BIG BANG! WORKSHOP

WRITE TO WIN:
DEVELOPING YOUR
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WRITING IS A SKILL.
TODAY’S WORKSHOP

• “Good writing” versus “bad writing”
• Writing for an audience
• Organization strategies
• Tone in writing
• Clarity in writing
  • Avoiding vague language
  • Being concise
  • Using active voice effectively
  • Avoiding unintentional passive construction
• Fundamentals of proofreading
• Suggested resources
• Executive summary exercise & draft workshop
What’s the most important thing in life?
Relationships.
Effective writing accomplishes writer’s goals:
• Serves the reader’s needs
• Often persuades the reader to act
• Conveys the necessary information
  • Understandable, pertinent content
  • Appropriate for the communication context
• Likely to achieve desired results
The audience is **central** to your professional writing.

(Don’t forget them.)
“Communication context” involves the circumstances surrounding a communication situation:

- Reason for writing
- Audience
- Channels
- Goals...

(Don’t forget the context. And remember to think beyond yourself.)
Subject: urgent

Professor,
I really need to take your class in order to graduate this spring quarter. Please is there any possibilities that i can get into your class. 
Let me know asap.
Thank you

Respectfully,
J. Smith
ORGANIZATION STRATEGY

Introduction
• Why are you writing?
• Why should I read this?

Body
• Orient reader
• Provide necessary details

Conclusion
• Provide closure
• Give a directive
• Offer to connect further
TONE IN WRITING

Tone refers to the emotional impact the message has on our reader.

Why do we use emoticons?

😊

Or textspeak?

LOL!

Or ALL CAPS?!
TYPES OF TONE IN WRITING

Depending on the communication context, we need to decide on an appropriate tone:

- Formal or conversational
- Pompous or warm
- Positive or negative
- Tactful or tactless
“You need to send us a copy of your expense report before we can send you your reimbursement check.”

Or

“Please send us a copy of your expense report so we may send you your reimbursement check.”

(Remember: Nice goes a long way.)
Avoid vague language

Be concise

Use active voice effectively

Avoid unintentional passive construction in sentences
ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE VOICE

Passive Voice: Makes the subject unclear:
“The report was prepared by our team.”

Active Voice: Subject – Verb – Object:
“Our team prepared the report.”

Active sentence construction is usually more clear & concise.
AND OF COURSE, PUNCTUATE.

Let’s eat, Betty!
AND OF COURSE, PUNCTUATE.

Let’s eat Betty!
Write first, *then* proofread.

Proofread & revise several times on important documents.

You don’t need to be a grammarian, but you need to be comfortable with the basics:

- *Its* vs. *It’s*
- *They’re*, *there*, *their*
- *Your* vs. *you’re…*

(And leave out “literally.”)
Let’s apply these concepts...
In your teams or with a small group of people who have not yet formed teams, discuss your business venture idea then write a one-sentence summary of that idea.

This should be a clear, concise, descriptive, and complete sentence.

After reading your sentence, your reader should have a very good idea of what your idea is.
As you draft your sentence, consider the 5 key elements in the Big Bang! Executive Summary Guidelines:

- Opportunity
- Product/Service
- Financials/Funding
- Implementation
- Team
THE BIG BANG! EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Your executive summary should be no longer than 2 single-spaced pages, be in 11-point Arial, and submitted as a PDF.

Your executive Summary should address the following points:

- Opportunity
- Product/Service
- Financials/Funding
- Implementation
- Team
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: SOME FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Be concise
    Much in few words
Don’t make judges sort through nonsense
    They know malarkey when they see it
Show how investors will make money
    This has to be a sellable idea
Be honest
    Be able to support all claims
Have a prototype and have customers
    This is the fast track to winning a prize
Remember: It doesn’t matter how smart you are
    It matters whether or not you can DO
SUGGESTED RESOURCES

*Take a UWP writing course
*Take advantage of available resources:
  • Student Academic Success Center
  • Fellow students/faculty &/or colleagues...
  • Fellow members of professional organizations

The Purdue Online Writing Lab

The Business Writer's Handbook

Tenth Edition

Gerald J. Alred
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Thank you!

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