

Leadership Competency Development Guide

Competency Cluster: Fostering a Team Environment



Competency: Communication

Definition: Ability to listen to others and communicates in an effective manner. The ability to communicate ideas, thoughts, and facts in writing. The ability/skill in using correct grammar, correct spelling, sentence and document structure, accepted document formatting, and special literary techniques to communicate a message in writing.

Behavioral Indicators:

- Gives feedback and is receptive to feedback received
- Knows that listening is essential
- Keeps others informed and ensures that feedback that is received is passed to others appropriately
- Uses a variety of methods to ensure information is conveyed
- Ensures error-free communications
- Expresses clear and concise ideas
- Organizes written ideas
- Uses graphics and other aids to clarify ideas

Developmental Activities

Practicing this Competency	Learning from Others	Sample Developmental Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review basic principles of listening, giving and receiving feedback • Practice giving and receiving feedback to staff • Practice summarizing conversations at meetings • Brief staff on meetings/conferences you attend • Outline ideas before writing reports • Use more graphics to clarify ideas • Coach others on using graphics • Ask for challenging assignments that involve oral or written communications • Read books, watch videos, take classes, watch webinars, or talk to experts on communication. (See below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for feedback from your manager/staff/peers on your oral and written skills • Ask a mentor for feedback on a presentation • Shadow a skilled communicator for a day • Find and study examples of well written letters, documents, policies • Ask others to evaluate your meetings or presentations • Observe leaders known for their ability to communicate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By October, I will give a presentation on Budget Change Proposals, asking Bud Smith to mentor me on development of ideas, graphics, and delivery. • During the first week of November, I will ask questions rather than always giving information at meetings. • In December, I will attend a class on Effective Writing Skills. • I will set aside time each week/month to meet individually with staff to discuss their ideas. • At the next staff meeting, I will have the team develop ground rules for effective meetings that we will use in all future meetings.

Leadership Competency Development Guide for Communication

This is not an exclusive list of resources. Please feel free to conduct your own search for more resources related to Communication in civil service.

Resources Index



[Definition, Behavioral Indicators,
Developmental Activities](#)



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Courses On-Line and for a Fee



Courses for a Fee on Communication

[On-Line Courses](#)

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Webinars



Coming Soon!!





Resource Links



Effective Presentations

California State Board of Equalization (BOE)

Preparing for a Presentation

[Presentation Outline](#)

[Planning an Effective Presentation](#)

[Writing a Presentation- Quick Tips](#)

[Rehearsing Your Speech](#)

[Handling Fear](#)

[Speaker Evaluation](#)

Checklists for Presentations

[Presentation Checklist](#)

[Room and Supplies Checklist](#)

[Selecting Speakers Checklist](#)

Presenting Data- Charts, graphs, and tables

[Charts, Graphs and Table Examples](#)

Public Speaking

[Do's and Don'ts Guide](#)

General Resource Links

[Leadership & Management: Communication](#)

Oral Communication

[7 Tactful Communication Strategies](#)

[Improving your Communication Skills](#)

This website offers a great selection of articles to help develop communication skills and become a successful and an effective communicator.

[Toastmasters International](#)

Toastmasters International is a club that develops public speaking and leadership skills through practice and feedback. This club helps individuals become competent and comfortable in front of an audience.

Written Communication

[Getting your Message Across Clearly](#)

This website explains how to improve writing skills and miss common mistakes, so you can communicate effectively with your manager, coworkers, and clients.

Plain language

[Department of Personnel Administration's \(DPA\) Plain Language Style Guide](#) - Please check with your department to see if they have their own style

[Easy-to-Read NYC -New York City's guidelines for clear and effective communication](#) (PDF)

[PlainLanguage.gov](#) - The Federal Government's plain language website

[Uself.com](#) -Writing for the Web

[Silva Rhetoricae](#) - An online guide to the art of rhetoric

Linked Documents





California State Library

Communication Books Available for Checkout

Book Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Call Number
Better Than Perfect: How Gifted Bosses and Great Employees Can Lift the Performance of Those Around Them	Dale Dauten	Career Press	2006	HD53.D377 2006
Breaking the Barrier to Upward Communication: Strategies and Skills for Employees, Managers, and HR Specialists	Thad B. Green, Jay T. Knippen	Quorum Books	1999	HD30.3.G736 1999
Bridging the culture gap : a practical guide to international business communication	Carté, Penny	Kogan Page	2004	HF5389 .C36 2004
Business communication quarterly: a publication of the Association for Business Communication	N/A	The Association	1995	4 03/01/00 CT
Communicating corporate performance : a delicate balance	Brancato, Carolyn Kay	Conference Board	1997	HD56.25 .B73 1997 08/08/97 CT
Communicating effectively in a business setting [microform]	Burt, Lorna	Mercer County Community College, Division of Corporate and Community Programs	1995	ED 1.310/2:388785
Communicating the future	Lucenko, Kristina	Conference Board	1999	HD59 .L834 1999 08/05/99 CT
Communications technology guide for business	Downey, Richard	Artech House	1998	HF5541.T4 D68 1998 03/31/98 CT
Corporate strategies for effective communications	Brothers, Theresa	The Conference Board,	1992	HF5718 .C67 1992 07/15/92 T 06/18/92 CTZ
Effective communication in business	Wolf, Morris Philip	South-Western Pub. Co	1989	HF5718 .W64 1989 02/07/90 CTZ
Effective listening skills	Kratz, Dennis M.	Irwin Professional Pub.	1995	HF5718 .K72 1995
Employee communication during mergers	Ainspan, Nathan D.	Conference Board	2000	HF5549.5.C6 A36 2000 10/19/00 CT

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Book Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Call Number
Energizing performance with communications : a conference report	Garone, Stephen J.	Conference Board	1994	HD30 .E54 1994 01/05/95 CTZ
Fundamentals of business communication	Henson, Carol	South-Western Pub. Co.	1990	HF5718.3 .H46 1990 01/23/90 CTZ
Hook, spin, buzz : how to command attention, change minds & influence people	Soden, Garrett	Peterson's/Pacesetter Books	1995	HF5718 .S636 1995 11/27/95 CTZ
How the way we talk can change the way we work : seven languages for transformation	Kegan, Robert	Jossey-Bass	2001	BF637.C45 K44 2001
How to say it at work : putting yourself across with power words, phrases, body language, and communication secrets	Griffin, Jack	Prentice Hall	1998	HF5718 .G748 1998 11/09/99 CT
How to say it online : everything you need to know to master the new language of cyberspace	Baker, Kim	Prentice Hall Press	2001	HF5718 .B346 2001 04/23/02 CT
Mastering communication through technology	Milrod, Eve	Career Advancement Center	2001	HD30.2 .M546 2001 04/19/02 CT
Move the world : persuade your audience, change minds, and achieve your goals	Brenner, Dean M.	John Wiley & Sons	2007	HF5718 .B73 2007
Skills of workplace communication: a handbook for T&D specialists and their organizations	Picardi, Richard P.	Quorum Books	2001	HF5718.3 .P53 2001
Strategies for success : an administrator's guide to writing	Yerkes, Diane	National Association of Secondary School Principals	1991	HF5726 .Y47 1991 08/24/92 CTZ
The Art of Influence: Persuading Others Begins With You	Chris Widener	Doubleday	2008	BF637.P4W533 2008
The executive's lifetime library of model speeches for every situation	Shelby, Roger	Sharpe Professional	1999	PN6122 .S58 1999 07/21/99 CT
The four styles	Alessandra, Anthony J.	[Learning Communications	2008	HF5718 .F687 2007
The listening leader : powerful new strategies for becoming an influential communicator	Harris, Richard M.	Praeger Publishers	2006	HD30.3 .H3718 2006
The Sourcebook of Nonverbal Measures: Going Beyond Words	Manusov, Valerie Lynn	Lawrence Erlbaum	2005	P99.5.S58 2005



Book Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Call Number
They just don't get it! : changing resistance into understanding	Yerkes, Leslie	Berrett-Koehler	2005	HD30.3.Y47 2005
What managers say, what employees hear : connecting with your front line (so they'll connect with customers)	Maruca, Regina Fazio	Praeger Publishers	2006	HD6971 .W46 2006
Write on! : business writing basics	Watson, Jane	Self-Counsel Press	1996	HF5718.3 .W37 1996 01/23/98 CT





Oral Communication

Book Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Call Number
7 Steps to Fearless Speaking	Wilder, Lilyan	John Wiley & Sons	1999	PN4121.W3865 1999
Coaching and Feedback for Performance	Duke Corporate Education and Sheppard, Blair.	Dearborne Trade	2006	HF5549.5.C53C6 3 2006
Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High	Kerry Patterson	McGraw-Hill	2002	BF637.C45.C78 2002
Effective Listening Skills	M. Kratz, Dennis and Kratz, Abby Robinson	Professional Pub	1995	HF5718.K72 1995
How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation	Kegan, Robert.	Jossey-Bass	2001	BF637.C45 K44 2001
The Art of Focused Conversation: 100 Ways to Access Group Wisdom in the Workplace	Stanfield, Brian	New Society Publishers	2000	HD30.3.A77 2000
The Art of Giving and Receiving Feedback	Poertner, Shirley and Miller, Karen Massetti	Coastal Training Technologies Corporations	1996	HD30.3.P63 1996
The How of WOW: A Guide To Giving A Speech That Will Positively Blow 'Em Away	Carlson, Tony	American Management Association	2005	PN4193.B8C37 2005
The Listening Leader: Powerful New Strategies For Becoming An Influential Communicator	Harris, Richard M.	Praeger Publishers	2006	HD30.3.H3718 2006
The Power of a Positive No: How to say No and still get to Yes	Ury, William	Bantam Books	2007	BF637.N4U795 2007
Turning To One Another: Simple Conversations To Restore Hope To The Future	Wheatley, Margaret J.	Berrett-Koehler Publishers	2002	BD435.W465 2002
Unspeak: How Words Become Weapons, How Weapons Become A Message, And How That Message Becomes Reality	Poole, Steven	Grove	2006	P119.3.P658 2006



Book Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Call Number
What Managers Say, What Employees Hear: Connecting With Your Front Line (So They'll Connect With Customers)	Maruca, Regina Fazio	Praeger Publishers	2006	HD6971.W46 2006





Written Communication

Book Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Call Number
135 Tips for successful business documents	Lindsell-Roberts, Sheryl	Houghton Mifflin Co	2006	HF5726.L57 2006
Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age	Levy, David M.	Arcade Publishing	2001	P214.L48 2001
The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual on style, grammar, usage, and formatting	Sabin, William A.	McGraw-Hill	2005	PE1479.B87S23 2005
The Presenter's EZ Graphics Kit: A Step by Step Guide for the Artistically Challenged to Creating Original and Effective Lettering, Borders, Visuals, and Images for Flip Charts, Overheads, and Presentation Software	Backer, Lori and Deck, Michele	Stylus Pub.	2003	HF5718.22.B32 2003
The write approach: techniques for effective business writing	Stockard, Olivia	Academic Press	1999	HF5718.3.S764 1999
Webster's New World letter writing handbook	Bly, Robert W.	Wiley	2004	PE1483.B58 2004
Write Right!: A desktop digest of punctuation, grammar, and style	Venolia, Jan	Ten Speed Press	2001	PE1112.V4 2001

Academic Journals and Articles On-Line

[23. Try Talking for a Change.](#)

The article offers information on the use of face-to-face communication in the workplace instead of communication through E-mail or instant messaging systems. The benefits of using face-to-face communication are presented, including connections with other employees, understanding nonverbal cues, and developing trust between employees.

Authors: Morella, Michael

Source: *U.S. News & World Report* 147, no. 11 (December 2010): 48.

