

Solid Business Writing

Reasons to Write Well

- Represents your contributions and the importance of a task or project you're working on
- Creates an image with words
- Increases communication
- Represents your level of competence
- Helps to avoid misunderstandings

Ingredients of a Well-Written Document

- Cuts to the chase
- Clear
- Correct
- Conversational
- Easy to read

To Analyze Your Audience Ask:

1. Who will receive the document?
2. What do they need to know about the topic?
3. Why are you writing to them?
4. What questions might they have?
5. Why should they be interested?

What Type of Document Is It?

- **Reports:** Used to communicate the final findings of a project or investigation and are formal documents that provide supporting information. They generally end with a recommended action.
- **Proposals:** When you need to make a request or convince people. Proposals range in length but should be kept as brief as possible.
- **Letters:** When you need to convey information or make a request
- **Memo:** When you need written documentation and a more formal delivery to multiple people.

Ways to Organize a Message

1. Chronological
2. Priority
3. Problem/cause/solution
4. Compare/contrast
5. Advantages/disadvantages

Tips to Increase Readability

1. One point per paragraph
2. Less is best
3. Write like you talk in a business setting
4. Use the best tone to deliver the message
5. Almost always write in an active voice

Got Writer's Block?

- ✓ Start with the facts.
- ✓ Write a chronological document.
- ✓ Write a draft.
- ✓ Collect more information.
- ✓ Beef up your outline.
- ✓ Write your opinions.
- ✓ Write anything!

Always include the answers to these questions:

1. Who?
2. What?
3. Where?
4. When?
5. Why?
6. How?

Netiquette

- Get to the point
- Be nice
- Edit
- Reply
- Don't broadcast

Editing Steps

Step One: Edit

Step one is to edit. Check your content. Check your facts. This means reading the document over to make sure it says exactly what you want it to say. The purpose is to make sure the message is concise, clear, and complete. Nothing more. Also, check the tone of the message at this point.

- Don't rely solely on the spell-check.
- Double-check numbers, dates, and names.
- Ask someone else to read the document.

Step Two: Proofread

Now that you are sure the document says just what you want it to, proofread. Make sure the grammar, punctuation, word choice, and format are in order.

Step Three: Final Check

Does this document best represent you and your work? If yes, fire it off!