*Reaching Your Readers*

*Business Writing for Managers and Leaders*

****Writing Coach Ken O'Quinn**

[**www.WritingWithClarity.com**](http://www.writingwithclarity.com/)

**Ken@WritingWithClarity.com**

**[207-767-0112](tel:207-767-0112" \t "_blank)**

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**Quick Exercise**

*Rewrite the following sentence:*

It was determined by management that the impact of the construction of the project would be short-term in nature and would result in only a temporary disruption to customer service.

1

## A Framework for Writing

###### **Do the important work before you write the first word**

* Brainstorm: Ask important questions about the writing task so that you have a sense of where you are going.

* Gather sufficient information to write a complete and precise document, and possibly brainstorm again.
* Choose the appropriate format.

**II. Write a draft**

Avoid two common mistakes:

* Don’t repeatedly stop to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. You can’t write and edit at the same time.

Write from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

* Don’t try to make it perfect.

###### **III. Make changes (revise and revise)**

###### **IV. Edit & proofread**

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**Know Where You are Going**

3

**Getting Ready to Write**

**Ask important questions**

* What one thing does the reader \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* What will the reader \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* What do you want \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and is there a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Will the reader have sufficient \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to know immediately what I am talking about?
* How much information \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to understand my point?
* How will the reader react to this message?
* What is the situation?
* Consider your relationship

**Organize Your Thinking**

List the topics you want to cover, and then put them in the order you want to write about them.

When we need to start ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Cost \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

benefits of this approach \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

what we are proposing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

what the problem is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Benefit of brainstorming**

* You will notice immediately what is missing.
* You can arrange topics in the right order.

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**Packaging Your Information for Impact**

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**Craft an Effective Subject Line**

* **Be specific, so you convey meaningful information**

*One- or two-word subject lines are rarely helpful to a reader.*

hello follow-up availability

* **Pay attention to the first few words**

Pretend you are sending an email telling the reader about two things she needs to do before the upcoming project planning meeting. If you like the subject line below, leave it as is. If not, write one that you think is more effective.

Subject: Upcoming meeting

option:

option:

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**Choose the Appropriate Format for the Message**

**The direct approach** – Most email and memos should be organized in one of two ways that take readers directly to the point of the message:

* In an order of most-to-least important.

A) Essential information: details the reader must know

B) Important information

C) Strong information but not quite as important

D) Less important info.

E) Even less important

F) Least important

* In an order of general to specific. Make a statement and then support it with facts.

A) Open with your main point, your conclusion, or your recommendation. (This is considered a general statement.)

B) Explain why and give the benefits of your idea.

C) Present the costs and details about how to proceed.

D) Rebut opposing points of view

**Problem / solution format**

A) Summary paragraph

(This might not be needed if the subject line is specific enough.)

B) Problem

C) Solution

1. Other details
2. Background

**Sequential order** (similar to chronological order but without any dates)

Use this when explaining steps in a process.

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**Packaging a Message for Easy Readability**

**Quick Exercise**

Read the message below and write your own opening sentence:

Joe,

As part of the ongoing expansion project, several departments have submitted renovation plans that exceed $500,000.  My understanding is that any plans that cost more than $500,000 will not be funded. Brian Jones sent me the attached message, and on Page 3, he said that the company is willing to consider projects, even if the cost will exceed a half-million dollars.

Can you please confirm that this is the case? Is it correct that the company will pay for construction that costs more than $500,000?  I’m hoping you can send me a note clarifying this before noon tomorrow.

*Revised opening sentence:*

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**Packaging a Message**

People don’t naturally get to the point quickly. We look for an easy place to begin and gradually arrive at why we are writing.

**Engage readers quickly by opening with highlights**

Begin most messages by encapsulating the key elements in your opening paragraph (usually two to four sentences). That synopsis should contain the most important facts and a detail or two to provide context for why you are writing.

