

Dangling Modifiers

Modifiers are word or word groups that define or described other words. Since they cannot stand by themselves, they rely, for meaning, on the words they modify.

When modifiers do not logically define or describe anything in a sentence, or when they are unrelated to any word in a sentence, they are called dangling modifiers.

To avoid dangling modifiers you should see to it that your modifiers properly modify the words next to them.

Examples:

Dangling: after reading these examples, the exercises should be done.

Improved: after reading these examples you should do the exercises.

Dangling: standing on the sidewalk, the parade passed by.

Improved: Standing on the sidewalk, I watched the parade pass by.

EXERCISES

A. Recast the faulty sentences

1. Crossing the street, the car sideswiped the old woman.

2. Unless mashed, an infant cannot eat potatoes.

3. While in my room, a knock was heard.

4. After taking a long test, a respite is needed.

5. At the age of ten, my grandmother died.

6. Written with gentle wit and wisdom, the students identified with character.

7. To develop proficiency in the language, practice is needed.

8. The teacher confronted the student, having discovered the plagiarized composition.

9. While sweeping the front yard, a tricycle came.

10. Upon entering the dark room, the stink turned my stomach.

B. If the sentence is correct, write C on the space provided. If the architecture of the sentence is faulty, reconstruct it.

1. Stressing the importance of books like *Noli Me Tangere*, the Chief Librarian urged the students to read.

2. The President cited the group's achievements in conferring the award.

3. Inspecting the building, the protruding steel bars caught the safety engineer's attention.

4. Although tired, the actress signed autographs.

5. Pensive and withdrawn, Nicolas usually sulks in a corner.

6. Reaching the post office, it was already closed.

7. After taking the final test, I thought the worst was over.

8. Having delivered my speech very well, I was given the highest grade in class.

9. Having delivered my speech very well, I was given the highest grade in class.

10. A silver bracelet caught my eye while looking for a Valentine present for my girl.

Coordination

Coordination or Linking is one method of crafting rhetorical sentences. It is the linking of parallel or grammatically similar constructions such as words, phrases, and clauses. The coordinators and, but, for, hence, however, moreover, neither... nor, or, so, therefore, thus, whereas, while, and yet are usually used to join independent clauses or other equal elements in a sentence.

Original

An imam opened the ecumenical celebration.
A priest opened the ecumenical celebration.
A minister opened the ecumenical celebration.

Crafted

An imam, a priest, and a minister opened the inaugural ceremonies.

Original

The sunburned swimmers were tired but happy.

EXERCISES

A. Fill in the blanks with the appropriated coordinating conjunctions. One conjunction may be used than once.

1. Pedrito, make sure you have taken_____the midterm_____the final exam.
2. Since Leonardo had_____pen_____paper, he wasn't allowed to take the quiz.
3. Rainer is good in English_____, he's weak in Math.
4. _____Joan_____Pamela will be crowned Miss University.
5. James took his P.E. I for granted. _____, he had to take it again.
6. Did you say Elvin_____Sarah will be wedded soon?
7. It takes_____guts_____hard work to make it in the business world.
8. My *balikbayan* cousin is modern in her manner of dressing_____she's still conservative when it comes to boy-girl relationship.
9. Susan is_____family-oriented_____her mother.
10. If you want to be successful entrepreneur, you should be willing to take risks._____, you should have a good PR.

B. Compound the sentences, using appropriate linkers and punctuation marks. Observe parallelism.

Model: Have you read the directions carefully? Have you answered all the questions? Have you read the directions carefully and answered all the questions?

1. Do you recommend the speech course? Do you think composition is more important?

2. The construction workers had no safety shoes. They did not have safety hats.

3. I have to answer the questions fast. The test ends in a few minutes.

4. I will pass this examination. I have studied very hard for it.

5. It rains. Our education tour will push through.

Parallel Structure

Rhetorical sentences may be crafted through parallelism in idea and form. **Parallelism** means that the elements which have the same relationship to the sentence as a whole are made to function in the same way, and are expressed in the same grammatical construction. It is a method of achieving sentence unity.

