

**Business Writing Essentials:  
Master the Basics  
Student Workbook**



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## Overview of the Workshop

The goal of this course is to help you write in a way that's professional, persuasive, and effective. We will be discussing common business writing standards, proofreading, and how to write effectively. You will complete the course with a better understanding of how to be a more compelling communicator and how to eliminate embarrassing mistakes.

## The Importance of Clear Communication

Use the area below to draw your version of the picture as described by the instructor.

## Questions to Ask Yourself

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Tips for Better Business Writing

Your writing must be \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_

1. Use a \_\_\_\_\_ style.
2. Be clear about the \_\_\_\_\_ of your message.
3. Leave out \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Skip the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Cut the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Leave out the \_\_\_\_\_.

### **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

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## 5 Steps for Effective Business Writing

### **Determine your audience**

You will need to consider the level of detail, the tone, formal or informal language, and professionalism.

### **Research and/or Organize**

The emphasis here will vary depending on what you are writing. If you are announcing a staff meeting, you may only need to organize your thoughts. If you are writing a report, you may need to organize research and other materials.

### **Write**

This is where you put all of your thoughts together in an organized fashion.

### **Proofread and edit**

Proofread everything you write. If it is a complex document, ask for assistance. Edit any mistakes you find, and then...

### **Proofread again**

Always proofread one last time before sending out any document.

## Organize

Using the picture from the lecture, write down and organize your thoughts.

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## Write

In Word or another word processing program, write five or six sentences based on your outline that describes the picture.

## Proofreading

1. Why did he aks what tyme it is.
2. Their going to the moovies tonight
3. When I went to the store.
4. We went to the store and we bought soda and chips and came home to watch the video that we rented earlier that afternoon thinking that it would be a good movie.
5. It was nice very of Jim to lend me his car.

## Commonly Misused Words

### Your/You're

On the lines below, write *your* or *you're*, as appropriate.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ new couch will be delivered Thursday.
2. Do you know where \_\_\_\_\_ going to put it?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ welcome.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ book is on the table.
5. I realize \_\_\_\_\_ looking forward to relaxing.

## Its/It's

On the lines below, write *its* or *it's*, as appropriate.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ been a long time since I've visited my grandmother.
2. The dog likes \_\_\_\_\_ new bed.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ raining today.
4. I can't figure out this math problem. \_\_\_\_\_ too hard.
5. The cat was playing with \_\_\_\_\_ toy.

## Their/There/They're

On the lines below, write *their*, *there*, or *they're*, as appropriate.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ are ice cream sandwiches in the freezer.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ melting because the freezer is unplugged.
3. In today's football game, it is \_\_\_\_\_ school against ours.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ tired after \_\_\_\_\_ long trip.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ are several reasons to study business writing.

## Rules of Comma Usage

### **Use commas to set off the elements of a series.**

When there are three or more elements in a list, they should be separated by a comma, including the last two.

If you leave out the last comma, it may change the meaning of the sentence.

*Example: Scott finished his report, ate lunch, and got ready for the meeting.*

### **Use a comma to separate two independent clauses joined by a conjunction.**

Conjunctions are ‘and,’ ‘but,’ and ‘or.’

If the clauses are short, however, you may omit the comma.

*Example: He wanted to eat lunch, but it was time to go to the meeting.*

### **Use a comma to set off introductory phrases.**

*Example: As I was driving to work, I suddenly realized I was going the wrong way.*

### **Use a comma to set off quoted language.**

*Example: “I’ll ask Jim,” said Sally, “if he’s going to the meeting.”*

### **Use a comma to set off parenthetical elements.**

This is added information that, if eliminated, will not change the meaning of the sentence.

*Example: My brother, who lives in New York, opened his own business.*

### **Don’t overuse commas!**