



An Introduction to Business Writing

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Business Communication is...

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

Connect with your audience

- Tone
- Specificity
- Response
- Relevance

Keep your **goal** in mind

- Have a reason for communicating
- Formulate a goal you are working towards
- Structure your message accordingly

Front-load your ideas

- Put your **main idea first**
- Follow with explanations and examples
- Close appropriately and show appreciation

Front-load e-mail exercise

I am in a computer course for my business major and this morning at 8:15 I was scheduled to take my midterm exam. While trying to set up my exam, the Proctor (we are using ProctorU) and I could not get the webcam on my laptop to properly work. While doing so, the Proctor decided to try and reboot my laptop, which then caused the laptop to shut down, making me lose my exam and having ProctorU thinking that I already took it. Then I had to hurry and schedule a test (because it is due today). Sadly, since it is a two hour exam, I had to miss your class today. I am so sorry for the inconvenience and I hope this never has to happen again. If possible, I would love to make up points that I lost today. Hopefully during office hours we can discuss it.

What **tone** should I adopt?

- Remember that **circumstances** dictate tone
- Find the correct balance for your audience
- End on a positive note

Tone exercise

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?

- Learn what the audience **already knows**
- Discover what your audience **needs to know**
- Cut out unnecessary phrasing and words

Specificity exercises

- 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 think I would like to ask for an extension on this assignment.

Specificity exercise answers

- Class went well today.
- I could not attend class because of the weather.
- May I have an extension on this assignment?

How will the audience **respond**?

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

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.
- 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.

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

Relevance exercise

- 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.
- Go to the UGPO to find out your FBC instructor.

Final tips to remember

State your claim **first**, then provide evidence

Back up your claims with **data** and **evidence**

Inform your audience without boring them

Engage your audience without entertaining them

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