

On the Job **WRITING**



BASIC EDITION

Lesson 14

In this lesson, you will discover how to:

- Deliver information effectively
- Write like you speak

WRITING TO CONVEY INFORMATION

Kareem Carpenter is a social worker for his county's child protection services. He investigates reported cases of child neglect or abuse. To keep track of each family's situation, Kareem makes home visits and maintains detailed case records of each visit.



DEFINE IT! **Convey**

Convey refers to communicating or delivering information between the writer and the reader.

Today, Kareem met with the family of a nine-year-old girl named Sara, after a next-door neighbor reported possible abuse and violence in Sara's home. During his visit, Kareem developed many details that he must include in Sara's file.

Before he begins his report, Kareem thinks about the information he will provide and the best way to get his points across. In addition to himself, Kareem's supervisor will read the file. The report will also be available to Sara's family, if they request it, and to a judge if the Court becomes involved.

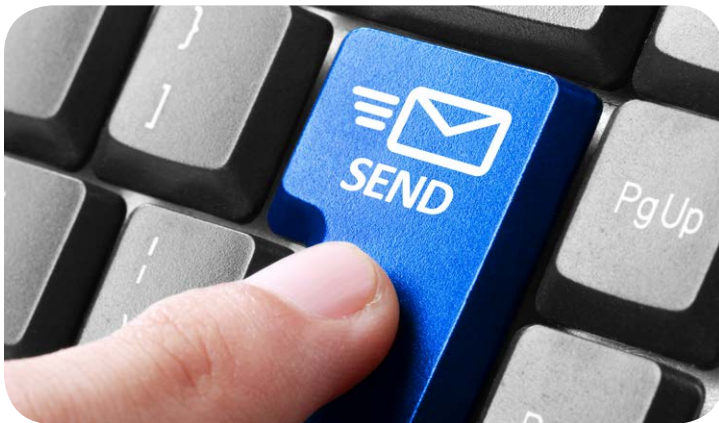
Since so many people may read Kareem's file, he knows he must state Sara's situation clearly and precisely. After he finishes his rough draft, he will review, edit and revise his report before transmitting it to his supervisor and storing it in Sara's file.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DELIVERING INFORMATION

The most common purpose of written communication at work is to convey information to another person or a group. Your job-related writing should be direct and well-focused. It should not ask readers to do extra mental work in order to understand.

When information is delivered in an easy-to-understand manner, readers can move forward quickly. That's important in today's fast-paced, technological world where the ability to receive and act on information promptly is highly valued.

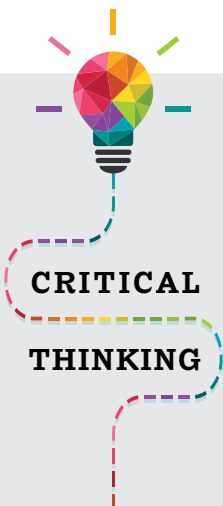
Sometimes writers try to convey too much information or too many ideas, and their message rambles on and on. Then readers become lost and confused and ask questions that should have been answered in the document.



If you're having trouble saying what you mean, remember that most documents start with a statement of the purpose.

Try writing your purpose in a sentence of 15 or fewer words. Then, put yourself in the reader's place and review what you wrote. Will the reader understand your message immediately?

Caution: When imagining yourself to be a reader, avoid reading what you meant to say, instead of what you actually wrote!



Identify the most important point in the following paragraph. What keeps the point from being clear?

During a disease pandemic, it is wise to be smart. There are many ways to be smart, but a good move is to follow the advice of medical experts. You can do that, but sometimes it's not easy. Anyway, you should try.

TALK TO YOURSELF

Do you have trouble getting started with writing? Then write like you speak. As the purpose of both speaking and writing is to get a message across, it makes sense that what works with speaking can work with writing also.

Assuming you can hold a good conversation, you can turn boring, unclear writing into strong writing by doing four things:

- First, say aloud what you want to communicate.
- Second, write what you said.
- Third, remove unnecessary words and sentences.
- Fourth, organize the sentences so they make sense.

Imagine you are having a phone conversation with a person or that the individual is sitting face-to-face with you. What will you say? Turn your words into a well-written communication.

Spoken Well

“I will send you my résumé tomorrow by email and come to your office at 9 a.m. Friday for an interview.”

Written Poorly

“The résumé you requested has been updated to show my commendable experience and will be disseminated to you via email tomorrow prior to the previously scheduled interview at 9 a.m. on Friday.”

Written Well

“You will receive my résumé by email tomorrow. I am looking forward to our 9 a.m. interview on Friday.”



ETHICS CONNECTION

Smart or Unethical?

You know your website will be down for maintenance two weeks from now, and you wonder whether you should notify customers. You are slammed with work right now, and you don't want to answer a bunch of questions from worried customers who won't have access to the site. What will you do?

LESSON 14 ACTIVITY



Imagine you are speaking to a group about nutrition. Rewrite the paragraph below so it sounds like what you would say in a conversation. Start by removing unnecessary words and sentences.

One way to use peanut butter is to coat it on apple slices. Peanut butter can be used in nutritious snacks, if you like peanut butter. Many people are allergic to peanuts. People should read all food labels to see if the labels say anything about peanut oil, since many other foods are produced on the same equipment as peanut-based items, and these foods can contain traces of peanuts, which could make you sick if you are allergic. You can also spread celery sticks with peanut butter.