* The summary provides a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of what is ahead. Don’t include many details.
* Mention anything the reader \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to understand the purpose of your message and the context in which you are writing.

*This opening is common:*

The purpose of this message is to bring you up to date and let you know where our team stands with the research. We finished our work this week, and below is a summary, along with our recommendations.

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**Packaging a Message for Readability**

*If you were writing the following message, what would you want your reader to know in the first two or three sentences? Write your own opening:*

Subject: logo

Please find attached the latest version of the proposed new logo for our construction equipment. The plan is still to roll out the look on new products as they are introduced this year and next year, with the BigDig backhoe being the first to display it.

Pam Thompson is gathering feedback from the commercial equipment team, and so far the response has been favorable. Please review the concept and let me know if you have any major issues. Also, please send me a list of problems that might arise from the change, such as outdated brochures and video clips, or complaints from dealers.

The new look has not been finalized or blessed by everyone in the relevant product groups. But I am providing this information to you as a heads-up, so we can manage the issues as we move ahead.

The lettering is much closer to our existing style, and the reflective white letters will stand out during night construction work. With all the products we will introduce this year, this is the right time to change the design.

Again – please do not share these concepts, because they are not approved, but they will give you a good idea of where we are heading with the look. I look forward to receiving your comments by the end of the day, Friday, May 26.

Regards,

Judy

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**Packaging a Message for Readability**

*original version*

To: All managers

From: Pam Sears, HR manager

## Subject: Supervisor Training

# I am excited to announce the third year of the supervisor training program. In connection with our goal of continual improvement in service, we are offering this development experience, which will offer new and relevant tools and techniques for all of our supervisors.

This year’s Supervisor Training will be two full days of site training at the Sheraton Hotel here in the city. The dates of the training are September 18 and October 9.

On September 18 we will cover two subjects. The first will be “Coaching for Peak Performance,” which will address how to deal with difficult situations, dealing effectively with performance issues, conducting performance reviews, how to tactfully challenge processes and procedures, and strategies to take individuals and groups to the next level of performance. The second subject will be “Influencing Skills to Make a Difference,” which will address creating influential networks, how to get things done despite perceptional barriers, how to demonstrate return on investment, and what it takes to demonstrate passion in your everyday work life.

On October 9 we will focus on two subjects, also. The first is “Facilitating Teams and Groups,” which will cover group dynamics and tools to manage small and large group processes, techniques to get good information, and techniques to solve problems and make decisions. The second subject will be “Managing Effective Meetings,” which will deal with preparing rolls, goals, and expectations with a winning agenda, managing difficult people and situations, and following up for results.

Please ensure that your supervisors are given the opportunity to attend this important training experience. Attached is a list of supervisors we will invite to the program. If you have any new supervisory employees you would like to recommend, please contact me by Friday, August 16 at ext. 224. We plan to announce the training on Monday, the 19th. Please remember that your mentoring and coaching is vital to achieving the goals of this training. Thank you for your continued support.

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**Packaging a Message for Readability**

**Use graphic elements, even in daily email**

* Use headings to direct the reader’s attention.
* Use bullets when appropriate, that is, when the information is conducive to a list.
* Create white space: Double space between bullets and between headings and the text underneath.

***revised memo***

## Subject: Supervisor training Sept. 18-19 & Oct. 9-10

# **Summary**

This year’s supervisor training program will be held Sept. 18-19 and Oct. 9-10 at the Sheraton Hotel in Plymouth. The first session will cover *Coaching for Peak Performance* and *Influencing Skills to Make a Difference*; the second day will focus on *Facilitating Teams and Groups* and *Managing Effective Meetings*. Attached is a list of supervisors we plan to invite. If you have others you want to recommend, please call me at ext. 1234 by Friday, Aug. 16. Your mentoring is vital; please ensure that your supervisors attend.