Example

Not parallel

When handling fluorides, you should mean protective devices. Rubber or plastic gauntlets should be used.

Parallel

When handling fluorides, you should wear gauntlets you should use rubber or plastic gauntlets.

Not parallel

Rubber maybe twisted into many shapes, but glass is brittle.

Parallel

Rubber is pliable, but glass is brittl

A. Change the italicized portion to match the structures in the rest of the sentences.

1. Before you can understand either calculus or analytical geometry, *more algebraic technique is needed by you.*
2. The understood value of a normally coefficient must be entered as 1; *enter the coefficient of any missing powers of x as 0.*
3. Automation replaces manpower in some instances, however, *other jobs are created by it.*
4. Inductive reasoning characterizes the research phases of a science and *the observation phases are characterized by deductive reasoning.*
5. An element cannot be formed from simpler substances, *nor someone can decompose it into simpler varieties of matter*
6. Which is worse, to renegade on a promise or *lying?*
7. As the program dragged on, some talked on their seats, some daydreamed, *while others were asleep.*

B. Decide which of the following statements are not well written and tell how they can be improved.

1. His voice is better than Heidi.
2. The rigidity of steel is more than plastic.
3. Glass is an resistant to corrosion as that of porcelain.
4. The higher the temperature, the greater the force.
5. Steam is produced in a boiler and cooled in the condenser.
6. Inferior detergents are far more harmful.

ordiness and Conciseness

As an amateur writer, you may be tempted to write needlessly long sentences (**verbosity** or **wordiness**), or beat around the bush (**circumlocution**). Hence, you should practice conciseness and directness. **Conciseness** is being economical with word and **directness** is being straightforward. If you can make five words do the job of ten words, why use ten words? If you can state your ideas directly, why beat around the bush.

You can achieve conciseness and directness by:

- a. avoiding *jargon* such as the “legalese” used by lawyers;

Wordy: An adult having carnal knowledge of a minor could be charged with statutory rape.

Concise: An adult having sex with a minor could be charged with statutory rape.

- b. avoiding long-handled connectives such as *along the lines of, in order to, in the event that, with reference to*, and the like;

Wordy: At this point in time, let us examine ourselves.

Concise: Now, let us examine ourselves.

- c. selecting a straightforward sentence pattern;

Wordy: In each person are found strengths and weaknesses.

Concise: Each person has strengths and weakness.

- d. condensing modifiers;

Wordy: Mr. Kahlil is a manager who has the tendency to be a slave driver.

Concise: Mr Kahlis is a manager who tends to be a slave driver.

- e. employing *ellipses* which entail the omission of one or more words from a phrase when such omission does not muddle the meaning;

Wordy: Team A scored 112 and Team B garnered 96 points.

Concise: Team A scored 112, and Team B, 96.

- f. using *appositives* which are words, phrases, or clauses which identify, explain, emphasize, clarify, or limit the meaning of the word or words to which they refer.

Wordy: Dr. Maines, who is an internist, specializes in cardiopulmonary medicine.

Concise: Dr. Maines, an internist, specializes in cardio-pulmonary medicine.

EXERCISES

- A. Collaborate with a classmate and condense the wordy expressions on the left column. Some have already been compressed for you.

Wordy	Concise
Along the lines of	
At a later date	later
At the schedule time	
Be cognizant of the fact that	Know
Be desirous of	
Be in agreement with	Agree with
Be in opposition to	Oppose
Be of the belief that	
By means of	Through/with
Due to the fact that	
For the duration of	For
For the length of time that	While
For the period of	
In order to	
In the event that	If
Looks something like	Resembles
Majority of	
Performs the function of	Functions/serve as
Take into consideration	
with reference to	

B. Make each sentence concise by crossing out the unnecessary words. Make no other changes.

1. Nerissa is majoring in English and minoring in the field of mass communication.
2. The HRM students participated and were actively involved in the table setting competition.
3. My dream is to write an autobiography of myself.
4. Some people prefer to live in isolation, away from other human beings.
5. Ballads are classified into two kinds, and these kinds are folk ballads and literary ballads.
6. Ibalon, which is a Bicol epic, was originally in the Spanish Language.
7. The general consensus of opinion is that laboratory facilities should be upgraded.
8. I am certain without an iota of doubt that the SAMAKATUWID party will have a landslide victory in the Student Council elections.
9. A pleasant good morning to each and everyone of you.
10. These items are on sale at bargain prices.