[ABC's of Supervisory Communication.](#)

The article offers tips to supervisors on communicating with subordinates. Communicating well with subordinates involves an interaction between what supervisors think they said and what their subordinates heard them say. Giving praise for work well done in front of a small group of others greatly contribute to ensuring the individuals feel part of a team and they are contributors to the team's strengths and performance.

Authors: • Protch, Orest

Source: *Supervision* 69, no. 10 (October 2008): 17.

[Body Language: Silent Communicator at the Workplace.](#)

The role of body language in communication is pivotal and unquestionable. Body language comprising of postures, gestures, eye contacts, facial expressions, etc., speaks more than any content delivered verbally. In today's highly competitive environment, an employee spends most of his time at workplace. Out of his experience, he practices self-control and keeps check on his verbal communication. But, body language surpasses all controls and invariably reveals the bare truth. The interpretations of body language differ and thus they may not always necessarily convey the real feelings of an individual. Thus being more sensitive to the need of others—employer, colleagues, customers, etc. – one must improve his/her nonverbal communication. The implications of body language need to be understood by the employer as well as the employees. A better understanding of right body language brings success at workplace and contributes to the growth of the organization. It also opens more avenues of growth at personal and professional front, for the employees of the organization. This paper aims at understanding the role of body language and its

interpretation at workplace. It is an attempt to understand nonverbal cues of individuals employed to enhance positivity at the workplace. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Authors: Kurien, Daisy N.

Source: *IUP Journal of Soft Skills* 4, no. 1/2 (March 2010): 29-36.

[Business Communication Quarterly](#)

Articles, reviews, original research, and news of note on issues of teaching and practice in business communication for members of the Association for Business Communication.

Publisher Information: Association for Business Communication

[Carrying Too Heavy a Load? The Communication and Miscommunication of Emotion by Email.](#)

Despite advice to avoid doing so, email senders intentionally and unintentionally communicate emotion. Email characteristics make miscommunication likely, and I argue that receivers often misinterpret work emails as more emotionally negative or neutral than intended. Drawing on the computer-mediated and nonverbal communication, emotion, and perception literature, I introduce a theoretical framework describing what factors make miscommunication most likely, how emotional miscommunication affects organizations, and how employees can improve the accuracy of emotional communication in emails. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Authors: Byron, Kristin

Source: *Academy of Management Review* 33, no. 2 (April 2008): 309-327.

[Communication in the Workplace: It Pays to Make Business Personal.](#)

The article discusses the importance of open communication in the workplace. According to the author, communication is a key element in the success of a business. He says that promoting communication on all levels and respecting employee opinions are ways of making a business effective. Furthermore, he also provides a list of methods a company can use to communicate with their employees.

Authors: Bonitz, Carl

Source: *Hudson Valley Business Journal* 18, no. 19 (May 7, 2007): 8.

[Effective Body Language for Organizational Success.](#)

It is well-known that body language refers to nonverbal mode of communication. On scientific analysis, it has been found that the different aspects of communication comprise 55% bodily movements and gestures, 38% vocal tone and only 7% words or verbal communication. It is thus clear that about 93% of communication is nonverbal, as many times, words are inadequate. This shows that correct use of body language serves as an effective nonverbal communication tool to convince fellow-workers at workplace, as well as family and friends, eventually leading to overall organizational success through self-development. It further leads to personal and professional growth of an employee, ultimately benefitting the organization. An attempt has, therefore, been made in this paper to discuss the importance, modes and effective use of body language in successful organizational development. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Authors: Rane, D. B.

Source: IUP Journal of Soft Skills 4, no. 4 (December 2010): 17-26.

[Journal of Business Communication](#)

Articles of original research that develops or advances business, managerial or organizational communication theory or knowledge and all conceptual models and descriptive studies that make an important contribution to business communication theory.

Publisher Information: Association for Business Communication

[Leadership Coaching Tip: Preparing for a Difficult Conversation.](#)

The article offers suggestions to get prepared for a difficult conversation in a systematic manner. It is advised to set up three chairs in such a way that two are directly facing each other while the third chair is on the side facing the two others and then sit on one of the chairs facing each other and speak freely what comes to mind without trying to edit anything. It is suggested to set up a good time and place for conversation as the person can listen better if the meeting place is comfortable. It is recommended to pick up the phone or write an electronic mail (email) to create space and time for conversation as well as be clear on what the conversation will be about so that the other person has enough time to prepare.

Authors: Frank, Volker

Source: *Integral Leadership Review* 9, no. 3 (June 2009): 1-4.

[Male and Female Managers' Ability to 'Read' Emotions: Relationships with Supervisor's Performance Ratings and Subordinates' Satisfaction Ratings.](#)

The present study examines the direct and indirect effect of managers' accuracy in 'reading' non-verbal emotional expressions and their supervisors' performance ratings and subordinates' satisfaction with the manager. Data from working managers and their supervisors and subordinates were used to test the study's hypotheses. Although managers' accuracy was not directly related to others' ratings, a significant interactive effect was found: Female but not male managers who more accurately perceived nonverbal emotional expressions received higher performance ratings from their supervisor and higher satisfaction ratings from their subordinates, perhaps due to gender stereotypes prescribing emotional sensitivity to female managers. Furthermore, how managers used emotional information to enhance subordinates' satisfaction varied for female and male managers. Results suggested that male managers who were more accurate at emotion perception received higher satisfaction ratings if they used the information to be more persuasive, whereas more emotionally perceptive female managers received higher satisfaction ratings when they demonstrated more supportiveness. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Authors: Byron, Kristin

Source: *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology* 80, no. 4 (December 2007): 713.

[Meetings That Matter: Conversational Leadership in Today's Organizations.](#)

The article discusses the significance of frequent meetings in an organization. It notes that one of the most critical skill for building a successful sales team is effective communication so that members can participate and become eager to learn to discuss and solve any issue in the organization. Five guidelines for conversations including listening, speaking and suspending judgment are also mentioned.

Authors: Jorgensen, Raymond D.

Source: *Reflections* 10, no. 2 (March 2010): 13-18.

[Strategic Application of Storytelling in Organizations: Toward Effective Communication in a Diverse World.](#)

Internal and external workplace diversity and the technology-induced time constraints of multinational competition make the challenge of improving organizational communication bigger than ever. Narrative paradigm or the "storytelling" theory has been proffered as an effective cross-cultural communication tool, but this article

presents the idea that storytelling goes beyond that and fills the diverse communication needs of today's heterogeneous workforce. It presents a model of storytelling as a complete organizational communication tool, discusses how to effectively apply storytelling in the diverse work environment, and proposes some opportunities for further research. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Authors: Barker, Randolph, and Kim Gower

Source: Journal of Business Communication 47, no. 3 (July 2010): 295-312.

[Using a Language That's Not Your Own: Experiences of Multilingual Employees.](#)

The article presents a conversation between multilingual employees in a U.S.-based English speaking company about their experiences and dilemmas. Examples of the dilemmas they face every day include: not knowing the right word to use; not being understood because of an accent; and being ignored or discounted. They share some suggestions for how companies can support multilingual employees and improve communication across language differences.

Authors: Thompson, Cooper

Source: Diversity Factor 14, no. 2 (Spring2006 2006): 30.

[Workplace Communication.](#)

This article reports the results of a content analysis of the debut season of the reality television show, The Apprentice. All 15 episodes were examined to determine the role that communication competencies played in competitors' success or elimination. Results indicate that the ability to persuade effectively was most critical to winning tasks, but leadership skills and interpersonal skills were the most common sources of praise and criticism from teammates and Donald Trump and his associates. Women appeared to be judged more critically for their interpersonal skills than men, whereas evaluations of men focused primarily on their leadership abilities. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Authors: • Kinnick, Katherine N., and Sabrena R. Parton.

Source: Business Communication Quarterly 68, no. 4 (December 2005): 429-456.



Books Available On-Line

[Absolute Beginner's Guide to Project Management](#) by Greg Horine. Que, 2009

[Chapter 17: Managing Project Communications](#)

[The ACE of Soft Skills: Attitude, Communication and Etiquette for Success](#) by Gopaldaswamy Ramesh and Mahadevan Ramesh, Pearson Education India, 2010

[Part Two: Communication](#)

[The AMA Guide to Management Development](#) by Daniel R. Tobin and Margaret S. Pettingell. AMACOM, 2008

[Oral Communication](#)

[Written Communication](#)

[Beyond the Babble: Leadership Communication that Drives Results](#) by Bob Matha, Macy Boehm, Marcia Silverman. John Wiley & Sons, 2008

[Can Do Writing™: The Proven Ten-Step System for Fast and Effective Business Writing](#) by Daniel Graham and Judith Graham. John Wiley & Sons, 2009

[The First-Time Trainer: A Step-by-Step Quick Guide for Managers, Supervisors, and New Training Professionals](#) by Tom W. Goad. AMACOM, 2010

[How to Give an Effective Presentation](#)

[How the Best Leaders Lead: Proven Secrets to Getting the Most Out of Yourself and Others](#) by Brian Tracy. AMACOM, 2010.

[Chapter 8: Communicate with Power](#)

[Improve Your Business Communication](#) by FT Press Delivers. FT Press, 2010

[Interpersonal Communication Skills in the Workplace](#) by Perry McIntosh; Richard Luecke; Jeffery H. Davis. AMACOM, 2008

[Know What You Don't Know: How Great Leaders Prevent Problems Before They Happen](#) by Michael A. Roberto. Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009

[Chapter 7: Teach How to Talk and Listen](#)

[The New Articulate Executive: Look, Act, and Sound Like a Leader](#) by Granville N. Toogood. McGraw-Hill, 2010

[Real-World Time Management](#) by Roy Alexander and Michael S. Dobson. AMACOM, 2008

[Chapter 12: Communications: Time-Saving Plus or Boring Minus?](#)



[Results through Relationships: Building Trust, Performance, and Profit through People](#) by Joe Takash. John Wiley & Sons, 2008

[Chapter 6: Become an Exceptional Listener](#)



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If you work at a state agency, and if you see screen below, click on START USING SAFARI under “Academic License & Public Library Users”

The screenshot shows the Safari Books Online login interface. At the top left is the 'Safari Books Online' logo, and at the top right is the 'ProQuest' logo. Below the logos is a horizontal bar with 'HOME' on the left and 'Signed Out' on the right. The main content area is titled 'Welcome to Safari Books Online' and contains two columns of options. The left column is for 'PERSONAL & CORPORATE ACCOUNT USERS' with a 'PERSONAL ACCOUNT SIGN IN' button. The right column is for 'ACADEMIC LICENSE & PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS' with a 'START USING SAFARI' button. A red arrow points to the 'START USING SAFARI' button. Below these columns is a paragraph of text describing the service and a link to sign in.

