3. See NUMBERS: a. Rule 2, write out numbers if they are below 10; b. Rule 1, use numerical figures for any number expressing time.
4. See QUOTATION MARKS, Rules 4 and 6. American usage always places periods and commas inside quotation marks. Dashes, exclamation marks, and question marks are placed outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation. Also see BRITISH ENGLISH, Rule 5, for information on punctuation placement in British usage.
5. See BIAS-FREE LANGUAGE, Rule 5. Work force.
6. See WORD PROBLEMS. Use “fewer” for things that can be counted and “less” for mass items that cannot be counted and for abstractions.
7. See PLURALS, Rule 1—note 2. “Data” is now used in both singular and plural forms.
8. See GRAPHICS FOR DOCUMENTS, Rule 5. Introduce graphics in the text before they appear on the page.
9. See SENTENCES, Rule 5. On average, limit sentences to about 20 words.
10. See NUMBERS, Rule 3. Write out numbers that begin sentences.
11. See WORD PROBLEMS.
12. See GRAPHICS FOR DOCUMENTS, Figure 3.
13. See APPENDICES.
14. See PREPOSITIONS, Rule 1. A preposition is a fine word to end a sentence with.

Page 65  
Use Active Voice

Suggested Rewrites

- 1. The training director attended the meetings.
- 2. Take the medicine with food at eight-hour intervals.
- 3. Our operations manager discussed these items with Mr. T. Smith.
- 4. Beginning December 6, Product Engineering has scheduled weekly meetings at 1 p.m. in the Manufacturing Division conference room.
- 5. Contact Art LeGrange at 765-4321 if you need further assistance.
- 6. These amounts seem insignificant compared to the totals.
- 7. Wear safety glasses during cleanup.
- 8. Janice Kessen, the service engineer, implemented the following recommendations.
- 9. Please inform your safety supervisor when you complete a work order.

Page 66  
Use Strong Verbs

Suggested Rewrites, Part A

She referenced...	Can you determine...
He is qualified for...	We authorized...
We attempted to...	We concur on...
This reflects...	This relates/resembles...
She rejected...	Document...
Who will represent...	Will you improve...
Prepare for...	We realized that...

Page 67

Suggested Rewrites, Part B

- 1. I agree with your decision to evaluate our current policies.
- 2. I evaluated the problem and documented the results for headquarters.
- 3. I contacted Earl Jones of USC&E, and he said the Cleveland Regional Office intends to suspend payment immediately.
- 4. This letter responds to your May 5 inquiry. If you agree with the provisions below, please sign your name in the space provided.
- 5. I assume that your office will not object to the task items listed in the project plan. The plan reflects your recommendations.

## Suggested Rewrites

1. Due to higher freeway speeds, more accidents have occurred this year.
2. Evidently, your department lacks accounting personnel.
3. With the schedule date extended, it's possible Engineering may exceed personnel limitations.
4. Discussions with several gas suppliers besides OG&E indicate that gas prices will rise next year.
5. Printing these reports is very important.

## Suggested Words

so	stick, follow
begin	make
use	agree
leave, empty, clear	change
handle	complex
view	send
result	begin
end, fire	more

Page 70  
Cut Wordy Phrases

Suggested Simplifications, Part A

permit/allow	can/may
suddenly	usually
later	to
then	without
due to/because	of/for
for example	although
during	apparently
for/to	because/since
occasionally	until
if so	halve/divide
around/near	usually

Page 71  
Cut Wordy Phrases

Suggested Simplifications, Part B

1. We must actively recruit because we have too few research personnel.
2. Making changes in corporate culture usually takes a long time.
3. If Keller joins our research team, we believe that more than 20 of his colleagues might apply to accompany him.
4. Without a formal offer, Jones is unlikely to consider verbal assurances, regardless of the fact he seemed eager to make a decision during negotiations.