C. Rewrite the following into clear concise sentence.

1. Arrange your test papers systematically in a file.

2. From my own point of view, groupthink is not good for an organization.

3. Many are desirous of working in other countries.

4. A person applying for a job must report for an interview at the schedule time.

5. The Philippine National Red Cross needs people who will donate blood out of their own volition.

6. A Thanksgiving Service will usher in the celebration which lasts for a week.

7. Aunt Pia pays the premiums for her life insurance twice a year.

8. The sliding doors open and close without the need for someone to open and close them.

9. People who live in cosmopolitan areas exposed to the pollution of the air and to the noise pollution everyday.

10. always make sure that you write in capital the first words in your sentences.

- D.** rewrite the paragraph by condensing the underlined phrases or clauses into single words. Use a piece of paper for this activity.

In the next to the first book of Iliad, Zeus sends a dream to Agamemnon, that he can overthrow in battle the Trojans and enter for conquest Troy. During the intervening time, the council of the elders first make a decision that they go home but at a later time, they think of Helen for whom many have lost their lives.

EXERCISES

I. Improve the following deadwood expressions.

Example: at the present time – now

1. Acknowledge receipt of
2. Due to the fact that
3. Hoping to hear from you
4. In the event that
5. With reference to
6. Despite the fact that
7. Are in receipt of
8. At this time
9. Held a meeting
10. In the near future

II. Revise the following sentences using specific words.

1. Damage from the typhoon was significant.
2. I am a college student.
3. Roy lost a fortune in gambling.
4. Many years ago she made good money.
5. My mother is good.

III. Revise the following sentences to make them concise and specific.

1. I wish each and every person who receives this notice and ahs suggestions to make to state what he has to say in the enclosed card, sign it, and drop it in the mail at once, so that I may know his opinion as soon as possible.
2. In compliance with your letter dated sometime last month, we are sending our booklet, "Travel Made Easy". Thanks for the desire you have with regard to our booklet, we remain.
3. We are informing you and I am happy for that, that we open our shopping center on December 7 located at EDSA Central, Mandaluyong City and our well-trained sales ladies stand ready to serve your requirements in our lines.
4. Replying to your recent letter regarding summer courses for 2011, wish to inform you that we are sending you today a copy of our brochure.

IV. Eliminate Redundancies and other errors in the following sentences.

1. We would like to ask you to return back the from enclose herein at your earliest possible convenience.
2. In accordance with your request, we have a consensus of opinion that the washing machine you purchased when you were in our store is at this time still under warranty.
3. Our store offers our clients customers modern up-to-date equipment.
4. The letter was returned back for your signature.
5. In reference to your work that had not been finished as of this date, please be reminded of your contract with us.

V. Revise the following sentences for easy communication.

1. Man's propensity to consume is insatiable.
2. The antiquated typewriters are still functional.
3. Recent capital acquisitions have accentuated the company's current financial crisis.
4. We must terminate all deficit financing.
5. Employment requisites for the company have been enhanced.

VI. Rewrite the following sentences to improve the you-attitude.

1. Will you honor your request.
2. I wish to inform you about our summer sale that begins next week.
3. We hope to have the pleasure of serving you in the near future.
4. We will give you a cash discount of 15% on purchases made before june 10.
5. We quit providing receipts three weeks ago because most customers said that they use their canceled check as a receipt.

TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

The Letter of Inquiry. This is a letter asking for request or information. This is a letter that seeks for help, assistance, or in general asking information about the product manufactured, service rendered, prices, quotations, terms, catalogue, etc. This is also usually a response to an advertisement inviting the reader to write a certain department or division for further information.