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General Communication

Video Title	Description	Format/ Length	Year	Call Number
Assertive communication skills for professionals: how to communicate powerfully, in a style that's comfortable for you	This series presents step-by-step blueprints for planning assertive reactions and techniques for carrying them out. Explains some easy-to-follow exercises to practice to strengthen assertiveness skills.	CD/4 sound discs/. 3 hr. 32 minutes	2005	RC489.A77 A87 2005
Communication breakdown	Identifies and prescribes a fix for the seven most important communication problems that can derail organizations which include: believing there is one reality, choosing the wrong method, responding defensively, failing to share information, failing to be direct, breaching confidentiality, and failing to listen	DVD/18 minutes	2007	HF5718 .C 6668 2007
Communication intelligence. [Part 1], Business etiquette	Even in today's casual work environment, business etiquette can mean the difference between success and failure. This video is designed to raise awareness and reinforce those social skills so important to teamwork, professionalism, and productivity	DVD/18 minutes	2002	HF5718.C7 34 2002
First impressions: etiquette and work habits for new employees	This video will save your students from common workplace blunders by showing them how to present a polished appearance, use positive body language, and demonstrate a can-do work ethic. Donna Panko, a professional corporate image consultant, shares her knowledge	VHS/22 minutes	2005	HF5389 .F5 7 2005
I Know Just What You Mean: Overcoming Roadblocks to Effective Communication	Discusses patterns commonly encountered in interpersonal communication that make matters more challenging, with suggestions for ways to improve the situations.	DVD/21 minutes	1998	BF637.C45I 56 1998
Listening: The Forgotten Skill.	Managers and other employees spend more than 40 percent of their time listening to other people but often do it so poorly that the result is misunderstood instructions, misdirected projects, and erroneous actions--millions of dollars' worth of mistakes just because most people don't know how to listen. In this new edition of her classic guide to the art of effective listening, Madelyn Burley-Allen teaches people how to acquire active, productive listening skills and put them to work for them--professionally, socially, and personally.	CD/ 6 sound discs/ 6 hours	2007	CD- ROMB875 2007
Meetings under control	This program demonstrates a specific set of skills for controlling meetings to ensure that they achieve intended outcomes efficiently. It discusses objectives and agendas, tangents and distractions, effective time	VHS/15 minutes	1997	HF5734.5 . M448 1997



Video Title	Description	Format/ Length	Year	Call Number
	management, and conflict resolution. Suggests to use the "CONTROL" formula: Convinced, Objectives, Navigate, Time management, Resolve conflict, Outcomes, and List action.			
Start right-- stay right	"Comprehensive training in productivity-enhancing attitudes and behaviors, resulting in better job performance and a healthier bottom line"--Container.	VHS/32 minutes	2005	HF5549.5. C35 S73 2005
Stop the whining [sound recording]	Pattern Research	1 sound cassette : analog, 1 7/8 ips	1999	TAPE W43 st 1999
The communication toolkit	"A library of 39 video clips on various aspects of communication , plus a comprehensive guide for using the clips in a number of innovative ways ... The 39 clips ... are organized into the following communication skill categories: speaking clearly, active listening, nonverbal communication , conflict, difficult conversations, group communication , presentation skills	DVD/71 minutes	2004	HD30.3.C6 51 2004
The Four Styles	In Part 1 of this three-part video program you'll learn about these four behavior styles and what's included in them. Part 2 teaches you how to identify these styles in others. Part 3 talks about how to change your behavior to better communicate with others - what is called being FLEX-able - able to flex out of your style and into the other person's style.	DVD/22 minutes	2007	HF5718.F6 87 2007
Toxic talk: what would you say?	Owen Stewart Performance Resources	1 videodisc/ 9 minutes	2009	HF5718 .T6 95 2009



Oral Communication

Video Title	Description	Format/ Length	Year	Call Number
A Basic Toolkit: Good Manager and Good Employee Skills	This video offers a practical, grounded approach to improving the workplace environment and advancing your career. Debra Wilcox Johnson presents different perspectives to help you gain a mutual understanding of what it means to be both a good supervisor and employee. She will provide you with specific information for improving skills that will both help you advance your career and make your workplace more enjoyable.	VHS/120 minutes	2003	Z682 S64 2003
Communication Nightmares	Covers communicating with coworkers, with maintaining conversations with someone who is defensive, a poor listener, or a discussion dominator. Shows specific examples of how to handle these personality traits, and how to turn that challenging situation into an effective conversation.	VHS/26 minutes	2000	HF 5549.5 C6 C658 2000
Dialogue-Now you're Talking	Explores the Six Basic Rules of Dialogue and provides practical video-based examples and training exercises aimed at helping to implement dialogue in your organization.	VHS & DVD/ Program 1 (25 minutes) Program 2 (24 minutes) Program 3 (21 minutes) Program 4 (24 minutes)	2003	P 90 D53 2003 program 1-2 P 90 D53 2003 program 3-4
Face It! Using Your Face to Sell Your Message	Your face is the tool by which your audience is going to judge your likeability -- and likeability is the key to winning. Learn how to establish likeability and get your message across for maximum impact.	VHS/16 minutes	2002	PLTrnVid B F592.F33 F 33 2002
How to write and deliver great speeches: the Toastmasters international guide to public speaking	This program covers the skills you need for writing and delivering effective presentations, whether you're speaking to a huge auditorium or within the confines of a business meeting or boardroom.	DVD/35 minutes	2006	PN4121.H6 9 2006
I Know Just What You Mean: Overcoming Roadblocks to Effective Communication	Discusses patterns commonly encountered in interpersonal communication that make matters more challenging, with suggestions for ways to improve the situations.	DVD/ 21 minutes	1998	BF637.C45I 56



Video Title	Description	Format/ Length	Year	Call Number
If Looks Could Kill: the power of behavior	It uncovers why an individual can be pleasant to one person, then offensive to another, simply in response to that persons behavior. It shows you how to use positive behavior to unlock the mystery of better service. How people behave when dealing with customers or colleagues can determine the success or failure of each interaction.	DVD/29 minutes	2006	BF 637 C45 I3 2006
Mixing Four Generations in the Workplace	Addresses the conflict between generations in the workplace and how to minimize its negative effects. Provides managers and supervisors with strategies for dealing with, recruiting, retaining, and motivating, using the generational differences in a positive way. The generations are: Matures, born prior to 1946; the Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964; the Generation Xers, born between 1965 and 1980; the New Millennials, born after 1980.	DVD/34 minutes	2007	HF5549.5. M5 M59 2007
Negaholics: How to Handle Negativity in the Workplace	If phrases like 'That'll never work,' 'I just can't do it,' and 'Things are terrible around here' sound all too familiar, chances are that you deal with Negaholics on a regular basis. Individuals who are addicted to negative behavior and negative thinking can slow projects to a grinding halt, destroy team spirit, spread their poisonous attitudes throughout the workplace – and make life miserable for people who have to work with them. This video provides you with some powerful tools and strategies that can transform negative attitudes into positive behaviors.	VHS/ Three 60 minute videos	1999	HF5548.8 N44 1999
Power of Words	A video to be used as an opener for training in communication, diversity, and teamwork.	VHS/3 minutes	1992	HF5549. 5 C6 P68 1992
Talking 9 to 5: Women and Men in the Workplace	Discusses how understanding conversational gender differences in style can improve communication in the workplace.	VHS/30 minutes	1995	HD30.3T34 1995
Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities	A video demonstrating the proper way to communicate with people with disabilities.	VHS/26 minutes	2007, 1994	BTBL.HV15 53.T46 1994
When I say No, I Feel Guilty	Discusses how to implement methods to make managers and customer service representatives more assertive and less easily irritated and manipulated.	VHS/30 minutes	2008	BF575.A85. W54 1991
Yes or No: Choosing Success Sooner	Encourages people to make more successful choices and reduce the stress through the use of the five "yes" and "no" questions.	VHS/26 minutes	1994	HD30. 23.Y47 1994
You're not Listening	Help employees find out why they are not listening, and what they can do about it.	VHS/19 minutes	1991	BF323.L5.Y 618 1991





Written Communication

Video Title	Description	Format/Length	Year	Call Number
Business Writing: Getting Started	Based on the work of business writing consultant Shelley Krantz, shows how to overcome the hard part of getting started with business writing, and presents four fundamental steps for clearer, more concise business writing.	VHS/19 minutes	1990	HF5718 B87 1990
Power Writing: The Key to Success	Discusses writing techniques that communicate ideas clearly and succinctly.	VHS/39 minutes	1990	HF5718.P69 1990
Proofreading & Editing Skills: How to Achieve Total Accuracy in Written Communication	Volume 1: Perfect Proofreading Volume 2: Grammar and Punctuation Volume 3: Spelling and Usage	VHS/ Vol. 1: 1 hour, 13 minutes; Vol. 2: 1 hour; Vol. 3: 50 minutes	1992	Z254 S64 1992
Report Writing	Report writing is overlooked as a necessary skill in many organizations. Report Writing examines six easy steps to ensure that every report that is written will get the attention it deserves.	VHS/20 minutes	1993	HF5719 R47 1993



Podcasts

[**Beyond Words: Communicate with Actions and Attitude**](#) — Does your communication style rely solely on what you say? Learn how to use actions and attitudes to communicate more effectively.

[**iTunes University Free Downloads**](#)



ENGL 106: Written Business Communication - Gray



The University Writing Center - Handouts



On-Line Courses on Communication

California Virtual Campus

The California Virtual Campus is an online site to help individuals find long distance learning throughout California. Their course catalog helps individuals find online courses that are available at the various California Schools.

Phone Number: (530) 879-4085

Online Contact: <http://www.cvc.edu/contact/>

OTech - Training & Event Center, HALO (High Achievement Learning Organization) "Office Desk Courses"

HALO (High Achievement Learning Organization) delivers thousands of online courses and resources to your employees in a connected collaborative environment. With HALO, users can receive training and discuss best practices around specific content. OTech brings you HALO through the LearningPASS program, which offers other training services at deep discounts and no contracts.

Phone Number: (916) 464-7547

Email: training@state.ca.gov

- Advanced Business Writing (2 lessons)
- Basics of Effective Communication (9 lessons)
- Communicating across Cultures (2 lessons)
- Communicating Clearly (4 lessons)
- Communication Techniques (5 lessons)
- Dynamic Business Presentations (1 lesson)
- Grammar Essentials (12 lessons)
- Effective Business Writing (2 lessons)
- Effective Listening Skills (1 lesson)
- Effective Presentations (3 lessons)
- Persuasive Business Writing (1 lesson)
- Presentations Skills (6 lessons)
- Presenting Your Ideas Effectively (4 lessons)
- Presenting Successful Training for Non-Training Professionals (2 lessons)
- Using data to Communicate (2 lessons)
- Writing Effective Emails (1 lesson)



Instructor-Led Courses on Communication

[College of Continuing Education, California State University Sacramento \(CSUS\)](#)

The College of Continuing Education at CSUS provides workshops, courses, training programs, and seminars to help adults enhance their careers and improve their job skills.

Phone Number: (916) 278-4433

On-line contact: http://www.cce.csus.edu/general_info/contactus.htm

- Communications (1 day)
- Effective Presentations (2 days)
- Interpersonal Communication (1 day)
- Leadership Communication (1 day)

[Centre For Organizational Effectiveness](#)

The Centre For Organizational Effectiveness provides academies and programs on management, organizational development, specialized leadership development, and training programs.

Phone Number: (858) 534-9119

Online Contact: <http://www.tcfoe.com/contact.html>

Email: info@tcfoe.com

- Communication & Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (4 hours)
- Communication and Strengths Deployment Inventory (4 hours)
- Coaching for Improved Performance (4 hours)
- Effective Communication & Conflict Resolution (4 hours)
- Facilitation Skills and Meeting Effectiveness (4 hours)

[Cooperative Personnel Services \(CPS\)](#)

CPS specializes in training public sector employees and meeting staff needs for each organization. CPS offers certificate programs to help employees advance in their careers.

Phone Number: (916) 263-3614 Option 3

Email: trainingcenter@cps.ca.gov

- Administrative Writing (2 days)
- Business Writing (1 day)
- Communicating Effectively (1 day)
- Communicating with Data (1 day)
- Conflict Management (1 day)



- Dealing with Difficult People (1 day)
- Effective Listening (1 day)
- Effective Presentations (2 days)
- ESL Grammar and Writing Skills (2 days)
- Franklin Covey's Writing Advantage (2 days)
- Grammar (3 days)
- Grammar and Punctuation Brush-Up (1 day)
- Influence with Integrity (1 day)
- Interpersonal Skills (2 days)
- Persuasive Communications (1 day)
- Plain Language Writing (1 day)
- Relationship Strategies for the Workplace (1 day)
- Technical Report Writing (3 days)
- Writing Letters and Memos (1 day)
- Writing Principles for Professionals (1 day)
- Written Communication Skills (4 days)

Folsom Lake College, Public Management and Nonprofit Organizational Management Certificate

Folsom Lake College has been developing Career Technology Programs that are designed to help individuals use real world skills and utilize those skills in the workplace.

