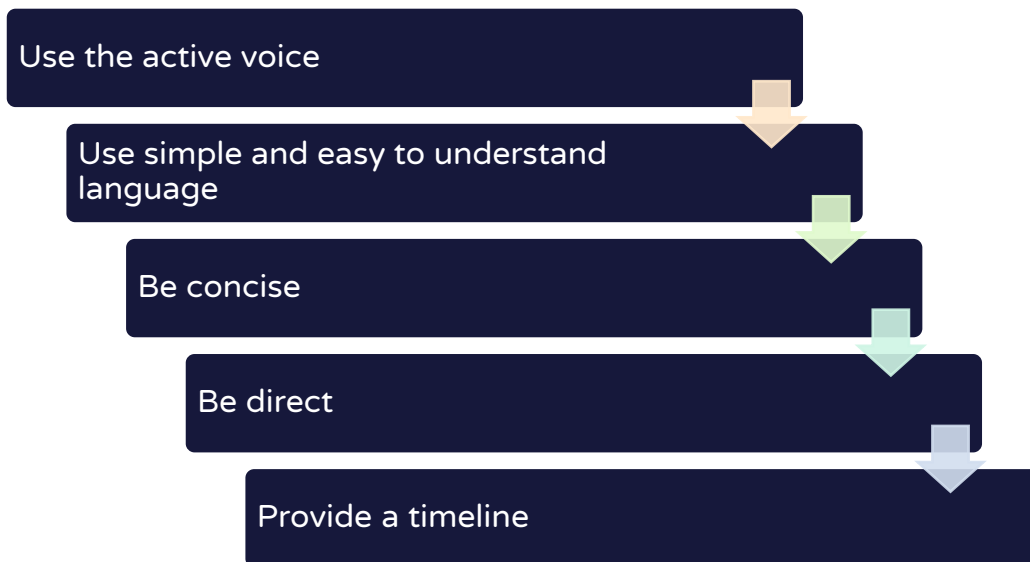


# Improving your written communication in the workplace

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## How to improve your business writing skills



*Use the active voice*

- Place the subject of the sentence before the verb.
- Example: Instead of saying 'The project was completed by Stephen', say 'Stephen completed the project'.

*Use simple and easy to understand language*

- Make sure that what you write will be understood by your readers.
- Avoid jargon - use simple words you know people will understand.

*Be concise*

- Only write as much as is needed to get the point across.
- Ask yourself: 'Can I get the same point across in less words?'
- Remove anything that doesn't add value to your message.

*Be direct*

- Keep your sentences short and direct.
- Don't use tentative language.

*Provide a timeline*

- If you need your audience to do something as a result of your message, be clear about what that is.
- Clearly state what needs to be done, and when it needs to be done by.
- How should they follow up with you once the task is complete?

## How to write with purpose

To inform

To persuade

To express goodwill

### *To inform*

- State the relevant facts.
- Use neutral language.
- Don't be emotive or opinionated.
- Be direct.
- Include enough information for points to be understood.

### *To persuade*

- Provide your reader with the relevant points.
- Convince them to believe your point of view is the best.
- Be positive and compelling.
- How can holding your view benefit the reader?

### *To express goodwill*

- Be sincere, use informal language.
- Be specific, what is the message you are trying to get across?
- Focus on the reader, don't change the topic.

## Writing for your audience

Relationship

Perspective

Knowledge

### *Relationship*

- What is the relationship you have with your reader?
- Do you know them well, or are they someone you haven't met before?
- This will dictate the tone and phrasing used in your message.
- If you're writing to someone you know well, you may use a more informal tone.
- If it is someone you haven't spoken to before, you may use a more professional tone.

### *Perspective*

- What is your reader's perspective on the topic?
- Do they have strong views already? If so, make sure to address these.

### *Knowledge*

- What does your reader already know?
- Do they need additional information to have a better understanding of a topic?
- Depending on their knowledge, you might also alter the language you use.
- More technical language won't make much sense to someone unfamiliar to the topic.

## How to structure your writing

Use a broad-narrow-broad structure

- Broad introduction
  - Start by giving a wide summary of what you will discuss in the text.
  - Make sure the reader knows what to expect.
  - What is your purpose for writing this document?
- Narrow main body paragraphs
  - Each of your paragraphs should make one point/argument.
  - Make your point, and provide evidence to back up this point, whilst further elaborating what this means.
- Broad conclusion
  - Provide an overall summary of the different points that you have discussed.
  - Wrap up all of the points into one main message.

## How to edit and proofread your work



Prevents errors

Ensures content is clear

Proofreading your work prevents careless errors from being made that might make your work seem like it's of a poorer quality.

Editing – making sure that your sentences and paragraphs flow, you've included an appropriate amount of detail, and your argument is well supported.

Proofreading – checking over your grammar, spelling and punctuation, and correcting any mistakes.

## How to review your work

Read your work out loud

Focus on small sections at a time

Read it backwards

Step away and return to it later

### *Read your work out loud*

- By reading your work out loud, you should be able to hear if your sentences flow smoothly.
- Are they too long? Is the vocabulary clear? Does it sound natural?

### *Focus on small sections at a time*

- Rather than looking at your work as a whole, break it down into smaller sections.
- This way, you can focus on each section in more detail.

### *Read it backwards*

- By reading your work backwards, you will have to slow down and pay attention.
- This will make it easier for you to spot any mistakes.

### *Step away and return to it later*

- Sometimes, you might read over something so many times you just can't spot the errors anymore.
- In this case, step away from the work for a while and come back to it with a fresh set of eyes.