



# An Introduction to Business Writing

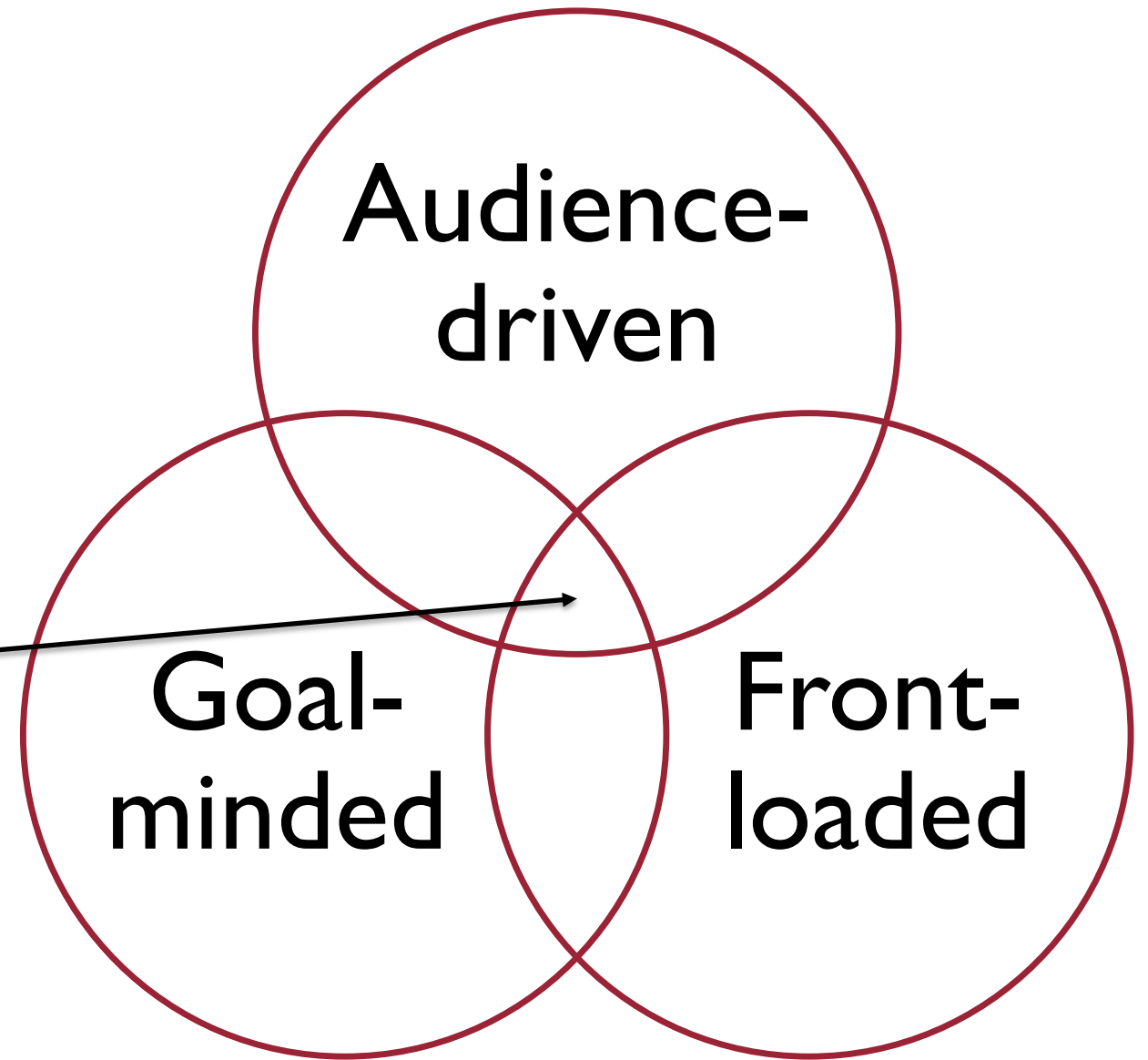
WALTON

The Business Communication Lab,  
Sam M. Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas



# Your message will always be:

The place where  
understanding occurs; the  
place where decisions can be  
made



# Connect with your audience

- Tone
- Specificity
- Response
- Relevance

# What **tone** should I adopt?

I need you to send me the files by 4:00 P.M.

Did I miss anything in class today?

I think the grade you gave me is unfair.

# How *specific* do I need to be?

- ~~I feel that~~ class went well today.
- ~~Due to the fact that~~ the weather was inclement and icy, I could not attend class.
- ~~At this point in time, I would like to ask for~~ some help on Problem 6, which I did not understand.