Website: [Career Technology Programs](#)

Phone Number: (916) 608-6687

Online Contact: http://www.flc.losrios.edu/Contact_Us.htm

- Business Communications (Bus 310) (3 units)

Los Rios Community College District, Business and Economic Development Center (BEDC)

BEDC offers training at their worksite in Sacramento and at the employer's worksite. BEDC will customize training to meet the employer's needs.

Phone Number: (916) 563-3230

Email: WinnerB@losrios.edu

- Assertive Communication (1/2 day)
- Communicate Congruently (1 day of Leadership Skills Workshop)
- Communication Skills for Technical Managers (1 day)
- Effective Communications (1-3 days)
- Interpersonal Communications (2 days)
- Listening Skills (1 day)
- Planning and Writing Effective Publications (1 day)

- Professional Business Grammar (1 day)
- Writing Excellent Letters, Memos, and Emails (1 day)
- Writing for the Web (1 day)
- Writing Skills for Public Agency Employees (1 to 3 days)
- Writing When English is your Second Language (1 day)

[OTech Training Center](#)

The Office of Technology Services (OTech) Training & Event Center provides professional low-cost information systems, business professional development and management training to state, federal, and local government agencies.

Phone Number: (916) 739-7502

Email: Training@state.ca.gov

- Effective Communications (2 days)
- Listening Skills (1 day)
- Presentation Skills (1 day)

[State Personnel Board \(SPB\)](#)

State Personnel Board offers training courses that range from Upward Mobility, to the Analyst Series Certification, Supervisory Training, Equal Opportunity Academy, and more.

Phone Number: (916) 653-2085

Email: tp@spb.ca.gov

- Presentation Skills (2 days)
- Writing for Analysts (2 days)

7 Tactful Communication Strategies

T-A-C-T-F-U-L Strategy:



- T = Think before you speak**
- A = Apologize quickly when you blunder**
- C = Converse, don't compete**
- T = Time your comments**
- F = Focus on behavior - not on personality**
- U = Uncover hidden feelings**
- L = Listen for feedback**

Do's and Don'ts:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DO be direct, courteous and calm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DON'T be rude or pushy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DO spare others your unsolicited advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DON'T be patronizing, superior or sarcastic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DO acknowledge that what works for you may not work for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DON'T make personal attacks or insinuations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DO say main points first, then offer more details if necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DON'T expect others to follow your advice or always agree with you.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DO listen for hidden feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DON'T suggest changes that a person cannot easily make.

Presentation Outline

“The art of writing is the art of applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair.” –Mary Heaton Vorse



Outlining Your Points

Why should you outline? Why not just start writing your speech? There are many good reasons why you should make an outline, such as:

- An outline is an overview of your entire speech. You can see if your main ideas and points are in order and complete.
- Outlines let you see *at a glance* if you've forgotten anything important.
- Outlining is a crucial step in clarifying ideas.
- The outline gives you a visual image of the main ideas of your speech.
- Reviewing your outline helps you familiarize yourself with how your speech is organized.
- Instead of reading from a written speech, use your outline the day you present. You will sound more natural identifying key points from your outline rather than reading straight from your written speech.

Types of Outlines

Usually there are three types of outlines used for public speaking, which are:

1. *Full-text outlines* describe the speech in complete sentences.
2. *Key word outlines* use important words and phrases to sketch the speech's contents.
3. *Note card outlines* are main points listed chronologically on 3" x 5" cards. This type of outline works best in informal speaking situations that don't require a fully written speech. Also, they work well for experienced speakers.

Outline Organization Patterns

There are many organization patterns to help your speech flow in a logical manner, such as:

Topical – Use this pattern when you have several ideas to present and it seems natural for one idea to precede the other. This is one of the most common types of patterns, and it is especially useful for informative and entertaining speeches.

Chronological – This pattern uses time sequence from a framework. It is useful in informative and persuasive speeches, both of which require background information.

Spatial – This pattern organizes material according to physical space. You may use spatial order in informative and entertaining speeches involving physical space or location.

Classification – This type of speech puts things into categories. You can use this pattern for persuasive speeches, informative speeches, and entertaining speeches.

Problem/Solution – The first part of the speech outlines a problem and the second part describes its effect. This pattern is used mostly for persuasive speeches.

Outline Organization

When you outline, use a consistent system of letters and numbers, subordinate ideas and supporting points. Also, remember to keep the following in mind when writing your outline:

Topic – What are you speaking about?

Purpose – What type of speech are you presenting – persuasive, humorous, or informative?

Audience – What type of group are you presenting to?

Goal – What do you want the audience to learn from you?

The skeleton of your ideas begins with your topic and purpose. Remember that the body of your speech will contain at least three main ideas. The main ideas will support the topic and purpose. For each main idea, you should provide supporting information or examples.

The introduction and the conclusion should also be included in the outline.

An introduction should:

- get the audience's attention
- introduce the topic
- show the importance of the topic
- present the thesis
- forecast the major ideas

The conclusion should:

- inform the audience that you are about to close
- summarize the major ideas
- leave the audience with an idea to remember

Additional Information

There are many different ways to make an outline. A sample outline is provided below. For additional samples, see the chapter “Time to Outline,” in the book *The Complete Idiot’s Guide To Public Speaking*, Laurie Rozakis, Ph.D., Alpha Books (second edition).



Sample Presentation Outline

Title: _____

I. Introduction

- A. Grab your audience's attention
- B. State your topic and purpose
- C. Preview your speech

II. Body

A. Main Idea

- 1. Support Information
- 2. Support Information

B. Idea 2

- 1. Support Information
- 2. Support Information

C. Idea 3

- 1. Support Information
- 2. Support Information

III. Conclusion (closing statement)

- A. Restate your main idea
- B. Add a memorable conclusion
- C. Thank the audience



Planning an Effective Presentation



“The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.” –**Albert Einstein**

Planning for a Presentation

The best advice anyone can give you about preparing for a speech or presentation is “**Don’t wait until the very last minute to work on your presentation.**” Get an early start on your presentation. You may still be changing it at the last minute. The more time you spend preparing for your presentation, the more you will know your material, and the more confident you will feel.

Planning is the key to an effective presentation. Use available resources including the Internet to research the topic you will be speaking about. Gather examples and other materials you can use. Collect possible handout materials on the topic.

Most presentations follow the same organizational pattern of:

- “Tell them what you’re going to tell them”
- “Tell them” and
- “Tell them what you told them”

In other words, start with an introduction, including an agenda or set of objectives for the presentation. Provide the information on each of the agenda items or goals with supporting information for each point. Summarize the “agenda” or set of goals. This will give you credibility and provides a road map for your audience so they don’t get lost. Consider using the following standard public speaking model: situation, purpose, audience, and method (**SPAM**) to help you prepare your speech:

Situation – What time (morning, afternoon, evening) will you give the presentation and what is the location like?

Purpose – What do you want to accomplish from this presentation?

Audience – What do you know about your audience?

Method – What method will best accomplish the purpose?

Five Steps to Planning Your Presentation

There are five steps to organizing an effective presentation. These steps assist you in organizing a presentation and recognizing the vital elements that contribute to its success.

STEP 1

Analyze your audience. Analyzing your audience means to put yourself in the shoes of the people who will be listening to your presentation. To help you analyze your audience, use the “Know Your Audience” section of the **Presentation Checklist**. The following are six helpful tips (*The Overnight Guide to Public Speaking*, by Dale Carnegie, June 1990, Mass Market Paperback) the audience wants to hear from you in your speech:

1. I will not waste your time.
2. I know who you are.
3. I am well organized.
4. I know my subject.
5. Here is my most important point.
6. I am finished.

STEP 2

Determine your objective or the goal of your message. Is it to inform, persuade, or entertain?

Informative

An informative speech provides new information about a familiar subject or information on a new subject. The information should be new to your audience.

Persuasive

A persuasive speech is intended to change the audience’s attitudes or behaviors. This type of speech is often about controversial subjects.

Entertaining

An entertaining speech simply tries to gain and keep the audience’s attention. Listeners will have a good time and be amused or interested by the speech.

STEP 3

Plan and organize the body of the presentation. The body focuses on the topic’s main sections and key points. Always build support for your points. Remember, ideas do not stand alone. They must be illustrated and supported before they will be heard, understood, and accepted. Here are some key types of support:

Figures – numerical representation of facts (but use rounded numbers).

Statistics – factual relationship based on figures.

Facts – statements about present or past realities that are verifiable, either by direct observation or third party support.

Anecdote – a story or experience used to demonstrate a point but not necessarily to prove it.

Example/Illustration – representative object or incident that proves or clarifies a general statement.

Authority – a reliable, recognized source cited to support your point.

Analogy – a set of similar conditions described to shed light on the subject.

STEP 4

The conclusion always returns the audience back to material in your introduction. It restates the main points covered during your introduction without adding any new material. The conclusion also lets the audience know that your speech is ending. As a rule of thumb, the conclusion should be no more than 10% of the presentation.

STEP 5

Lastly, develop your introduction. The introduction is a very important part of your presentation. Spend time in developing an interesting opening because often a presentation is won or lost within the first minutes. As a rule of thumb, the introduction should take no more than 10% of the presentation. This is when the attention is focused on the speaker and when the audience is most receptive. The introduction should capture the audience's attention, establish speaker/audience rapport, and tell the audience why they should listen. Your introduction serves a number of purposes:

- To capture your audience's attention and make them focus on **you** the speaker.
- To provide background information on the topic.
- To introduce yourself -- tell them who you are and why you are qualified to speak on the topic.
- To tell them what you are going to tell them.

Regardless of the purpose, a good introduction is essential. There are various devices you can use in an introduction to create an interesting opening. Some of the ways include:

- A rhetorical question
- A question or testimonial
- A story or illustration

Writing a Presentation – Quick Tips



"Writing is easy. All you do is stare at a blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead." –Gene Fowler

It's the "Write" Time

Make effective use of your time by dividing your writing task into the following main parts: planning, writing, and editing. Each of these parts need equal attention. Don't spend all your time planning and writing and no time editing. No matter how pressed for time you might become, *don't skip the editing*. Speeches are often reprinted at conferences, posted on the Internet, and used by other speakers. You wouldn't want a sloppy speech with your name on it circulated for others to read.

Quick Tips to Help You Plan, Write, and Edit

Preparing – Formulate your topic, analyze your audience, define your purpose (to inform, persuade, or entertain), and think of ideas. Select the major point of your speech (see the [Planning an Effective Presentation](#) section for additional information on this topic).

Put it together – Physically gather all the materials that you will need. Do your research using books, articles, and the Internet. Talk to your sources. Select a method of organization and prepare your outline (see the [Presentation Outline](#) section for additional information).

Get it on Paper – Write an informal first draft. State your thesis in a simple sentence. Just start writing, don't worry about punctuation, grammar, or spelling. Just get your ideas on paper. Don't skimp on the details, examples, facts, explanations, and other back up information. A speech is written to be heard, so write for the ear. Speech is straightforward and conversational, so it calls for short, familiar words, active verbs, personal pronouns, contractions, and subject-object order. Remember you will be writing an introduction, the body (including main ideas with supporting information), and a conclusion. Use your outline to help keep yourself on track (see the [Presentation Outline](#) section for additional information).

