**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_RUI\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s Personal English Handbook**

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| **Topic / Question / Main Idea**  **Sentence**  What you need?  Verbs  SVA: subject-verb agreement  Commonly-used nouns un-countable, therefore singular  Keep subjects and verbs close together | **Notes / Details**  Subject, verb, complete thought (otherwise, it’s fragmented)  Weak verbs: go, get  Don’t convert verbs to nouns.  E.g. This paper gives an analysis of the water problem and offers a solution.  Better: this paper analyzes and solves the water problem.  E.g. Software, information, research, equipment, progress, feedback, advice,  Faculty, staff |
| **Summary** | |

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| **Topic / Question / Main Idea**  Prepositions  Use formal academic language  Professional Emails  Subject lines  Greeting  Signature line  Articles  Numbers  Hope vs Wish  It  Words that don’t use:  **Cover letter**  What’s unique about cover letter? | **Notes / Details**  He had a publication **IN** the IEEE journal.  Check **on** something.  Intern **at** Amazon.  I earned an “A” **on** the final exam.  Like 🡪such as  Don’t use ETC.  Respond promptly;  Proofread emails;  Consider audience;  Be polite/friendly;  Don’t send emails you will regret;  Don’t use all capital letters;  Be direct;  Don’t have to a full sentence;  Use Ms. For female;  Never use: to whom it may concern/dear sir/madam;  Your full name;  Your program at Duke;  Use A/AN with singular, countable nouns  \*human is countable  \*AN M.S degree  \*A useful book  Use words for 1-9;  Use numbers for >10;  In general, use HOPE for the future.  Use WISH for future which is likely not possible.  (I wish I could go with you).  It’s a bad word, reader does not know what you refer to  firstly, secondly, thirdly;  besides: it reinforces an argument;  Moreover, what’s more  Unique for each job;  Take 2-3 things from resume and develop them in cover letter; |
| **Summary** | |

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| **Error** | **Type of Error** | **Rule** | **Correction** | **Notes** |
| Before coming to Duke U. | Prof. bio. Doesn’t need transitions |  | Deleted |  |
| Rui is a master student. | style | When you refer to a degree in general, use lower case and ‘s | Rui is a master’s student. | Slides for details |
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