# About the Sept. 18-19 training **(two full days of tools and techniques.)**

* ***Coaching for Performance*** will address how to deal with difficult situations, how to deal effectively with performance issues, how to conduct performance appraisals, and how to use strategies to take people to the next level of performance.
* ***Influencing Skills to Make a Difference*** will explain how to create influential networks, how to get things done despite perceptual barriers, how to demonstrate return on investment, and how to demonstrate passion in your daily work life.

**About the Oct. 9-10 training**

* ***Facilitating Teams and Groups*** will cover group dynamics: tools to manage small and large groups, and techniques to get good information, to solve problems, and to make decisions.
* ***Managing Effective Meetings*** will deal with preparing goals and expectations with a winning agenda, managing difficult people and situations, and following up for results.

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**Handling a Sensitive Topic**

**Take an indirect approach.** – In a routine message, you can tell the reader quickly what the main point is, but when you need to convey information the reader will not find pleasant, you should soften the impact.

1. Open with something that is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Deliver the bad news.
3. Give details explaining why.
4. Provide helpful suggestions to remedy the situation.
5. Close on a positive or encouraging note.

**Use a professional tone -** The more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you are, the more likely you

are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you want.

* If you need to be firm be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
* Don’t be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Tone can affect your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Avoid inflammatory language

**Use *I* or *we* statements** when the situation involves a disagreement, a complaint, a disciplinary matter, or a delicate issue. Using “you” in routine messages is appropriate, but be selective in this type of message.

*How else could you write the following statements?*

You should have included me in the discussion before deciding.

“I received your email with the suggestions, but they seem unrealistic. You overlooked the logistics involved and alternatives that might be less expensive.”

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**Handling a Sensitive Topic – exercise**

*Here is a memo from a marketing manager to a colleague in a different department about planning for a promotional event. Write your own opening two sentences.*

Hi Brad,

I was extremely surprised, and frankly put off by your email to people listing action items we need to deal with. The management of this event is my responsibility, as marketing manager, because it is a customer-focused event, and the funding is coming out of the marketing budget. Having two people manage the process creates confusion and duplication.  
  
I met with the team yesterday to discuss our strategic messages, the invitation list and other details. You didn't attend and didn’t respond to the email announcing the meeting. If you had taken the time to look at it you would have seen that I’ve already explained the action ítems you listed.  
  
Regards,  
Erin  
  
 

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**Creating Clear, Compelling Prose**

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**Keep Paragraphs in Readable Chunks**

*Here is an example of a good paragraph:*

Clean-coal technologies (CCTs) are a key to our survival for two reasons. *They* drastically reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide, and they also tackle a major environmental problem: mercury. *The CCTs* can remove it easily from coal here in Illinois because of the coal’s chemical composition. Two *additional* factors favoring the clean technologies are that prices are dropping and that their performance is improving.

**Key points: unity, cohesion, length**

* **Unity** - A paragraph should discuss one idea. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

A topic sentence can help unify a paragraph (it is not required). It signals to the   
  
reader \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the paragraph.

*Example of a topic sentence*

The CEO’s visit will be challenging, but it also brings opportunities.

* **Cohesion** - Each sentence clearly relates to the previous one.
* **Length** – two to four sentences (generally) or five lines of text.

# # #

**Use visual cues to help the reader breeze through the paragraph:**

* *First, second, third* serve as markers when your topic is broken into elements.
* Pronouns, such as *some, another, that, this, these, those,* *they* at the start link a new idea to the previous sentence.
* Transitional words and phrases show how two sentences are related. *But, however, nevertheless* show a contrast; *furthermore, also, in addition* show you are adding information; and *therefore, as a result,* *consequently* introduce a consequence.

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**Crafting Effective Sentences**

*Here are a few tips for constructing sentences that readers can grasp easily:*

**Understand the key building blocks of the sentence**

S V O

The manager approves all requests.

S V

All requests must be approved by the manager.

S V O

After several interviews, the committee selected her for the job, which requires the experience that she will bring.