Evaluating – Read what you have written and measure it against your audience and purpose. Have you provided all the necessary facts? Have you avoided unnecessarily long and complicated words? Are your paragraphs short and easy to read? Is your speech written in the active voice? Have you written in a friendly receptive manner? Is your speech informative? Convincing? Entertaining?

Revising – This is the point where you add, subtract, rearrange, rewrite, and reshape the speech to suit your needs. Make sure your speech is accurate and in agreement with your departments policy. If your speech is too long, this is where you make your cuts. Make sure you have used transitions

between paragraphs to create unity. Correct your spelling. Check that you have used proper grammar and punctuation.

Comments – Ask a couple of coworkers to read your speech. Don't be shy about asking for help or receiving constructive criticism.

Editing – Make final changes based on the comments you received from your coworkers. This is your final draft so make sure all your main points are proven and accurate. Make sure your speech flows smoothly. Make any last minute corrections.

Proofreading – Check the final draft to make sure that there are no typos (sometimes it is best to get someone else to proofread your speech, since you may have read the document so much you may read right over minor errors).

Final Copy – Correct any typos and print a final copy.



Rehearsing Your Speech

"Practice is the best of all instructors." –Publilius Syrus

The following is a guide for rehearsing your speech. The more you practice, the more comfortable and confident you will feel the day of your presentation.

- If at all possible, use overhead transparencies, flip charts or PowerPoint slides (for large audiences) as “note cards.” At all costs, avoid reading your entire speech to the audience.
- Mentally run through your speech to review each idea in sequence. Repeat this procedure until you become familiar with the timing and flow of ideas.
- Begin stand-up rehearsals of your presentation. If possible, practice in a room similar to the one in which you will actually give your presentation. Remember to be conscious of your gestures. Gestures can add effect to a speech; just don't overdo it.
- Give a simulated presentation, idea-for-idea (not word-for-word), using all your visual aids. Visualize and focus on your audience more than your notes. Remember to move your eyes slowly covering the entire audience. Time this second practice session to make sure you do not go over your allotted speaking time. If possible, videotape yourself or have a coworker give you feedback.
- Review the videotape and/or coworker's feedback and incorporate necessary changes. Take special note of your voice. Did you add emphasis where necessary? Did you use voice variations by changing loudness and tone (a monotone speech will put your audience to sleep)?
- Rehearse the presentation in its final form.
- Practice answers to questions you anticipate from the audience.
- You are READY!

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Handling Fear

“The brain starts working the moment we are born and never stops until we stand up to speak” –Anonymous



Fear of Public Speaking

If you hate the very thought of speaking in public, you are not alone. Some people may experience a variety of symptoms: sweaty palms, dry mouth, accelerated heart rate, memory loss, shaking hands, and difficulty breathing.

One of the most important steps to overcome anxiety of public speaking is preparation. The better prepared you are, the more relaxed you will feel.

Preparation is the Key

Start Early – When you’re asked to present, begin preparing as soon as possible. Dale Carnegie once commented that “a speech well prepared is 90% delivered.” Ask yourself, “What do I want people to go away with?” Be able to clearly state your goal and what you want your message to convey.

Know Your Location – Become familiar with the place where you will speak. Arrive early and survey your speaking area. Make sure you walk around the audience seating area as well. Take the [Room and Supplies Checklist](#) with you and check off the items that pertain to your needs.

Know Your Audience – Know what your audience expects from you. If possible, greet and chat with the audience before you speak. It will be easier to talk to friends than to strangers.

Outline – When writing, use an outline form with just bullet points and not word for word (for an example, see the [Presentation Outline](#)). For each section of your presentation, have at least one anecdote, illustration, or example, to make your point.

Know Your Material – Prepare your presentation. Practice your speech and revise it until it becomes natural and you can present it with ease. Have your opening remarks well thought out (this is when you are the most nervous), so that you get off to a good start.

Summarize – End your presentation with a brief summary along with a dose of inspiration or a call to action. Even a simple quotation can be very effective. People will remember your opening and closing more than the midsection of your speech.

Techniques to Ease Anxiety

Relax – For example, thirty seconds before you present, pinch your fingers together (index finger, middle finger, and thumb) and hold that position tightly. When you release your pinched fingers, your hands and arms will be relaxed. You'll look and feel more at ease. Just before you deliver a presentation, remember to take at least two deep breaths. If you are breathing correctly, you'll not only be speaking in your natural pitch but you will also think more clearly because you'll be providing your brain with the oxygen it needs to function well.

Visualize success – Imagine yourself from the beginning to the end of your speech. Imagine walking up to the microphone and speaking loudly, clearly, and confidently. If you see yourself as successful, you will be successful. If you expect to do poorly, you will. It happens because that is the way you mentally visualized it happening. What you say to yourself and how you visualize your performance can greatly affect your confidence.

People Want You to Succeed – Audiences want speakers to be informative, interesting, stimulating, and entertaining. They want you to succeed!

It is OK, Even Normal, To Be Nervous - Consider nervousness as energy. Use the adrenaline you feel to your advantage. The same nervous energy that causes stage fright can be transformed into enthusiasm. Most of the time people don't notice you are nervous. If you don't say anything about it, they'll never know.

Concentrate On Your Message – Focus your attention on your message and your audience, not yourself. If you don't think about your anxieties, they will disappear.

Be Yourself - Whatever is comfortable for you is going to make the audience comfortable. Use a conversational tone with the audience.

Pause - Pauses are effective. Reduce “ums” and “ahs.” You don't have to be talking every second.

Experience – Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking. Your anxiety will decrease after every speech you give. Get feedback. Ask people to listen to your speech and tell you what you did well and where you can improve.

Symptoms and Solutions

Still feeling afraid or anxious? Try using some of these techniques.

Symptoms	Solutions
1. Shaking hands	Use 3" x 5" cards, but don't hold them in your hands. Place them on the lectern or podium. Turn the cards over as you use them. (Be sure to number your cards just in case you drop them.)
2. Tongue-tied	Slow your speech down. Pause naturally between words and sentences.
3. Shortness of breath	Don't breath from your mouth. Take deep breaths from your diaphragm and breathe through your nose.
4. Dry mouth	Speak slowly. Have a glass of water handy; however, keep sipping to a minimum and never guzzle.
5. Upset stomach	Make sure you eat a small meal before presenting, taking care to avoid overly spicy foods.
6. Foolish feeling	Dress your best. If you look your best, you'll feel your best.
7. Fear of audience	Try looking just above their heads. Or find a friendly face, one on each side of the room, and alternate your focus between those two friendly faces.
8. Desire to not show up	Resist it. Psych yourself up. Tell yourself, "I'm ready because I wrote a great speech and I practiced it. I will go out there and do a wonderful job."



Speaker Evaluation

Speaker's name _____

Type of Speech _____

Please **circle** whichever applies:

Presentation	excellent	good	fair	poor
Content	excellent	good	fair	poor
Audiovisual/ Props/Charts	excellent	good	fair	poor
Handouts	excellent	good	fair	poor

1. What was the most useful information you learned from this speech?

2. What other topics would be of interest to you in the future?

3. Any other comments or suggestions?

4. Optional – Name, Department, address, e-mail address, and telephone number



Presentation Checklist

Instructions: Read through the list before you start planning or writing your speech and review it again the day before your speech. Check-off all the items you will need to address to make an effective presentation.

Name	Subject of Presentation	Date/Time/Place of Presentation
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p>BEFORE YOU START</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have approval from your Supervisor or Executive Director to present? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have approval to travel (if necessary)? <input type="checkbox"/> Why were you asked to speak and what problems have created the need for this presentation? <input type="checkbox"/> What will be your objective for this presentation? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know the subject well enough to speak about it? <p>KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How large will your audience be? <input type="checkbox"/> What are the age, gender, and education of your audience? <input type="checkbox"/> Why does this group meet and what are their common interests? <input type="checkbox"/> How much does the audience know about the topic? <input type="checkbox"/> How can I spin the topic to be more appealing to the audience? <input type="checkbox"/> Are there any special circumstances I must take into account? <p>SPEECH PREPARATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use your audience analysis to choose what type of speech you will make: to inform, to persuade, or to entertain. <input type="checkbox"/> Research the information you need. <input type="checkbox"/> Organize and outline your material. <input type="checkbox"/> Write the introduction, body, and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> Revise and edit your speech. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you have used humor appropriately. <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare visual aids, audiovisual aids, and props. <input type="checkbox"/> Rehearse your speech. <input type="checkbox"/> Practice appropriate body language </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p>SPEECH PREPARATION (Continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Memorize the opening and closing to your speech. <input type="checkbox"/> Review Do's and Don'ts guide. <input type="checkbox"/> Review Handling Fear guide. <p>THE DAY YOU SPEAK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you dress appropriately. <input type="checkbox"/> Remember to eat (no growling tummies). <input type="checkbox"/> Arrive early to do a room check (see Room and Supplies Checklist). <input type="checkbox"/> Don't read from slides or the written speech - use an outline or note cards to keep you on track (remember to number the note cards in case you drop them). <input type="checkbox"/> Use nonverbal communication to reinforce your message. <input type="checkbox"/> Speak clearly and loud enough so every person in the room can hear you. <input type="checkbox"/> Adapt the right attitude to suit your audience. <input type="checkbox"/> Deal with unforeseen problems in a professional manner. <input type="checkbox"/> Leave time to answer questions. <input type="checkbox"/> Handout a copy of the Speaker Evaluation form and give very brief instructions on completing it. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure everyone knows where to receive handouts. <input type="checkbox"/> Thank your audience and follow up on any questions. <input type="checkbox"/> Gather evaluation forms after audience has left. <p>OTHER ITEMS NEEDED</p> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/> </div> </div>		



Room/Supplies/Miscellaneous Checklist

Instructions: Check-off all the items you will need to address or bring with you to make an effective presentation. (Many of these items may be provided at the facility where you will be speaking, but you need to contact the coordinator who is arranging the seminar/meeting to make sure everything is available the day of your speech.)

