

Business Writing Quick Test Review

Thank you for requesting this preview of editing techniques based on the sample sentences on CommunicationSkillsSuccessTips.com.

Let's compare how you edited the sample sentences with a few of the suggestions I recommend.

One of the important messages I hope you capture from this activity is that, in business writing, you do not only have one correct answer. You have many.

How clearly you understand the purpose of the document and how well you know and focus on your audience, will determine the results of your writing efforts.

As you read my suggested revisions, try to imagine the differing audiences that each approach addressed.

What impact would the revisions have on the audience?

What impact did each sentence have on you?

Would your approach or my approach achieve the desired or expected results.

Sentence # 1

"I am appreciative of all you hard work."

Do you think that way?

Do you talk that way?

Then don't write that way!

I hope you think or talk in a more conversational, non-academic fashion.

I hope you would say, "I appreciate all your hard work."

Now, the sentence sounds like you are writing or talking to a person, not at them. And the sentence is six typing spaces shorter. That saves you time creating and the reader time reading (or skimming or scanning).

Sentence # 2

With this situation, there is involved an apparent reorganization of all fifteen departments in the company.

In Sample Sentence #2 above, please circle the following words: *situation*, *reorganization*, *departments*, *company*. While you still have your pen or pencil in your hand, cross out the two extra words, *there is*. To do that, you have to go all the way

back to the beginning of the sentence and cross out the preposition, *with*. And, cross out the comma. The sentence now reads:

This situation involved an apparent reorganization of all fifteen departments in the company.

Now let me tell you why I asked you to circle those four words in the sentence. You can use any one of those four words as the subject of your sentence. You could say:

This situation involved an apparent reorganization of all fifteen departments in the company.

or,

This reorganization involved all fifteen departments in the company.

or,

All fifteen departments in the company reorganized.

or,

The company reorganized all fifteen departments.

or,

The company reorganized all departments.

With the edited versions, you use less words, focus on the specific picture or message you see in your mind, and you write in a clearer, more conversational manner.

Sentence #3

In a report to the company president, it was disclosed that profits were low and costs of sales were high.

With this sentence, your objective is to make the sentence clearer and more concise. In that sentence above, cross out the words, *it was*. Now, cross out the preposition, *in*. And, cross out the comma. The sentence now reads:

A report to the company president disclosed that profits were low and costs of sales were high.

Now cross out the word, *that*.

A report to the company president disclosed profits were low and costs of sales were high.

Now cross out the Weak Verbs, *were*, and *were*, and rearrange the rest of the words in the sentence to read:

A report to the company president disclosed low profits and high costs of sales.

Now cross out the preposition, *of*, and rearrange the rest of the words in the sentence to read:

A report to the company president disclosed low profits and high sales costs.

Important Note

Remember, in business writing, you must always focus on your purpose and your audience. If your audience for the last example sentence focused on accountants or financial people, you would leave the word *of* in the sentence. The phrases, *cost of sales* and *sales costs*, mean two completely different things to accountants and financial people. That's why you must focus on your audience.

Sentence # 4

Our manager made a recommendation that we sell the returned goods for half price.

This sentence contains a construction I call a **Suffering Suffix**. Writers create **Suffering Suffixes** when they add suffixes such as *ion*, *tion*, *al*, *ment*, *sis*, or *ive* to the end of good, strong, powerful words. The practice sentence contains the noun, *recommendation*. This noun comes from the Strong Verb, *recommend*. Change this sentence to read:

Our manager recommended we sell the returned goods for half price.

When you think of the verb, *make*, what mental picture do you get?

Normally, you would think of an ounce of "this" a dash of "that," and a sprinkle of something else to make your favorite recipe. Or, attach bolt "A" to nut "B" and clamp on brace "C" to make something.

Did the manager make anything? No. What did the manager do? He or she recommended. Give people credit for what they do.

By wiping out the **Suffering Suffix**, you created a clearer, more specific picture and you used 11 words rather than 14.

With 11 words, your sentence becomes clearer, more concise, easier to read, easier to understand, easier to remember and easier to act upon.

Sentence #5

It is therefore incumbent upon all employees to put forth their best efforts to overcome the minor problems that beset our company.

This sentence may have created a challenge for some of you. If you attempted to change it, I applaud you.

Before I share with you the way I would change this sentence, let me ask a couple of questions.

What kind of person or what level of person would be inclined to write a sentence like the above example?

Most of my seminar participants agree that a sentence with a message like the example sentence would most likely be a high level person in an organization. That person would probably be a C.E.O., President, Vice President, or Senior Officer.

Now, I would like to place you in two situations

In the first situation, you come home from work to find a letter or telegram that contains the sentence, "It is therefore incumbent upon all employees to put forth their best efforts to overcome the minor problems that beset our company."

In the second situation, the sentence reads:

I ask all of you to help us get through these difficult times.

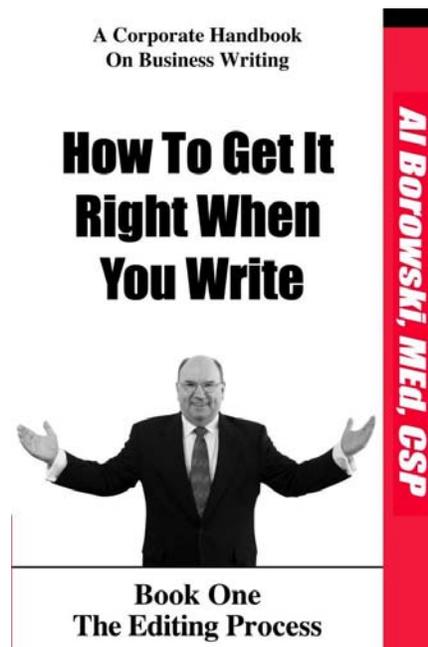
Which sentence would produce positive results for the author? Again, seminar participants agree the second sentence with the simple language and personal tone would get better results.

I hope all of you want to create writing that is more personal. The more you take a personal approach towards your audience, the better your chances of getting positive results.

Well, how did you do?

For more detailed information on [editing techniques](#) please visit

[How To Get It Right When You Write](#)



For more detailed information on [using e-mail as a powerful business tool](#), please visit [**Excellent E-mails - More Than Etiquette - Results**](#)



A quick, clear, easy [reference source to check grammar, punctuation, and formatting](#) for all business writing tasks. A wealth of information. This book should be next to your computer all the time.

[**Gregg Reference Manual**](#)

