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Learning Outcomes

- Discuss strategies to improve clarity in writing

Word selection and phrasing leads to successfully transferring meaning from the sender to the receiver. Careful word selection enhances the writer's reputation and reflects the business's reputation grows.

Think of the advice a home seller receives before an open house. They will often have bread baking or apple cider simmering to create an aroma that makes the house feel more like a home. This small step might help a potential buyer make the right choice. Solid writing skills can have the same effect for the employee. The employee gains respect and appreciation because of writing skills that project credibility and confidence.

Precision

Business communication should be clear, specific, and precise meaning. Work to be accurate and careful with your word choice.

Avoid	Try
Capable of greeting many customers while attending to a multi-line phone.	Capable of greeting 25 customers an hour, while managing incoming phone lines for six district managers.
Your order has been received and will ship shortly.	Order number 1234, received August 1, ships on August 5. You should receive the order on August 8.

Plain Words

When trying to enhance your reputation, it is tempting to want to use complex words in order to sound sophisticated. Unfortunately, using complex vocabulary may obscure your ideas and potentially damage your credibility. Remember the focus of your writing should be on the reader who needs to understand your message.

Instead of focusing on complex words concentrate on expressing accurate content with precise, unambiguous words so that the message is transmitted clearly. Be precise while understandable.

Avoid	Try
The lawyer was trying to obfuscate details during his opening speech.	The lawyer was trying to confuse the details during his opening.
The remuneration the contractor receives is commensurate with the time and materials used.	The pay the contractor receives is equal to the time and materials used.

Lists

Lists can be used in several ways. Working with numbered lists or bulleted lists is a fast way to draw attention to several items. Lists add white space to a document, which helps the reader. They add emphasis because they stand out on the page. Numbered lists are used when order of importance matters.

Avoid	Try	Why
The store needs several items to process the refund for the incorrect billing. If you have the receipt, we'll need that. After you find the receipt, circle the incorrect payment and add the voided check to the envelope. Remember that a stamped return envelope will get your money back more quickly. Please be sure to add that.	To process your refund, the store needs several pieces of documentation. Please do the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find the original receipt 2. Circle the incorrect items 3. Find the voided check 4. Complete a self-address stamped envelope Include all items with your request.	A numbered list provides the correct order and structure for the reader. It creates white space in the message.
When you go to the store, can you remember to get the items I need for my recipe? I forgot to get one orange, eggs for the mix (2), and the red for the icing ,so I'll need one bottle of red food coloring.	At the store, please purchase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one orange • two eggs • one bottle of red food dye 	It's likely the shopper only needs to know what to buy, not why to buy it.

Practice Question

How can this passage be improved for clarity? Select the best improvement.

- ☐ Mr. Angelo and his wife created a sort of shared use property that consisted of a covered camping site on at least enough acres of land for people to go out for the weekend and escape all the close-quarters camping. They want some space for their canines to run around. They want to be far away from other people.

[See this interactive in the course material.](#)

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