Name	Subject of Presentation	Date/Time/Place of Presentation
<p>14 DAYS PRIOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know who will be your contact the day of your speech? (Get phone number.) <input type="checkbox"/> Call to confirm date, time, and room number. <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have directions and/or a map to the facility where you will be speaking? <p>THE ROOM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is there adequate seating for the expected number of people attending? <input type="checkbox"/> Is ventilation adequate? <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate number of display tables (if necessary)? <input type="checkbox"/> Are heating or cooling settings appropriate for the room? (Make sure you have access to the thermostat in case you need to adjust settings.) <input type="checkbox"/> Electric circuit check needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know how to dim lights? <input type="checkbox"/> Special lighting needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Music equipment needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Lectern/podium needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Overhead projector and transparencies needed? (Extra bulbs handy) <input type="checkbox"/> Microphone needed/check to make sure it works. <input type="checkbox"/> Slide Projector/slides, VCR, DVD, and TV needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Portable PC/PowerPoint software/overhead projector needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Extension cords needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Video camera/screen/tripod needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Large sticky notes needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Erasable marking pens/chalk needed? 		<p>THE ROOM (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chalkboard needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Portable easel needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Flipcharts needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Masking tape needed? <p>MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Workbooks. <input type="checkbox"/> Paper/pencils/pens/markers/tape. <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance list. <input type="checkbox"/> Water. <input type="checkbox"/> Breath mints. <input type="checkbox"/> Name Plates/tags/badges. <input type="checkbox"/> Business cards. <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation forms. <input type="checkbox"/> Handouts needed <input type="checkbox"/> Rolling briefcase to carry supplies needed? <p>ODDS AND ENDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Locate restrooms. <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee breaks scheduled AM _____ Lunch _____ PM _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Nearby eating establishments located. <input type="checkbox"/> Parking fees. <input type="checkbox"/> Specific departure procedures required by facility. <p>OTHER ITEMS NEEDED</p> <p>_____</p>



Selecting Speakers Checklist



Name of Potential Staff Speaker	Subject of Presentation	Date/Time/Place of Presentation
<p><u>Before You Start</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Did you receive approval from the Executive Director or Supervisor to speak at the requested event or seminar? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have approval to travel (if necessary)? <input type="checkbox"/> Why was the Department asked to speak and what problems have created the need for this presentation? <p><u>Knowledge Of Subject</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understands the Department and its functions? <input type="checkbox"/> Two years' experience or more on subject? <input type="checkbox"/> Superior understanding of subject? <input type="checkbox"/> Considered by staff to be an expert on the subject? <input type="checkbox"/> Good researcher/writer? <p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Completed any college level speech classes? <input type="checkbox"/> Past or present member of Toastmasters or other speaking club or association? <input type="checkbox"/> Previous speech or presentation experience? <p><u>Personal Characteristics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Well spoken? <input type="checkbox"/> Non-confrontational? <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic? <input type="checkbox"/> Sincere? <input type="checkbox"/> Convincing? <input type="checkbox"/> Professional? <input type="checkbox"/> Personable? 		<p><u>Personal Characteristics (continued)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys speaking to groups? <input type="checkbox"/> Is not extremely shy? <input type="checkbox"/> Is competent? <input type="checkbox"/> Polite/respectful of others? <input type="checkbox"/> Good sense of humor? <input type="checkbox"/> Self-confident? <input type="checkbox"/> Completes assignments in a timely manner? <input type="checkbox"/> Organized? <input type="checkbox"/> Dresses appropriately? <p><u>Workload Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Any pressing deadlines that will conflict with speaking engagement? <input type="checkbox"/> Is my potential selected speaker currently overloaded or too busy? <input type="checkbox"/> Any vacation conflicts that need to be addressed? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there adequate time for researching and preparing for a speech? <input type="checkbox"/> For cross training purposes, can I send a second person to attend the speaking engagement? <p><u>Other Reasons For Selecting This Speaker</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

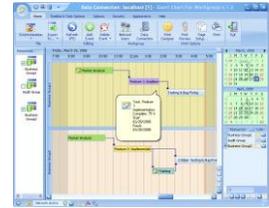


Charts, Graphs and Table Examples

Gantt Chart

- A Gantt chart is a horizontal bar chart developed as a production control tool in 1917 by Hendry L. Gantt, an American engineer and social scientist.
- Used in projects to display time and tasks.

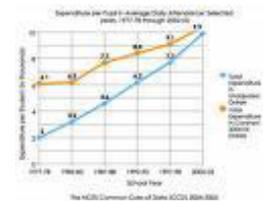
Gantt Chart



Line Graph

- A line graph is a way to summarize how pieces of information are related and how they vary depending on one another.
- Lines can show progress and/or comparisons

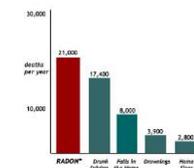
Line Graph



Bar Chart

- A bar chart is a way of visually summarizing data.
- Bars and colors help display comparisons and relationships.

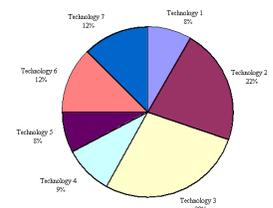
Bar Chart



Pie Chart

- A pie chart is used to show proportions of a whole.
- Percentages of the whole can easily be visually

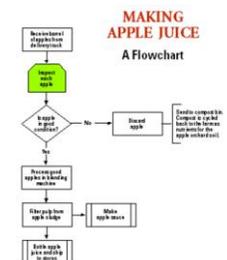
Pie Chart



Flow Chart

- A pictorial representation describing a process being studied.
- Can be used to plan stages of a project.
- Also used as a decision making steps.

Flow Chart



Do's and Don'ts Guide



"I used to use clichés all the time but now I avoid them like the plague." –author unknown

DO . . .

Keep to your scheduled time.

It is important to keep your speech within the timeframe you were given. If you go over your allotted time you may be cutting into the next speaker's presentation.

Stick to your topic.

You may get questions from the audience that have nothing to do with your current topic. Politely tell the person you will talk with them after your presentation and move immediately back to your topic.

Encourage audience participation.

Getting the audience involved will make your speech more interesting and help keep the attention of your audience.

Support your department's position.

Each department may hold certain positions on policies and if you work for the departments you must support their position. If you are unclear of your departments position regarding your topic (or other policy issues), contact your supervisor *before* you speak to familiarize yourself on current issues.

Leave time for a "Question & Answer" period.

Inform the audience that there will be time at the end of the presentation for questions. Also, before you answer a question, repeat the original question asked. This will ensure that everyone in the room hears both the question and the answer.

Follow up.

If you are asked a question and you are unsure of the answer, make a commitment to get back to the individual within a reasonable amount of time. This does not necessarily mean you need to be the person who answers the question. It does mean you *will* find out who can answer their question and ensure they respond to the individual.

DON'T . . .

Lecture or belittle the audience.

You could be asked to speak so you could inform employees and/or public about a program or policy. This means don't lecture your audience on what they are doing wrong.

Use inappropriate humor.

Use humor in your presentation but be very careful. Don't offend your audience.

Use clichés.

Clichés can be regional and if you speak outside your area, your audience may not understand your meaning. Also, clichés become dated quickly. Avoid using them in your speech.

Chew gum.

Hold off on chewing your favorite gum until after your speech is over. Other habits to avoid while speaking are chewing fingernails, fidgeting, pulling on clothing, tapping fingers on podium, or fiddling with your hair or necktie.

Try to answer questions if you only have limited knowledge on the subject.

You may be asked a question that is unrelated to your topic, but is an area covered by another program. If you are unsure of the answer, make a commitment to get back to the individual within a reasonable amount of time. This does not necessarily mean you need to be the person who answers the question. It does mean you *will* find out who can answer their question and ensure they respond to the individual.

Let someone else dominate the presentation.

Occasionally you will have someone in the audience who is upset or will constantly interrupt your presentation. Do not get in an argument with this individual. Repeat their question back to them to make sure you understood them correctly, and tell them you will give them your undivided attention after your presentation.

Point out your own mistakes.

We all make little mistakes while speaking. Don't point out your mistakes by apologizing profusely and starting your speech over; *just keep going.*

Department of Personnel Administration

Plain Language Style Guide

Writing and editing tips for staff

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capitalization, headings and titles.....
 capitalization, Social Security number.....
 capitalization, State, state.....
 commas, dates.....
 commas, serial.....
 computer terms.....
 contractions.....
 cover pages.....
 dashes.....
 date, day.....
 dates, format.....
 dollar, amounts.....
 due to the fact that.....
 e.g.....
 enclosed please find.....
 etc.....
 federal.....
 font style.....
 gender neutral.....
 he/she, he or she.....
 headings, font style.....
 headings and titles, capitalization.....
 headlines.....
 highlight.....
 however.....
 hyperlinks.....
 hyphens.....
 I.....
 i.e.....
 if, should.....
 impact.....
 italics.....
 its, it's.....
 justification.....
 lines and borders.....
 lists.....
 margins.....
 Nationwide.....
 numbers and numerals.....
 numerals in parentheses.....
 ongoing.....
 parentheses.....
 parentheses, period placement.....
 percentages.....
 personal pronouns.....
 question and answer sections.....
 quotation marks.....
 rationale.....



should, if.....
slash.....
Social Security number.....
State, state.....
Statewide.....
that, which.....
that, who.....
timeframe.....
timely.....
underline.....
we.....
which, that.....
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you.....
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Can this guide help me write?

Yes!

This guide begins with three principles you should always follow:

- Help your readers scan
- Give useful information
- Edit

If you stick to those three things, you will write better than practically everyone else. Beyond that, this guide describes requirements for:

- Style
- Grammar
- Punctuation, word choice, and format

Pay attention to these basics when you're writing and when you're editing.

Help readers scan

Don't expect readers to read pages from top to bottom. Readers look for the most interesting (and easy) parts and skip the rest. Readers give up when they get bored or distracted.

Put your most important point first

The top of the page is prime real estate. Tell readers what they need to know.

- Imagine you have 30 seconds—or, if you want to be realistic, 10.
- Minimize introductions. Cut them out if you can.
- Put conclusions at the top.
- Summarize at the top, don't explain. Details come later.

Keep it short

Think short. Short documents, short paragraphs, short sentences, short words.

- The less words the better.
- Aim for no more than five sentences per paragraph.

- Sentences: 20 words or less.
- Leave out anything you don't need. Cut once. Then cut again.
- Use short, common words.

Show off your points

Draw the reader's eyes to your critical points.

- Use headings.
- Make your headings meaningful.
- Call attention to points using bullets and lists.
- Use charts, diagrams, and pictures.

Make it look easy to read

Dense blocks of text turn readers off. How can you cure this? Use plenty of blank space.

- Use headings with plenty of space around them.
- Break up text with bullets, charts, diagrams, and pictures.



Give useful information

Readers will follow a clear instruction. But if you give them a mess of instructions, you're asking for trouble. When they get stuck wading through it, they'll call you. Or they'll make a mistake that you'll need to undo.

Save yourself the trouble. Give readers useful information to begin with.

Write clearly

Do you take pains to make your message clear?

- Write in plain language style.
- Short, direct sentences work better than long, meandering ones.
- Readers love examples, stories, and comparisons. Keep them short and simple.
- Use headings to label sections.

Stay relevant

Think of the reader's attention span. If you throw too much at the reader, the reader will tune out.

- Cut introductions, purpose statements, and unlikely exceptions. They should be short – or gone.
- Read your work – and others' work – looking for what's overwritten. Cut that part.

Tell readers what to do

People need to know what to do. Where do I send this form? Who do I call?

- Direct the reader to take an action.
- Put your direction at the beginning.
- If you need the reader to look over instructions before acting, say so upfront.
- Use questions as headings. Answer the questions with directions to take an action.



Edit

Your writing tells readers about you and your department in ways you may not know.

We all know how a spelling or grammar mistake can embarrass us.

Poor style, convoluted instructions, and impenetrable layout tell readers something, too. They tell readers you don't respect the time it's going to take them to wade through it.

Always take care to polish your writing before you send it out. The time you spend revising pays dividends each time someone reads your work.

Revise

You have a deadline you can barely meet. Do you have time to revise? Yes. Make the time.

- Plan to spend at least a third of your time revising.
- Sharpen your writing by cutting out at least a quarter of your words.
- Look for places where you strayed from plain language style. Fix them.
- Watch the flow of your piece. Rearrange parts and change headings. Make your writing flow.
- Add details and examples if you find places where they can help.

Have someone else read it

No matter how good a writer you are, you can improve your writing by having another person read it.

- Listen for suggestions on ways to improve style, flow, and layout.
- Be open. Even suggestions you initially resist may help you improve the document.
- Look for more than grammar and spelling errors when you review someone else's work. For instance, point out unnecessary words or sentences that could be eliminated.
- Review other people's writing. You'll learn to write better this way.



Style

Use simple sentence structure

A simple sentence has a subject, verb, and object. It has one thought. It has a period or question mark at the end. It doesn't have subordinate thoughts, clauses, or phrases.

You can break long, complicated sentences into two or more smaller ones. It's easy.

- **Complicated:** When an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence the deductions for benefits cease, and at that time the option to direct pay to continue the monthly premiums is offered, not COBRA.
- **Simple:** Benefits deductions cease when an employee takes an unpaid leave of absence. The employee has the option to pay the monthly premiums directly, but can't use COBRA.