**Keep the subject and verb reasonably close to the front of the sentence.**

You can avoid this problem:

From our radio frequency identification (RFID) asset tracking solutions that ensure the proper medication is delivered to the correct patient, to our voice over internet protocol (VoIP) solutions that help nurses stay connected (31), we provide the solutions that keep patients safe.

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**Crafting Effective Sentences** *(continued)*

**Don’t bury strong verbs.** Uncover good verbs that are hiding in nouns.

Example: She provided an explanation of the changes.

Again this year, we have been successful in keeping our fixed costs under control.

She will be providing direct oversight of the research and development effort.

We have recently completed an assessment to understand the prospects for the region.

**Tip:** Be alert for forms of *make, have, do, give, take, perform, provide,* and *conduct.* Look closely and you might find a stronger verb a short distance away.

The company makes a contribution to that charity every year.

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**Crafting Effective Sentences**

**Squeeze out words that do not contribute**

There are a number of factors that affect employee performance.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment …

She is in the process of checking

… so that we can pursue new opportunities going forward

**Beware of redundancies.** When one word is sufficient, leave it alone.

A collaborative team mutual cooperation Positive benefits

**Remove adjectives and adverbs that don’t add to your meaning**

* + The issue is very important.
  + We are extremely pleased
  + This is a really unique opportunity.

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**Sentence Exercise**

*Recast this message to make it more concise without changing the meaning.*

I wanted to let you know that Pam Sears, communications manager, will be leaving the company to pursue other career interests. Her last day will be April 30.

Pam has been with us for more than 10 years as the communications manager. She joined the company with the acquisition of ZipLink in 2005. Pam was very instrumental in the success of that transition.

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Write with Specifics: Help the Reader to “see”

Remove buzzwords, insert examples, and use comparisons to convey what you mean.

**Buzzwords are not useful.** Use words that are more familiar and more specific..

Buzzwords have two problems: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Boring: *leading-edge, win-win, take the discussion offline, leverage*

Vague: *mission-critical, organic growth,* *bandwidth, initiative*

**Think about great speakers.**

Buzzwords are particularly risky in persuasive messages because they don’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Use examples and weave in explanation.**

The project involves twinning, *or laying another pipe*, alongside a 710-mile pipe stretching from Northern Alberta …

Youngsters are at much greater risk of concussion than adults because their brains are not myelinated fully. *Myelin is the coating of nerve fibers, like coating on telephone wire. It adds strength and allows for better transmission along the fibers.*

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*Write with specifics (continued)*

**Use Comparisons**

Metaphors, similes, and analogies enable readers to see similarities between an abstract object or process and something that is familiar.

a slam dunk We need to nail down a date.

In its modern, digital forms, writing resembles *an untended garden, overgrown with text-speak and crawling with invasive species like tweets and dashed-off emails*.

*Similes begin with* **like** *or* **as**

*Like a chocolate bar in the hands of a 2-year-old*, the spilled oil covers everything.

Tata Motors in India introduces the Nano. It’s a tiny car, *like a jellybean with wheels*.

*Here’s a manager describing why many corporate brainstorming sessions don’t work*

“We sit there looking embarrassed, *like we’re all new to a nudist colony*.”

## Put numbers in context

Smith came up with a gap of $70 billion between what was spent for fiber-optic lines and what was warranted by the growth in Internet, data, and phone traffic. *To put that amount in context,* it is four times what Verizon spends each year to ….

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Make Your Mark (.!?,;) With Careful Punctuation

Punctuation is intended as a guide to help the reader understand the sentence and also to help ensure that the reader gets your intended meaning.

*Make whatever changes you think are necessary in the following sentences:*

While working with the mechanics on the job site he studied, asked questions and learned how to read maps.

The New York company’s plan to sell its office empire—which totals more than 100 buildings and some 50 million square feet of space,

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**The Comma**

**Between items in a series.**

We need to buy groceries, mail the package, and stop at my office.

