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| Inputs to Business Writing  Why?  Who?  What?  What? – Content   * What do I want to happen? * What could stop this happening? * What do I need to provide to avoid this? * What content will achieve the objectives of my writing? | Know your audience   * Background and experience * Authority to make decisions * Preferred communication style * How they like to receive information * Work priorities and pressures * Sensitivities * Micro or macro thinker * Assumptions you can make * Preconceptions they may hold |
| Simple Sentences  Subject-verb  “Mike writes.”  Subject-verb-object  “Mike writes the report.”  Subject-verb-adjective  “Mike writes the initial report.”  Subject-verb-adverb  “Mike writes hastily.”  Subject-verb-noun  “Mike is a writer.” | Word Types   * Noun – a person, place or thing. Nouns may be singular or plural   + “report” and “Mike” * Verb – an action   + “writes” * Adjective – a word that describes a noun   + “initial” * Adverb – a word that describes a verb or words other than a noun   + “hastily” * All sentences contain at least a noun and a verb.   A noun in a sentence may take on one of two roles:   * Subject – the noun or nouns that performs the action (verb) * Object – the noun or nouns that receives the action (verb) |
| Nouns   * Use nouns that people actually say – write how you talk * Don't use an all noun subject line in an email * Use acronyms and company names correctly – if in doubt, check the website or call someone to check * When using acronyms, write the full name first with the acronym in brackets – thereafter, use the acronym * Be specific – specificity adds more energy to a noun, e.g., "dog" vs "toy poodle" * Use gender neutral nouns where it makes sense to do so. If a woman identifies herself as Mrs, Miss or Ms then use that identification, otherwise use Ms | Seven C’s of Writing   * Clear   + What you write makes sense   + The intent is clear * Complete   + Necessary information only   + Exclude the rest * Concise   + Avoid padding   + Brief is best * Correct   + The information is accurate * Concrete   + Avoid the abstract * Conversational   + Use common language as you would in conversation * Connected   + Make an emotional connection to your audience |
| Use Plain Language   * Use active (not passive) voice * Keep word use concise * Never lose sight of the reader * Use a clear and readable tone (conversational) * Maintain a cohesive structure - one part flowing into the next | Tone   * The Context   + Is your tone appropriate to the occasion?   + How formal should you sound? * Authenticity   + Straightforward   + Unpretentious   + Honest * Respectful   + Be courteous   + Never be abrupt, rude or demanding   + Respect cultural differences   + Proofread thoroughly |