Use active voice

Active voice means using strong verbs, with subject and object where the reader expects them. Passive voice hides the subject.

Beware of the verb "to be" (is, are, am, was, were, being, been, be). Use it sparingly.

- **Passive:** Nominations are submitted by departments and agencies to DPA and recipients are honored annually in a public ceremony.
- **Active:** Departments and agencies submit nominations to DPA. The Governor honors recipients in a public ceremony each year.

Use real verbs, not "is"

Avoid the verb "to be" (is, are, am, was, were, being, been, be) when possible. Find the verb that fits and make it do its job.

- **With "is":** Check if your department is participating in the program.
- **Without "is":** Check if your department participates in the program.

Use the verb form of words

Look out for verbs that have shrunk into nouns. Certain word endings may signal that the writer reduced a mighty verb to a puny noun: -al, -ment, -ant, -ence, -ion, -ancy, -ency, -ance, -ity, -en, -ize.

- **Noun form:** At the discretion of the appointing power, CEAs may receive an adjustment to their bonuses.
- **Verb form:** The appointing power may adjust CEA bonuses.



Write with a personal tone

Write like you would talk. Do you speak in a stiff, formal tone? Probably not.

- Use personal pronouns: I, me, mine, we, us, ours, you, your, yours
- Use the full range of punctuation. Try using a colon or dash every now and then.
- Use contractions. you're, won't, can't, you'll, and so on.
- Ask your reader questions. Why not give it a try?
- Use common words with common meanings. For example, instead of "reflected" use "shown."

Example:

- **Impersonal tone:** This code, which is reflected on the employee's monthly statement of earnings, is used to identify deduction premium and enrollment information for each dental carrier.
- **Personal:** The State Controller uses the code shown on your paystub to identify your dental carrier and deduct the correct premium.

Cut out jargon

When you create new terms or use overly precise terms, you create jargon. Jargon makes the reader struggle to figure out what you're saying.

Sometimes we use jargon because we need to use very specific terms as we do our jobs. But, most often, our readers don't need that kind of precision. It only slows them down or confuses them.

- **With jargon:** Plan members can use a Reduced Fee Network Attorney (RFNA) at a reduced rate of at least 25% for legal advice and representation for non-excluded services.
- **Without jargon:** For legal advice and representation covered by insurance, you can hire an attorney for at least 25% less than you'd pay otherwise.

Don't create acronyms

Readers won't tolerate unfamiliar acronyms. We already expect readers to know quite a few acronyms. Don't add new ones. By the same token, feel free to use commonly accepted acronyms.

Do your readers – or you – know what all of these acronyms stand for?

- DCRA
- ARRA
- AEI



- RMD
- QEL
- MCL
- GLSIP
- QRD
- MLA
- RHCEP
- ESP
- MAA



Grammar

Match nouns and pronouns

When you use a noun, refer to it with a pronoun. Make sure the two parts agree in number. In other words, for a singular form of a noun, use the singular pronoun; for a plural noun, use a plural pronoun.

In this example, “the department” is the noun.

- **Instead of:** The department gave their employees the day off.
- **Write:** The department gave its employees the day off.

In this example, “a worker” is the noun.

- **Instead of:** If an injured worker can’t perform their duties...
- **Write:** If an injured worker can’t perform his or her duties...

In this example, look at the pronoun “their,” which is plural. Do you use “a participant” or “participants”?

- **Instead of:** A participant may transfer assets back to their core account.
- **Write:** Participants may transfer assets back to their core accounts.

Match nouns and verbs

Use the correct form of the verb based on the subject.

A problem occurs when you get confused about the subject of your sentence.

In this example, the subject is “the choice” (not “plans”).

- **Instead of:** The choice of health plans are up to the employee.
- **Write:** The choice of health plans is up to the employee.

The first sentence above highlights a common mistake that happens when you put a prepositional phrase or indirect object in between the subject and the verb.

Mistakes also happen when you construct the sentence poorly, perhaps by choosing the wrong verb.

In this example, the verb doesn’t work right as first written. Can you revise the sentence to make it stronger?

- **Instead of:** The increased contribution limits changes the plan greatly.
- **Write:** The increase in contribution limits change the plan greatly.



Punctuation, word choice, and format

For consistency, everyone should use their department's plain language rules. You may find other writers use different rules. That doesn't make them wrong. We aim for internal consistency.

above-listed

Eliminate this phrase.

- **Instead of:** Please call the program manager at the above-listed number.
- **Write:** Please call the program manager at the number listed above.

above-mentioned

Change to "mentioned above" or "listed above."

- **Instead of:** I am responsible for the above-mentioned child.
- **Write:** I'm responsible for the child mentioned above.

acronyms

Ask yourself why you're using an acronym. Plain language tries to eliminate overuse of acronyms. It's all about the reader. If an acronym helps the reader, use it. You don't help readers, though, by teaching them new acronyms.

acronyms, plural

Don't use an apostrophe to make an acronym plural. Just add an "s" at the end.

- **Singular:** CEA
- **Plural:** CEAs

acronyms, possessive

Treat the acronym just like it was any other word.

- **Acronym:** MOU
- **Possessive:** MOU's
- **Plural Possessive:** MOUs'

acronyms, spelling out

You don't need to spell out an acronym. If your readers know what it means, you don't gain anything by spelling it out. If your readers don't know what it means, you shouldn't be using it.

aforementioned

Eliminate this word. Use more natural wording, such as "listed above."

- **Instead of:** The incumbent must be employed by the State Personnel Board in one of the aforementioned classifications.
- **Write:** The incumbent must be employed by the State Personnel Board in one of the classifications listed above.

aligning text

Alignment refers to how you anchor text on a page. Documents should be left aligned; meaning text starts flush to the left margin and continues right. Paragraphs can be indented or not, depending on the document.

Justification refers to spacing or kerning the font so text has a smooth border on both sides. We don't justify documents except flyers or short announcements. We never justify text on web pages.

all of

Usually you can omit "of."

- **Instead of:** Appellant supervised all of the part-time and intermittent help.
- **Write:** Appellant supervised all the part-time and intermittent help.

But you can use "all of" in these cases:

- **When the next word is a pronoun:** All of us are confronted by a variety of temptations in our jobs.
- **When the next word is a possessive noun:** We met all of Dave's goals.

and/or

Try to avoid "and/or." Choose one.

- **Instead of:** The State will make reasonable accommodations to adjust the application process, job, and/or work environment.
- **Write:** The State will make reasonable accommodations to adjust the application process, job, and work environment.

You can also use the construction "A, B, or both."



- Enroll in a Flex Elect Medical Account, a Dependent Care Account, or both.

The word “or” usually includes the sense of “and.”

- **Instead of:** If you're doing workforce and/or succession planning ...
- **Write:** If you're doing workforce or succession planning ...

Apostrophes

Use an apostrophe only to show possession.

Where you place the apostrophe depends on whether the word it refers to is singular or plural.

- Unit (singular)
- **Possessive:** Unit's
- Units (plural)
- **Possessive:** Units'

For words that end in “s” add apostrophe “s” if the word is singular.

- Process (singular)
- **Possessive:** Process's

bold

Use bold font to call attention to a word or text. Don't use bold as a substitute for a heading – use heading styles instead.

Don't overdo bold. If you put too much bold font on a page, it loses its impact and distracts the reader.

bullets

Use one style of bullets throughout your document. Don't use subordinate bullets. Use headings and subheadings instead.

cannot, can't

Cannot is one word. You can also use the contraction can't.

capitalization, all caps

Don't use all caps, even in a headline or subject line. Always use mixed case words.

- **Instead of:** GOVERNOR ISSUES OPEN LETTER

- **Write:** Governor Issues Open Letter

See also [lists](#).

capitalization, headings and titles

Capitalize the title or primary heading of a document. Don't capitalize subordinate headings, except for the first letter and any proper nouns.

When capitalizing a heading or title, capitalize all words except articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and forms of to be.

- Impact of Budget Delay on Paychecks
- 2009 Employer Contribution for Health, Dental, and Vision Benefits

capitalization, Social Security number

Capitalize "Social Security" but not "number."

- To change your dental plan, enter your name and Social Security number.

capitalization, State, state

Capitalize "State" when referring to State of California government. "State" is like the name of a company.

- What do you need to do when you return to State service?
- Read the State's last, best, and final offer.
- If your spouse is a State employee, your spouse may be eligible for leave while you're on active duty.

Use lower-case "state" when referring to California as an area. Also use lower-case "state" when you mean any state.

- You may be able to relocate anywhere in the state.
- The public thinks state workers across the country get great benefits.

commas, dates

Use commas before and after the year if the date includes the day of the month.

- On November 20, 2008, DPA announced an increase for pre-tax parking deductions.

Don't use commas if you omit the day of the month.

- These changes take effect in January 2009.



commas, serial

Place commas after every item in a series of three or more.

- Today DOF presented the State's last, best, and final offer.
- DPA's responsible for all issues related to salaries, benefits, job classifications, and training.

computer terms

The convention for using computer terms changes quickly. We've seen formal principles relax as these terms come into general use. Words get pushed together, we drop hyphens, and we rarely capitalize.

Here are current conventions for spelling some common terms.

- database
- email
- home page
- the Internet
- internet (as an adjective)
- intranet
- online
- the Web
- web (as an adjective) web page
- website

contractions

Use contractions. When trying to decide whether to use the spelled-out version or a contraction of a word or words, read the sentence aloud. If it *sounds* natural to use the contraction, write it that way.

The rules of some writing styles urge you to avoid contractions, typically for formal academic writing. In plain language style, if you would use a contraction when speaking you should use the contraction when you write.

cover pages

Make the title the focal point. The title needs to tell the reader what to expect. If you have a subtitle, use a subordinate heading style for it. The subtitle belongs under the main title.

dashes

Use dashes to set off phrases. Dashes work like parenthesis, but imply a more direct relationship with the main thought.

- When you type two hyphens together, Word—on default AutoFormat settings—changes them to a dash.
- At the hastily arranged press conference—don't get me started on why we agreed to it—the first question out of the reporters' mouths was...



See also [hyphens](#) and [parentheses](#).

date, day

Date means a specific calendar day.

- For cases with a date of injury after January 1, 1994, you may get an additional payment.
- We haven't chosen the date for the conference.

Day means a day that could occur any time.

- The benefit begins on the first day of your disability.
- We know the conference will last three days.

dates, format

In text, write out full dates whenever possible, like this:

- November 24, 2008

If you need to use a smaller date format, use the full year, dashes, and leading zeroes, like this:

- **November 24, 2008 becomes:** 11-24-2008
- **January 2, 2009 becomes:** 01-02-2009

Always use the four-digit year.

dollar amounts

Leave off the cents if it's zero.

Instead of: \$20.00

Write: \$20

Don't begin a sentence with dollar amounts. Change the sentence around.

For amounts of \$1 million or more, use a one-or two-decimal format.

- **Instead of:** \$1,293,450
- **Write:** \$1.3 million

Ignore this rule in charts or examples where you need to use the exact figure.

See also [numbers and numerals](#).

due to the fact that

Use "because."

- **Instead of:** An employee may not be eligible due to the fact that the employee received equal pay.
- **Write this:** An employee may not be eligible because he or she received equal pay.

e.g.

From *exempli gratia*. Latin for “for example.” You can use e.g. if you mean “for example.”

- **Using Latin:** Enter the name of the dental plan (e.g., Delta Premier-Basic).
- **In English:** Enter the name of the dental plan (for example, Delta Premier-Basic).

enclosed please find

Don't use "enclosed please find." Instead, write "I (or we) have enclosed" or "Enclosed is."