*Note: In a short series (above), the comma before and is optional, but in a longer series, such as the one below, a reader might be confused:*

We have several topics to discuss at the meeting, including the budget, the development of new products and a new startup company that we recently bought.

**Between two independent clauses** (complete thoughts joined by *and, but,* or *or*)

The meeting was productive, **and** I am confident we will win approval.

*When the second clause has no subject, a comma usually is not necessary:*

She *showed* me the proposal **but** *gave* no indication whether she liked it.

**Between multiple adjectives when they appear before a noun.**

Her thoughtful, flexible policies make it an enjoyable, rewarding place to work.

**To set off nonessential clauses and phrases.**

The top-floor conference room, which is our largest, is where we will meet.

**To mark the end of some introductory elements.**

Without the repairs the sites have no way to do …

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**Dash**

**To set off information you want to emphasize**

I am excited about the project—but we cannot make the same mistakes this year.

Her performance late in the year—a remarkable improvement—earned her the award.

**To provide clarity when the sentence already has commas.**

To attract enthusiastic, experienced, ambitious candidates—people who are in demand—we need to offer high salaries, great benefits, and generous leave policies.

**Semicolon**

**To divide independent clauses that are closely related in meaning.**

She will be a good addition to the team**;** we need experience and enthusiasm.

**To divide independent clauses joined by *however, furthermore, consequently,* or *nevertheless*.**

We suggest you sign up now**;** however, you can do it whenever you want to.

We don’t have the budget. It’s a great idea, however**;** we will reconsider it in January.

We don’t have the budget. However, it’s a great idea**;** we will reconsider it in January.

**Colon**

Colons introduce explanatory information or examples. We prefer a complete sentence before the colon, but you don’t need a complete sentence after the colon.

**Use a colon to introduce a series.**

We have several obstacles**:** bad timing, a low budget, and a lack of facilities.

**The Hyphen**

**Hyphens link two words that are being combined to form one adjective.**

A well-known speaker cost-saving tips slow-moving van

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**Punctuation Exercise**

**Make any changes that you think are needed in the following sentences:**

We need more money additional people and new equipment, we don’t need more promises.

The distributor sells propane to restaurants, stations that service propane-fueled cars and other users in four states.

In our company major decision makers have long term contracts.

There will be a temporary disruption of service, however, we will resume normal operations within a few hours.

Do you think you will reach the point where you wonder is this worth it

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**Tips for Being a Persuasive Communicator**

**Analyze your audience**

Too many messages fail because they ignore the audience’s beliefs and attitudes.

People might be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

An important question to ask is, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are they?

**Don’t ask for so much initially**

**Use the consistency principle**

People feel a need to be consistent in two ways:

**Just say thanks!**

**It’s all about the *We***

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An Editing Checklist

Organization

* Will the reader quickly grasp what this is about? Is key information at or near the top?
* Are there any gaping holes where important information is missing?
* Is the information presented in an appropriate order (usually most-to-least important, but not always)?
* Does the information unfold logically from one idea to the next?

Formatting

* Have you used a summary paragraph at the top to capture the highlights of what is in the entire document? (When the message is brief or when you use an indirect entry into the information because the topic is delicate, a summary paragraph might not be appropriate or necessary.)
* Use headlines to guide the reader, and be sure the headlines capture the essence of your meaning in the paragraph(s) underneath.

Paragraphs

* Keep most paragraphs to two-to-four sentences and no more than five lines. Some paragraphs will be longer, some shorter.
* Cover only one idea; don’t drift into a second topic in the same paragraph. Starting with a topic sentence, which introduces the reader to the main idea that you will cover, can help you keep the paragraph focused. Using a topic sentence is not mandatory.

Sentences

* The primary elements of the sentence, the subject and verb, should be positioned near the front of the sentence. Whenever possible, use the active voice (the subject is the actor, followed by the action).
* Remove any words that contribute nothing to your meaning.
* Be precise. Avoid misunderstanding by substituting familiar words for jargon.
* Be conscientious about grammar, punctuation, and correct usage.

