IIT ROORKEE

NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE

EFFECTIVE WRITING

Lecture 12: Mechanics of Business Writing

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Mechanics of Business Writing

- Make use of short and simple sentences.
- Use specific words.
- Allow the use of transitions.
- Work towards achieving agreement in sentences and coherence in paragraphs.
- Concentrate on parallel structure.

Adapting to Audience

- Focus on benefits
- Develop you- attitude
- Ensure conversational tone and language
- Include positive expressions
- Use familiar words

You-view

We are requesting all employees to complete the enclosed questionnaire so that we may develop a master schedule for summer vacation.

Revd.: Because master schedule for summer vacation is being developed, please fill in the enclosed questionnaire.

Your request cannot be considered unless you've sent the signed agreement.

Revd.: We will be glad to consider your request once you send us the signed agreement.

Conversational

- The undersigned respectfully reminds affected individuals that employees desirous of changing their health plans must do so before October 25th.
- All employees can change their health plans before 25th October.

Maintain Good Relationship

- ✓ Emphasize the positive
- ✓ Convince how your message will benefit
- ✓ Use meaningful euphemisms
- ✓ Use bias free language
- ✓ (Gender, race, age and disability)

Crippled workers face many hardships on the job.

Cheap merchandise	Bargain prices
Toilet papers	Bathroom tissue
Used cars	Resale cars
High calorie food	High energy food
Elderly	Senior citizen
Pimples and zits	Complexion problems

Use Positive Expressions

- Construction cannot begin until the building plans are approved.

Revd.: Construction will begin soon after building plans are approved.

- It is impossible to move forward without community support.

Revd.: Community support is essential to move forward.

- We will withhold payment until you complete the job satisfactorily.

Revd.: Satisfactory completion of job qualifies for fast release of payment.

Inclusive Language

Every employee is entitled to see his personal file.

Revd.: All employees are entitled to see their personal file.

All conference participants and their wives are invited to the banquet.

Revd.: All conference participants and their spouses are invited to the banquet.

Plain English

The contract stipulates that management must perpetuate the retirement plan.

Revd.: The contract requires that the management must continue the retirement plan.

Because we cannot monitor all cash payments, we must terminate the contract.

Revd.: Since it is difficult to check all cash payments, we must end the contract.

Using Words Correctly

Be careful while using:

- ❖ Functional words and content words
- ❖ Denotative and connotative words
- ❖ Abstract and concrete words

Functional words	Content words
Conjunctions, prepositions, articles and pronouns	Nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs

- ✓ **In business, avoid using words that are high in connotative meaning.**
- ✓ **Avoid using expressions of intimacy, humour and preaching.**

Use of words

- Make use of specific words.
- Prefer familiar to general words.
- Omit superfluous words.
- Avoid flabby phrases.

Perpetuate	Continue
Badmouth	Criticize
Terminate	End
Stipulate	Require
Encompass	Include
Monitor	Check
Reciprocate	Return
Rip off	Steal
Rat on	Inform
Guts	Nerve

Remember

- ✓ Use strong words.
- ✓ Focus on action verbs rather than state of being.
- ✓ Avoid overuse of adjectives and adverbs.
- ✓ Avoid over use of prepositions and prepositional phrases.

Mr. X has always been the most fortunate and luckiest businessman.

The boss took me into confidence and told me his secret.

Amenities	Features
Bill of sale	Written transfer of ownership
Agreement	Mutually agreed document
Disbursement	Payment of fund
Equity	Owner's value beyond debt
Symposium	Conference
Synchronous	At the same time
Brief	Summary of a legal case
Dossieur	A collection of papers related to a person or an event
Arrears	dues

Organizing Data

- Defining the idea
- Limiting the scope
- Grouping and patterning
- Outlining

The Direct Vs. Indirect Pattern

- Direct Pattern: Routine request, responses, orders and acknowledgements, non-sensitive memos etc.
- Direct method is also called frontloading
- Indirect patterns: Bad news, ideas requiring persuasion, sensitive news
  - Saves audience from sudden hurts
  - Reduces negative reaction
  - Orients readers to a fair hearing
- Letters of denial, refusal, disapproval

Conveying bad news

- Use indirect approach
- Evidence first and idea later
- Open with a neutral statement
- Bad news to be used in a dependent clause

We do not have vacant seats in core management, but we do have an alternative course named engineering management which carries the same market value.

Revd. : We have a course that caters to your need of management education since we cannot admit you in core management course.

Parallelism

- ✓ Readers appreciate easy to understand and balanced parts of a sentence.
- ✓ Use of similar structure to express similar idea prompts ease in reading.

The application for a grant asks for this information: funds required for employee salaries, how much we expect to spend on equipment, and what is the length of the project.

Revd. : The application for a grant asks for expenses on employee salaries, on equipment and on tenure of the project.

Contd.

- We need more laboratory space, additional personnel is required, and we also need much more capital.

Revd. :- We need more laboratory space, additional personnel and more capital.

- To lease an automobile is more expensive than buying one.

Revd. :- Leasing an automobile is more expensive than buying one.

Thank You