

Business Writing

Guided Notes

This tool is designed to help you actively engage with course material before, during, and after class. They're not about taking perfect notes. They help you process information and remember so that you can later apply your knowledge and build on it.

Before Class: Use the 4R Method

1. **Read:** Select a manageable section of your assigned reading. Depending on your personal preference, this could be one page, one set of Learn It pages, or one topic within the Study Plan.
2. **Recall:** Without referring to the reading, write key terms and concepts in your own words. It's ok to leave blank spaces.
3. **Review:** Return to your reading, compare your notes, and add any missing information.
4. **Repeat:** Continue the process for each subsequent section until you have read, digested, and taken notes on all your assigned reading.

During Class: Bring your notes to every class session

- Add insights from lectures and discussions
- Note connections to business examples
- Ask questions about concepts that need clarification

After Class: Revisit and Reflect

- Spend a few minutes reviewing your notes after class while it's still fresh.
 - Summarize main takeaways in your own words to strengthen your understanding.
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Strategic Messaging in Business Communication

Key Terms

- Downward communication: _____
- Upward communication: _____
- Horizontal communication: _____

Talking across Different Levels

Give an example of each type of communication:

Type	Example
Downward communication	
Upward communication	
Horizontal communication	

Clear and Efficient Communication

The primary purpose of every business communication is to deliver _____

To avoid the back-and-forth of communication you must ensure two things:

1. The sender's idea is _____
2. The communication provides _____

Positive, Negative, and Persuasive Messages

Describe each of the following types of messages and give an example:

Type	Description	Example
Positive message		
Negative message		
Persuasive message		

Think About It

Consider a time when you received a persuasive message that was effective. What elements made it persuasive? How did the sender address your potential concerns?

Remaining questions:

Crafting Effective Messages

Writing for the Reader

You-view refers to: _____

You-view requires the communicator to do two things:

- 1. _____

2. _____

Language as an Obstacle

Define these common language challenges and give an example of each:

Language Challenge	Description	Example
Clichés		
Jargon		
Jargon		
Euphemisms		
Doublespeak		

Think About It

Identify a piece of jargon from your job, major, or a hobby. How would you explain this term to someone who is not familiar with it? Why is it important to be able to translate jargon?

Bias-Free Writing

A rule for bias-free writing is to consider whether _____

Avoiding Gender Bias

Given an example of each type of gendered writing and a neutral alternative:

- Gendered nouns
 - Example: _____
 - Alternative: _____
- Gendered pronouns

- Example: _____
- Alternative: _____

Avoiding Race and Ethnicity Bias

A general rule to follow in a business environment is _____

Avoiding Disability Bias

As a general rule, try to avoid using _____ and use _____ expressions.

Concise Writing

Describe each type of sentence:

Type	Description
Simple sentences	
Compound sentences	
Complex sentences	
Compound-complex sentences	

Using compound and complex sentences is great! However, be sure you are not being overly wordy. As you write and edit, ask yourself whether you are using several words when there's one perfectly good one that would be clear.

Active and Passive Voice

Describe the difference between active voice and passive voice: _____

Business writing is known for being direct and to the point in most situations, so you should favor using _____ voice rather than _____ voice.

If you are trying to avoid calling out a particular individual, one strategy is to de-emphasize the actor or subject in the sentence by using _____ voice.

Clarity

Describe how each of the following can help you communicate with clarity.

Language Choice	Description	Why It Matters
Precision		
Plain words		
Lists		

Parallel Construction

The application of **parallelism** improves writing style and readability, and it makes sentences easier to process.

Parallel construction refers to: _____

How does parallelism help you avoid bias?

Emphasis

Give some examples of ways to use emphasis in communication:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Think About It

Identify a recent business email or message that was unclear to you. What specific issues made it difficult to understand? How could the sender have improved the message to better meet your needs as the reader?

Remaining questions:

The Writing Process

List the three steps of the writing process:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Remember to use **you-view** in planning!

Organizational Structure

All messages contain three or four blocks. Describe each one:

1. **News:** _____
2. **Reasons:** _____
3. **Goodwill and Action:** _____
4. **Buffer:** _____

List the blocks in a **positive** message:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List the blocks in a **negative** message:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Persuasive Messages

List and describe the significance of AIDA in a **positive persuasive message**:

Concept	Why It Matters
A_____	
I_____	
D_____	
A_____	

Describe the considerations when delivering a **negative persuasive message**:

- Context and understanding: _____
- Reasoning and explanation: _____
- Alternatives or compensations: _____
- Moving forward: _____

Writing Skills

Describe the significance of each of the following elements:

Element	Description	Why It Matters
Subject line		
Constructing buffers		
Negative words and tone		
You-view		

The Art of Revising

Revising is _____

In the revising process, the writer does two things:

1. _____
2. _____

Two issues to watch for in proofreading are:

1. _____
2. _____

Think About It

What is your typical revision process? How could you enhance it based on what you've learned in this section?

Formatting Business Messages

Common specifications of the basic letter, memo, or email format are:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Business Letter Format

The most common parts of a business letter in block format include:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Business Memo and Email Format

Describe the significance of the following:

- Subject line: _____
- Bold paragraph headings: _____

Style

Describe each of the following style elements and explain their importance:

Element	Description	Why It Matters
White space		
Lists		
Headings		
Serif vs. sans serif font		

Think About It

How does your typical formatting approach compare to the guidelines presented? What changes might you make?

Remaining questions:

Key Takeaways

Summarize the three most important things you learned in this module:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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