Writing Plan for an Inquiry Letter

Opening Directly. The most emphatic positions in a letter are the first and the last sentences. The first sentence of an inquiry letter is usually a question or a polite command. It should be an explanation or justification, unless resistance to the request is expected. When the information requested is likely to be forthcoming, immediately tell the reader what you want. This saves the reader's time and may ensure that the message is read. Begin an information request letter with the most important question or a summarizing statement. The following example poses the most important question first, followed by other questions:

Will the Personality Development seminar on June 30 offer college credit?

How much of the total expenses for this seminar is tax deductible?

If I make reservation and then must cancel, may I receive a refund?

If you want to ask many questions that are equally important, begin with a summarizing statement:

Will you please answer the following questions about the Personality Development seminar in Baguio City.

Notice that the summarizing statement sounds like a question but no question mark. That's because it's really a command disguised as a question. Rather than bluntly demanding information (*Answer the following questions*), we often prefer to soften commands by posing them as questions.

Details in the Body. The body of a letter of inquiry may contain an explanation or a list of questions. Some writers use "high scan factor" (*highlighting techniques*) such as bullets, numbered lists, and boldface print to make main points stand out.

Closing with an Action Request. Use the final paragraph to ask for specific action, to set an end date if appropriate, and to express appreciation. A request for action is most effective when an end date and reason for that date are supplied. It's appropriate to end a request letter with appreciation for the action taken. However, **don't fall into a cliché trap**, such as *Thanking you in advance.*

I remain.... Or the familiar *Thank you for any information you can send me.*

Your appreciation will sound more sincere if you avoid mechanical, tired expressions.

I would appreciate it if you will send me this information by February 14, when I will be reevaluating my entire insurance program.

The Reply Letter. Any reputable organization should adopt the policy of sending replies to inquiries to maintain its public goodwill. Replies should be handled promptly, cheerfully, and competently.

A reply to an inquiry may contain the following information:

First paragraph

Express appreciation for writer's interest in your company, its products, or its services.

Second paragraph

State the information requested cheerfully and if possible, add relevant details.

Third paragraph

Graciously indicate willingness to be of further assistance. You may enclose folders, booklets, or catalogs which might be of value to the reader.

SAMPLE LETTER OF INQUIRY

SYSTEMS TECH

747 J. P. Rizal Avenue
Makati City 8181530

20 February 2003
Ms. Consolacion Opina
Manila Peninsula Hotel
Roxas Boulevard
Manila 85253-4310

Dear Ms. Opina:

Can the Manila Peninsula Hotel provide meeting rooms and accommodations for about 250 Systems Tech sales representatives from May 25 through May 30.

It is my responsibility to locate a hotel that offers both resort and conference facilities appropriate for the summer sales meeting of my company. Please answer these additional questions regarding the Manila Peninsula.

1. Does the hotel have a banquet room that can seat 250?
2. Do you have at least four smaller rooms, each to accommodate a maximum of 75?
3. Do you provide public address systems, audio-visual equipment, and ice water in each meeting room?
4. Do you provide transportation to and from the international and domestic airport?

I will be most grateful for answers to these questions and for any other information you can provide about your resort facilities. May I please have your response by March 15 so that I can meet with our planning committee March 19.

Sincerely yours,



Gary Valenciano
Corporate Travel Department

MF:gdv

THE RESPONSE TO AN INQUIRY

BLOOMS *interiors and design*

1978 New York Street ~~Cubao~~, Quezon City 918-0448

Ms. Belen De ~~Asis~~
P.O. Box 267
Davao City

Dear Ms. De ~~Asis~~

Naturally we are delighted that you are interested in our ~~Narra~~. Thank you for giving us a chance to tell you more about this fine new paneling.

~~Narra~~ is a versatile and highly practical paneling for your kitchen. It will blend beautifully with just about any color or decorating scheme you choose. A striking example of color harmony is illustrated on page 9 of our enclosed booklet. The floor is in Brownstone Red, a new color that is very popular with decorators.

Of course, you are always welcome to write us for any additional information you may need and it is our pleasure to be of further assistance.

Very truly yours,


~~Patema~~ Manalo
Manager