

# Business Writing Tips and Best Practices

Powerful, professional writing improves productivity, collaboration, credibility and influence. It can also help convey an impression of intelligence and ability.



## Improve your writing by implementing the following tips:



**Lead with the “big news”**—By quickly getting to the point, you stand a better chance of influencing your readers.



**Use natural language**—For example, instead of saying, “With a greater level of self-awareness, your key talent will be more focused, disciplined, collaborative, and productive,” say, “Increasing your self-awareness results in more focused and productive key talent.”



**Use “active voice”**—Instead of saying, “The presentation was given by the marketing department,” say, “The marketing department gave the presentation.”



**Use shorter sentences (average 20 or fewer words)**—Rather than saying, “I am requesting we schedule a meeting of about three hours to discuss the issue, and then ultimately make a decision,” say, “We will meet for half a day to discuss and make a decision about the issue.”



**Use more verbs and fewer nouns**—Instead of saying, “It would be appreciated if you could send the files immediately,” say, “Please send the files immediately.”



**Use the subject line to make a clear statement**—For example, “Today’s report is attached” or “Please send images ASAP.”



**Be specific about the action requested**—Let the recipient know if a response is needed within a certain time frame.



**Only include those who need to be included**—Don’t send to more people than necessary; the same goes for email replies.



**Do not write an email if you are upset or emotional**—Instead, wait or write it without inserting the email address of the recipient; send later after proofreading.



**Do not use inappropriate humor or all capital letters**—These can alienate and offend others, or be misinterpreted.



**Use spell-check and the thesaurus**—Edit to improve the readability and professionalism of your message.



**When forwarding an email conversation, check the thread**—Scroll down to ensure there is nothing in previous emails that you do not want the recipients to see.



**Don’t use business email for personal correspondence**—Emails from a business account are considered official company communications and may be monitored.



**Proofread your message**—Then proofread your message again to ensure correct content, grammar and style.



**A powerful written voice is one that is clear, confident, and convincing. Never underestimate the written word as a tool to influence others and to represent yourself.**

## Explore these additional AMA resources to help you continue to be acknowledged and heard in a virtual work environment:

- ▶ [The Successful Virtual Team Member](#)—Live Online Course, 3 Lessons
- ▶ [Writing with Confidence, Consideration, and Class](#)—Webinar
- ▶ [Powerful Communication Techniques](#)—Live Online Express Course, 1 Lesson
- ▶ [How to Build a Professional Brand and Image](#)—AMA OnDemand Course
- ▶ [Workplace Communication Training](#)—AMA OnDemand Course

**All of these online resources are available for individuals, or can be delivered organization-wide in a private setting, with content aligned to your business goals. Visit our website or call 800-262-9699 for more information**