- **Instead of:** Enclosed please find the State's modifications to its offer.
- **Write:** We've enclosed the State's modifications to its offer.

etc.

From *et cetera*. Latin for “and so on.” Instead of using etc., try to spell out the alternatives. If it's appropriate, you can use etc. when you mean “and so on.”

- **Using Latin:** Courses, seminars, etc. are not scheduled at convenient times.
- **In English:** Courses, seminars, and so on are not scheduled at convenient times.

federal

Don't capitalize “federal” unless it begins a sentence.

font style

With the current version of Word, use the built-in styles. Use Normal style for text. See also [headings](#), [font style](#).

gender neutral

When you refer to a person who may be male or female, use gender neutral terms. You have three ways to do this, in this order of preference:

- **Address the person directly:** When you're referred to a physician, your supervisor will give you a Medical Provider Network brochure.
- **Use a gender-neutral term first, then use "he or she" and "him or her":** When an employee is referred to a physician, the supervisor gives him or her the Medical Provider Network brochure.
- **Use a gender-neutral term throughout:** When an employee is referred to a physician, the supervisor gives the employee the Medical Provider Network brochure.

See also [personal pronouns](#).



he/she, he or she

See [gender neutral](#) and [personal pronouns](#).

headings, font style

With the current version of Word, use Title style for your title. Use Heading 1 for major section titles, Heading 2 for subtitles within sections, and so on.

Don't skip levels of headings. In other words, if the last heading style you used was Heading 1, the next heading style under it should be Heading 2, not Heading 3 or something else.

headings and titles, capitalization

See [capitalization, headings and titles](#).

headlines

Headlines express a message. They don't state topics. Use verbs in your headlines.

- DPA Encourages Flexible Approaches to State Work During I-5 Fix
- DPA Releases Revised State Restrictions of Appointments Manual

Headlines need to be the right size: not so short they say nothing, but not so long the reader won't catch the meaning from a quick glance.

See also [capitalization, headings and titles](#).

highlight

To highlight text, make it bold and use italics. Don't underline or capitalize it.

- **Instead of:** THESE PERMITTING EVENTS ONLY APPLY TO THE FLEXELECT PROGRAM.
- **Write:** *These permitting events only apply to the FlexElect Program.*

Don't overdo highlighting. Highlighting works best if done sparingly. Too much and the reader can't distinguish the highlighted text from the other parts.

however

Don't use "however" to connect sentences. Use two sentences.

- **Instead of:** An age 60 employee with ten years of service would qualify under this pattern; however, an age 45 employee with 20 years of service would not qualify.
- **Write:** An age 60 employee with ten years of service would qualify under this pattern. However, an age 45 employee with 20 years of service would not qualify.



hyperlinks

Use hyperlinks to give readers access to web pages, websites, email addresses, and bookmarks in the same document. Hyperlinks have two parts: an address and some text.

In electronic documents, readers can click hyperlinks. For documents that readers will see online or receive through email, don't spell out the hyperlink address. Instead, write text that lets the reader know what to expect and make it all one hyperlink.

- **Instead of:** An electronic copy of the "Notice of Mailed Ballot Election" will be posted on the PERB website (at www.perb.ca.gov).
- **Write:** An electronic copy of the "Notice of Mailed Ballot Election" will be posted on [the PERB website](#).

The longer the hyperlink's address, the less likely a reader will try to type it. If you need to send a printed document with a hyperlink address, try to arrange for a short link that's easy to type.

When you spell out a hyperlink's address, don't include "http://." Web browsers add this automatically.

hyphens

Use hyphens to connect words. Don't use them in place of dashes.

When you have two adjectives in a row, hyphenate them.

- The report will also specify any follow-up testing.
- It may be impractical to obtain long-term lodging.
- We'll accomplish short-term goals in the next 6 to 18 months.
- You produced a well-written report.

Don't hyphenate word pairs when the words follow the object they describe or are used as a verb.

- She was told to follow up with Kaiser.
- The investment probably won't return much in the short term.
- But the investment will probably have bigger returns in the long term.
- The report was well written but not to the point.

Don't hyphenate adverbs ending in -ly.

- **Instead of:** hastily-arranged press conference
- **Write:** hastily arranged press conference

See also [dashes](#).

I

See [personal pronouns](#).

i.e.

From *id est*. Latin for “that is.” You can use i.e. when you mean “that is.” Many times you can delete this phrase altogether.

- **Using Latin:** The benefits package provided to the State's excluded employees (i.e., employees designated managerial, supervisory, confidential, excluded, and exempt)...
- **In English:** The benefits package provided to the State's excluded employees (managerial, supervisory, confidential, excluded, and exempt)...

if, should

Don't use "should" when you mean "if."

- **Instead of:** Should you have any questions ...
- **Write:** If you have any questions...

impact

Don't use "impact" as a verb when you mean "affect."

- **Instead of:** The Environmental scan involves looking at how change could impact the workforce.
- **Write:** The Environmental scan involves looking at how change could affect the workforce.

italics

Use italic font style to indicate a special case. Italics don't call as much attention to text as bold font.

Don't overuse italics. Italicized text's impact comes from its contrast to normal font styles. If you use too much of it, it becomes meaningless.

its, it's

“Its” means “belonging to it.”

- SPB reviewed its policies.

“It's” means “it is”

- It's not required to conform.



justification

See [aligning text](#).

lines and borders

Web pages don't use borders. We can use a horizontal line of set size to separate sections.

For print documents, limit your use of lines and borders. Don't use different colored lines, different line weights, or different line styles.

In other words, if you use 1.5 point solid single black lines in one place, use the same settings everywhere you have a line.

lists

You can organize information attractively using lists. This guide uses many lists.

Use bullets to create unordered lists. Most lists are unordered.

Use numbering to create ordered lists. Only use numbered lists if the reader needs to follow the steps in a particular order.

Use headings and subheadings to create lists of sections. This gives your document structure. When done properly, you can automatically create a table of contents from your document.

See also [bullets](#).

margins

In general, for printed documents use one of these two settings:

- 1" margins all around (Word 2007 default)
- 1/25" right and left margins with 1" top and bottom margins (Word 2003 default)

If you're preparing a document with special formatting requirements, such as a letter from the Director, follow the specific guidelines for what you're writing.

See also [aligning text](#).

Nationwide

Nationwide is one word.

numbers and numerals

Spell out zero through ten. Use numerals for numbers greater than ten.

- The two-day event attracted 30 people.



However, if you use numbers above and below ten to compare quantities of something, use numerals.

- Of the 30 people enrolled, 7 registered at the door.

Spell out numbers when they begin a sentence.

- Twenty units started bargaining this year.
- One unit has agreed to a new contract.

See also [dollar amounts](#), [numerals in parentheses](#), and [percentages](#).

numerals in parentheses

If you spell out a number, don't follow it with the numeral in parentheses.

- **Instead of:** An additional nine (9) permanent positions were established.
- **Write:** An additional nine permanent positions were established.

The tradition of putting numerals in parentheses came about to counter confusion caused by sloppy handwriting and misspelling. In today's type-written, spell-checked world, the practice is outdated and adds a certain stuffiness to documents it's used in.

ongoing

Ongoing is one word.

parentheses

Parentheses set off an interrupting or peripheral thought. If you use them, you must use an opening and closing parenthesis. Omitting the closing parenthesis is a common typographical error.

Too many parentheses can annoy the reader. Consider using dashes instead. Or give the parenthetical statement its own sentence.

See also [dashes](#), [parentheses](#), [period placement](#).

parenthesis, period placement

If the material in parentheses is a complete sentence, the period goes inside the parentheses.

- Workforce planning depends on sound strategic planning. (Create your strategic plan as the first step in workforce planning.)

If the parenthetical phrase isn't a complete sentence, the period goes outside the parentheses.

- Focus on defining the necessary competencies (skills, knowledge, abilities, and personal attributes).

See also [parentheses](#).

percentages

For percentages, use a number or numeral followed by the word "percent." Save the percent symbol (%) for when you're comparing a series of numbers (for example, in a table).

- Nine percent is a good return rate.

See also [numbers and numerals](#).

personal pronouns

Use personal pronouns: I, we, you. These words help engage the reader. Addressing the reader as "you" also helps you avoid clumsy constructions with "he or she."

- **Instead of:** The manager reviews the immediate supervisor's remarks and indicates in the space provided whether he or she concurs with the report and comments.
- **Write:** Manager--review the immediate supervisor's remarks and indicate in the space provided whether you concur with the report and comments.

Write questions from the perspective of the reader, as if "I" am asking them.

- **Instead of:** What are the consequences to an employee if he or she participates in a strike?
- **Write:** What are the consequences if I participate in a strike?

The rules of some writing styles urge you to avoid personal pronouns, typically for formal academic writing. DPA uses a plain language style in all its communications, so you can always use personal pronouns.

See also [gender neutral](#), [question and answer sections](#).

question and answer sections

Question and answer sections help readers find answers quickly. But they aren't a substitute for creating and refining informative sections or pages.

When you create a question and answer section, you create an obligation on your part to update it frequently. You also must be honest with the reader. If you call it "frequently asked" questions, you need to ensure it really addresses the questions that are asked most often.

See also [personal pronouns](#).

quotation marks

Put periods and commas inside quotation marks.

- The "Excluded Employees Bill of Rights Act," passed in 1990, requires DPA to meet and confer with organizations.

- See “Catastrophic Leave.”

Don't put colons or semicolons inside the quotation marks.

A question mark goes inside the quotes if it's part of the quoted material. If you're asking a question about the quote, put the question mark outside.

- See the section “Is your spouse a State employee?”
- Are you an “exempt employee”?

rationale

Don't use "rationale" when you mean "reason."

- **Instead of:** The rationale is loss of consciousness may indicate more serious injuries.
- **Write:** The reason is loss of consciousness may indicate more serious injuries.

should, if

See [if, should](#).

slash

Don't use the slash character when you mean “and,” “or,” or both. Instead, use the appropriate conjunction.

- **Instead of:** Dental/Vision
- **Write:** Dental and Vision

Social Security number

See [capitalization, Social Security number](#).

State, state

See [capitalization, State, state](#).

statewide

Statewide is one word.

that, which

"That" introduces a clause that's essential to the sentence. It's not set off by a comma or commas.

- Do State employees currently have the right to strike or engage in other types of job actions that interfere with the work of the State?

"Which" introduces a non-essential clause. The sentence would still be complete, though perhaps not as informative, without the "which" clause. It's set off by a comma or commas, depending on whether

it comes in the middle of a sentence or at the end.

- Each CEA position must be checked against the DPA CEA Database, which identifies approved CEA positions.
- The State contributes \$788 per month toward employee health premiums (for family coverage), which equals 80 percent of the total premium for most State employees.

See also [that, who](#).

that, who

Use "who" when referring to people and "that" when referring to anything else

- **Instead of:** The number of people that attend your meeting....
- **Write:** The number of people who attend your meeting...

Other examples:

- Any employee who opts to enroll must wait 90 days.
- Any employee in unit 12, 13, 14, 16, or 19 who is a member of PERS or STRS can receive the benefit.
- Employees in classes that include certain duties and require specialized experience or training can get this pay differential. (In this sentence, "that" refers to classes.)

See also [that, which](#).

timeframe

Timeframe is one word.

timely

Avoid using this word except as an adjective before the word it modifies. Instead, use "in time," "on time," or a similar expression.

- Instead of: She had not contacted respondent timely.
- Write: She had not contacted the respondent in time.

underline

Don't underline text to highlight it. Make it bold and use italics instead.

Underlining indicates a hyperlink.

we

See [personal pronouns](#).



which, that

See [that, which](#).

workforce

Workforce is one word.

you

See [personal pronouns](#).