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Appendix

*Revised version of memo on Page 8*

Joe,

I would appreciate it if you could send me a note by noon tomorrow clarifying whether the company will consider renovation plans of more than $500,000 as part of the expansion project.

Several departments have submitted proposals to expand their office space, and the cost is more than a half-million dollars. My understanding is that anything over $500,000 will not be funded. But in the attached message (bottom of Page 3), Brian Jones says these projects will be considered.

Thank you for your help.

# # #

***Revised version of the memo on Page 10***

## Subject: Please review logo changes by May 26

Attached—for your eyes only—is the latest version of our proposed new logo. Do not share these drawings because they are not final. Please do two things and get back to me no later than Friday, May 26:

* Review the concept and tell me if you have questions or concerns.
* Send me a list of problems that you think might arise from the change, such as outdated wording or video, and dealer complaints.

We are not distributing these drawings because the concept has not been finalized, but all managers need to be aware of updates so that we can manage the issues in advance as we finish the design and develop the rollout. We plan to introduce the logo on new products in January.

Regards,

# # #

***Revised version of memo on Page 14***

Hi Brad,

I know that we both want to ensure that the WorldExpo is a huge success, and one way to do that is to provide everyone with one clear list of action ítems to avoid confusion.

Given that this is an event for customers, the planning falls on our shoulders in marketing because the funding is coming from the marketing budget. So I am working closely with my team. We discussed the strategic messages, the invitation list, and other details yesterday, and they are clear on what they need to do.

If you have additional suggestions, please send them along, and I will be happy to consider them. I am always open to new ideas.

Regards,

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A Business Writer’s Resource List

* **Send, the Essential Guide to Email**, by N.Y. Times editor David Shipley
* **Management Communication**, James O’Rourke
* **Plain Style** by Richard Lauchman (published by AMACOM)
* **Why Business People Speak Like Idiots** by Brian Fugere
* **Business Writing: What Works and What Won’t**,by Wilma Davidson
* **Writing With Precision,** by Jefferson Bates
* **Put It In Writing** – How to Write Clearly, Quickly, Persuasively, Albert Joseph

# **Reference Books**

* **Little, Brown Handbook**, a simplified, comprehensive book on writing
* **The Grammar Bible**, by Michael Strumpf
* **The Write Way**

by Richard Lederer

A witty, enjoyable book about common writing problems that baffle most business professionals

* **The Associated Press Stylebook**

or the Gregg Reference Manual

or the Chicago Manual of Style

(These style guides are the ones most widely used in business. The AP Stylebook is the single most common resource.)

* **Thesaurus and a hard-cover dictionary**
* **Elements of Style,** Strunk & White
* **Woe Is I,** by Patricia O’Connor. ISBN #0-399-14196-0

“The Grammarphobe’s guide to better English in plain English”

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***Writing With Clarity***

***Corporate Seminars and Individual Coaching***

Ken O’Quinn is a professional writing coach and the author of *Perfect Phrases for Business Letters* (McGraw-Hill). He started *Writing With Clarity* after a journalism career with the Associated Press, and he now conducts workshops around the world. He has helped thousands of business professionals sharpen their writing skills.

His clients include Facebook, GE, Chevron, Dell, Campbell Soup, Oracle, Cisco, KPMG, Sprint, Motorola, 7-11, John Deere, Georgia-Pacific, Best Buy, Reebok, and Raytheon.

Ken speaks at national conferences, and his writing has appeared in major newspapers, in Fast Company magazine, and in such publications as the Harvard Management Communication Letter and the Journal of Employee Communication Management.

He is based in Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

website: www.WritingWithClarity.com

Facebook: www.Facebook.com/WritingWithClarity

LinkedIn: www.LinkedIn.com/KenOQuinn

Twitter: @KenOQuinn

Phone: 207-767-0112

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