# How will the audience **respond**?

- *Avoid colloquialisms, idioms, or clichés*
- *Use a simple sentence structure*
- *Write with precision but in plain terms*

# Are my ideas **relevant**?

- Answer the “**so what**” question
- Define all unfamiliar terms or abbreviations
- Give the reader all the information necessary to understand your message

# Response activities

- He hit a home run on that presentation.
- You will not be charged the first monthly fee unless you don't cancel within the first thirty days.

Garret X

Today, 11:45 PM

Subject: Class

This is Garret from your 8:00 am class. I'm trying to submit the assignment that's due at midnight and BlackBoard is not working.



# Revise with your peer:

- The widget I purchased from your facility has ceased working after only 45 days. I purchased an additional 60-day warranty. Thank you for your time and consideration.
- It is necessary that the general student population carry on collective discussions pro and con with regard to the student services proffered to them by the university.
- Go to the UGPO to find out your FBC instructor.

# To Recap...

## Business Communication *vs.* Academic Writing

- Audience-driven
- Goal-minded
- Front-loaded

- Personal opinions
- “Fluff” language
- Build-up to reveal

## “Why can’t we work together anymore?”: can intercultural, cross-functional, remote teams collaborate?

You have been hired as a consultant by Reynolds Walker Walton (R2W), a growing supply chain software company based in Northwest Arkansas with locations in Bangalore, India, and Suzhou, China. R2W has had success with culturally and linguistically diverse, virtual, and highly talented teams (usually of about 8-10 employees) who handle challenging, time-sensitive projects, but those teams are now not working well together. Their teams all speak the same language (English) yet are cross-functional, which means they consist of team members from different departments: backend and frontend engineers, data scientists, developers, product managers, sales, and marketing staff. The men and women who comprise these teams now struggle to share knowledge willingly, share resources, and even meet deadlines. This quarter alone, R2W has missed one key internal deadline and almost missed a vitally important client deadline!

How can R2W retain its diverse team composition, maintain a high level of technical expertise, and have a multi-continent virtual work environment without continually running into the same problems? R2W teams must remain cross-functional and geographically dispersed/culturally diverse – i.e. **do not suggest** that US employees only work with US employees or engineers work with fellow engineers. Senior management needs to learn what the current research is on teamwork and team formation, negotiating cultural differences and diverse viewpoints with teams, and virtual teamwork *as well as* learn how other companies and organizations have dealt with this challenge. Your job is to conduct this research and provide two recommendations to R2W senior management.

**Your task:** Compose a 2-page, single-spaced business brief answering what two recommendations you have for R2W to improve its practices. Be mindful of your tone, as the goal is to **recommend**, not dictate action.

**Note:** you will need to cite 4 different sources in APA on your references page. Your references page won't count towards the 2-page requirement. When citing sources, use parenthetical citations (see *Publication Manual of the APA* §6.11-21), not footnotes.

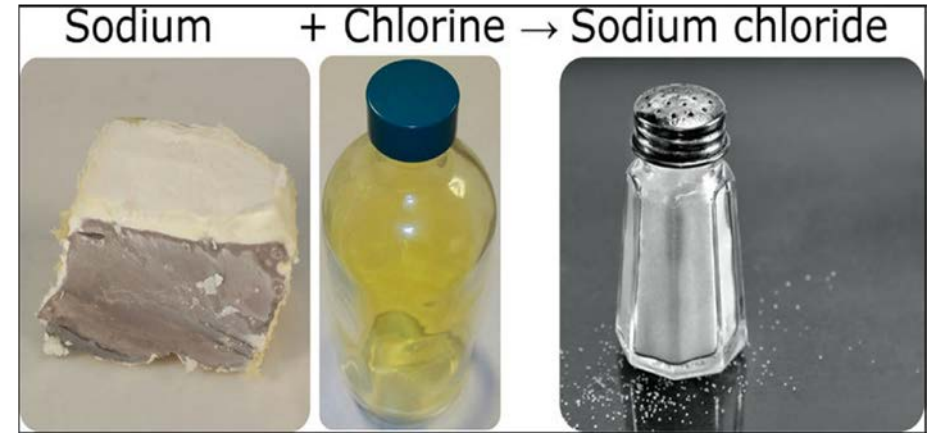
# Freshman Business Connections 2018 Business Brief Rubric

