

10 simple ways to improve your business writing style

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We define a writer's style through his or her word choice and syntax (the order of words in a sentence). In business writing, we should choose words and sentence structures that convey our messages in the most effective way. The best way to do this is by writing simply and professionally.



Sometimes, our writing can be too monotonous and it ends up boring the reader. Here are 10 simple ways to improve your business writing style:

1. Avoid using the same word at the beginning of every sentence

If you start every sentence in the same way, the reader will stop paying attention.

Do not write: I like my colleagues. I enjoy working for my company. I am happy with my job.

Do write: I am happy with my job. Working for my company, and working with my colleagues, is enjoyable.

2. Avoid repetitive sentence structures

Vary your sentence lengths. Use simple, complex, and compound sentences. If every sentence you write is five words long, your reader will become bored. Read this to see how annoying it can be: [The Importance of Varying Sentence Length](#). Use short sentences and longer sentences to make sure your reader is paying attention.

Do not write: The directors went to the conference. They met with all their counterparts. They had a busy schedule.

Do write: The directors went to the conference. Although they had a busy schedule, they enjoyed meeting their counterparts.

3. Avoid phrases and words that do not sound like you

If you do not say words like 'preposterous' and 'judicious' when you speak, do not include them in your writing.

4. Do not overuse adjectives and adverbs

When you pad your writing with unnecessary modifiers and qualifiers, your reader's attention will wander.

Do not write: He was absolutely, completely and utterly exhausted after the journey.

Do write: He was exhausted after the journey.

5. Avoid slang

Only use slang in direct speech, and only if you are reporting exactly what somebody has said. Even then, it is better to avoid it. It puts readers off.

Do not write: The managers took a break after the director told them to chill at the bar.

Do write: The director asked the managers to take a break and relax at the bar.

6. Avoid overused words

Create lists of alternative words for the ones you use most in your writing. Warning: Do not swap them for more complicated words. Simply have a user-friendly selection of synonyms. (Have a look at [this list](#) for ideas.) The more you write, the more aware you will become of repeating them.

7. Avoid clichés and jargon

Do not use phrases such as 'think outside the box', 'a win-win situation', 'low-hanging fruit', 'touching base', and 'pushing the envelope'. Say what you mean or your readers will become as tired as the expressions you are using.

8. Avoid redundancy and tautology

Do not use superfluous and unnecessary words or statements.

Do not write: I thought to myself.

Do write: I thought.

Do not write: She said it repeatedly, over and over again.

Do write: She repeated it.

Do not write: He was overjoyed and ecstatic to be there.

Do write: He was overjoyed to be there.

9. Avoid wordiness

Do not use too many words if you can say the same thing using fewer words. Do not use big words to show off. This shows your inexperience as a writer. Use the simplest word that gets your message across.

Do not say: Sarah needed to think ahead and plan comprehensively, because she had to make sure of the correctness of every detail, figure and fact, as well as the names of the delegates in order for the conference to run smoothly.

Do say: Sarah needed to plan the conference so that everything ran smoothly.

10. Avoid [acronyms](#), [initialisms](#), and [abbreviations](#)

You may know what COO, B2B, B2C, ERP, and QC mean, but there are many people who have no idea what you are talking about. If you do this, they will waste time looking up the [meanings](#), or they will simply ignore your email.

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