

Writing Good Sentences

The most successful businesses today recognize the value of communicating logically and succinctly. Your written communication depends heavily on these techniques because you cannot utilize voice inflection or facial expression to help deliver your message.

Whether you're writing for customers, patients, employees, or stockholders, the structure of your writing must support the logic of your message. Your writing can quickly become lean, active, and positive by eliminating cumbersome words and phrases whenever possible. Use the examples that follow as benchmarks for judging and improving your organization's written communication.

Change passive to active verbs by eliminating:

Any Form of To Be (is, are, was, were, has been)

Replace: It has been our practice to send those experiencing trouble making decisions to leadership training.
With: *We send those who lack decision-making abilities to leadership training.*

There Is, There Are

Replace: There are three reasons for using this approach.
With: *Clinicians use this approach for three reasons.*

Many -ing Verb Endings

Replace: We will be evaluating trace metals in the water supply to the facility.
With: *We will evaluate trace metals in the water supply to the facility.*

It Is

Replace: It is unfortunate that your order was inadvertently shipped to our East Coast office.
With: *We regret having mistakenly shipped your order to our East Coast office.*

Be positive and direct by eliminating:

Not and No

Replace: Not only did your order ship on time, but we have been monitoring delivery daily with the trucking company.
With: *Your order shipped on time, and we monitor its delivery status daily.*

Would and Should

(Unless you may not be able to deliver on a promise, substitute "will" as well as "suggest," "intend to," and "attempt to" whenever possible for "would" and "should.")

Replace: At the next meeting, we should discuss whether you feel that a writing guide would be helpful.
With: *At the next meeting, we will address the merits of using a writing guide.*