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>Purpose &amp; Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student misunderstands the purpose of the brief</li> <li>• Student provides 0-1 recommendations</li> <li>• Student addresses the wrong audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student understands the purpose of the brief</li> <li>• Student provides 2 recommendations</li> <li>• Student addresses the correct audience</li> </ul>
<b>Organization &amp; Synthesis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief not organized in a logical way</li> <li>• Brief lacks synthesis of ideas; student simply states facts</li> <li>• Brief lacks evidence to support its recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief is organized in a logical way</li> <li>• Student synthesizes information into a coherent, plausible recommendation</li> <li>• Brief contains factual support for all recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>Professionalism &amp; Style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student uses inappropriate tone</li> <li>• Style is too informal or unprofessional</li> <li>• Student uses slang, jokes, or jargon</li> <li>• Student does not demonstrate appropriate level of cultural/global sensibility and awareness</li> <li>• Brief suffers from wordiness/unnecessary information that prevents easy understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student uses a professional yet conversational tone</li> <li>• Style is appropriate yet engaging</li> <li>• Student does not use slang, jokes, or jargon</li> <li>• Student demonstrates an appropriate level of cultural/global sensibility and awareness</li> <li>• Brief uses concise phrasing and precise language; an average reader could easily understand information on first read-through</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<p>Brief contains extensive errors in the areas below that would distract the average reader or make comprehension difficult for the average reader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Punctuation</li> <li>• Word choice</li> </ul>	<p>Brief may contain some minor spelling, grammar, punctuation, or word choice errors, but not enough to distract the average reader.</p> <p>Also, the average reader would have no trouble understanding the brief on the first read-through.</p> <p>In short, the writer's credibility would not suffer due to the frequency of these types of errors.</p>
<b>Genre conventions &amp; Format</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief fails to follow the format given in the model</li> <li>• Brief lacks correct parenthetical citations</li> <li>• Brief lacks a reference page or reference page contains incorrectly cited materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief follows the format given in the model</li> <li>• Brief contains a reference page and all sources are cited correctly per APA formatting guidelines given in the assignment prompt</li> <li>• Brief contains correct APA parenthetical citations</li> </ul>



# How do I do my “job?”

- Analyze facts
- Locate patterns
- Rank importance
- Provide recommendation



Synthesis means putting **parts** of an element together to make a **whole**.

# Integrating sources

## Using in-text citations:

Author is stated	According to Scott (2013), "A good manager is more like a friend than a boss" (p. 199).
Author is not stated:	He stated, "Everyone loves a stick of gum" (Scott, 2013, p. 199), but he did not offer an explanation as to why.
Paraphrased with author	According to Scott (2013), business is always personal.
Paraphrased without author	The office is like a family (Scott, 2013, p. 199). *page number is not required but suggested

# How do I start?

- Consider your audience: **R2W executives**
- Consider your job: **Research and recommend**
- Consider what is needed: **2 concise suggestions**

# Business brief format:

Your name  
Date  
WCOB 1111  
Instructor name

No page  
numbers  
needed

Teamwork Recommendations for Reynolds Walker Walton Senior Management

## Title with a line break

Left-  
aligned

Your first sentence should **summarize the purpose of your business brief in an interesting, engaging way**. Your first sentence should not say “The purpose of this brief is to inform you about x” or something equally wordy and boring; instead, say something more interesting like “While Reynolds Walker Walton has long used cross-functional, remote teams to complete projects, ensuring those teams possess a collaborative ethos remains a challenge.” Please note that you may *not* use the sentence quoted above as your first sentence; say something equally engaging and impactful that also signals *why* you are writing to your reader. After that initial sentence, you will want to provide an overview of your recommendations. In short, succinctly state what two initiatives/programs/practices you recommend. Do not go into great depth as to *why* you are recommending them or *how* you recommend Reynolds Walker Walton (R2W) implement them, as that will be what the body paragraphs do. Your introduction’s final sentence should summarize in one or two points how your solutions will benefit R2W.

1 inch  
margins

## 1 line break

Your first body paragraph should go into greater depth about the first initiative/program/practice you recommended to R2W. Be sure your topic sentence does not merely provide information or describe the initiative. Instead, your **topic sentence should put forth a position/make a claim that the**





## ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

Due Date <b>Friday, October 12, 2018</b> 11:59 PM	Points Possible <b>3</b>
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Please upload your business brief here. Be sure it is in either .pdf, .doc, or .docx format - please do not submit it in "Pages" format, as we cannot open those file types.

**Assignments submitted in "Pages" format will receive an automatic "0."**

For more information, visit the FBC business brief website: <https://walton.uark.edu/business-communication-lab/fbc-workshop.php>

[FBC 2018 business brief final.pdf](#)

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## ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Text Submission

Write Submission



Attach Files

Browse My Computer

Browse Content Collection

Browse Dropbox

SafeAssign accepts files in .doc, .docx, .docm, .ppt, .pptx, .odt, .txt, .rtf, .pdf, and .html file formats only. Files of any other format will not be checked through SafeAssign.

# Use your resources!

Make an appointment with the BCL

[walton.mywconline.com](http://walton.mywconline.com)

Check out our online resources

<https://wordpressua.uark.edu/bclresources/>

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