Page 72  
Avoid Redundant Words

Suggested Terms

essential	pitfall	stumbled
partnership	planning	large
fundamentals	mix	close
cooperation	destroyed	one example
factor	experience	cavity
plan	enclosed	postponed
result	identical	filled
upset		



Page 73  
Solve Word  
Problems

### Correct Word

- |                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 1. principal           | 6. that       |
| 2. compose             | 7. eminent    |
| 3. contiguous          | 8. inferred   |
| 4. biannual/semiannual | 9. effect     |
| 5. continuous          | 10. impromptu |

Page 75  
Cut Excess  
Verbiage

### Suggested Rewrites

1. The team charged with quality assurance assessed the program's effectiveness. (10 words)
2. Apparently, about 70 percent of an executive's time is spent in scheduled meetings. About 10 percent is devoted to holding or attending unscheduled meetings. (2 shorter sentences, 24 words)
3. The Inspector General's staff must evaluate whether conducting further investigations is necessary. (12 words)

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## Revised Comark Letter

The following is a correction of the errors in the Wind Stream letter (spelling, grammar, punctuation, and typos) found on pp. 78–79. We found 35 errors.

June 9, XXXX

Mayor P. L. Smith and City Council

City of Glendale

3968 Elm Street

Glendale, AZ 80611



**Subject: Proposal to lease and Renovate Comark Building at No Cost to City**

Last week our president met with council members Lowe and Calanoni. As a result of their discussion, we are submitting this proposal.

Please consider Windstream's proposal to lease the historic Comark Building and to renovate it **at no cost to the taxpayers**. Because we would like to take occupancy by October 1, we will need your decision by August 1. I will contact you on June 25 to answer any questions or to schedule a meeting if necessary.

We believe this proposed action would be mutually beneficial. Benefits of such a lease would:

- renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.
- increase commercial activity in central city.
- expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.

**Renovate a historic structure at private rather than public expense.**

Windstream will lease the property, renovate it, and turn it into a major research facility that would meet our needs as well as add value to the city. The Comark Building is currently slated for renovation to accommodate city offices; however, the expense to taxpayers would more than offset any benefit to the city administration. Obviously, they are not happy about these expenses since office space for city officials is available at relatively low cost in surrounding buildings.

**Increase commercial activity in the central city.**

✓ ☐ Our proposed research facility would bring many new workers into the central city, an area  
 ✓ in need of a commercial boost. Further, other neighborhood businesses would benefit from our  
 ✓ presence there. <sup>rev</sup> For example, 150 Windstream employees would work and shop in the central  
 city, invigorating local businesses.

**Expand Windstream's investment in the economic well-being of the community.**

✓ Windstream has a long-standing investment in the downtown district, with our corporate  
 ✓ headquarters building at Fourth and maple. The decline of this district troubles us and we feel  
 obligated to contribute to its redevelopment.

✓ Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We are confident your favorable response  
 ✓ would mean a savings to taxpayers as well as renewed business development in the downtown  
 district. I will contact you on June 25 to determine the next step, or if you wish to call me before  
 then, my number is 626-6633.

✓ Sincerely,

**Proofreading Symbols**

✂ Delete or take out.

^ Insert a phrase, word, or  
punctuation mark.

~ Transpose letters, words,  
or phrases.

□ Move to the right.

□ Move to the left.

≡ Use capital letter(s).

/ Use lower case letter(s).

○ Close up a space.

# Add a space.

¶ Make a new paragraph.

## PEER-REVIEW TIPS

### For writers:

- Ask for specific critique. What do you want the reviewer to assess? For example:
  - Is the purpose clear and up front?
  - Is the document easy to skim and scan?
  - Are the headings informative?
  - Does the document contain relevant detail?
- Don't be defensive. Don't try to explain the whys of your document. Make a note of each response for later consideration.
- Remember, you have one person's opinion. You are the author. You make the final call (unless you are writing for another person's signature).

### For reviewers:

- Ask the writer to be specific about what you should review.
  - Is the purpose clear?
  - Is organization clear?
  - Is detail complete and relevant to readers?
- Be specific with your feedback. Avoid statements such as "The document is great." Instead, use statements like:
  - "The purpose is clear. I found it right away."
  - "The document was easy to skim and scan."
  - "Use a signal word like 'request' in the subject line."
- State what you like. Most writers have experienced tough reviews that focused only on what was wrong. Writing is a difficult task that deserves positive reinforcement. Help writers understand what they are doing well. Help them build on their strengths. Remember to be specific.
- Suggest a few improvements. Don't overwhelm your peers with too many suggestions. Comment on the areas you were asked to review.
- Critique the writing, not the writer. Focus on the document rather than the writer. Writing improves when egos are taken out of the equation.