Good Business Writer — study guide

Clear writing is a professional skill: a well-written report or e-mail gets read and acted on, while jargon gets ignored. This guide covers the three habits that make business writing good.

Use the active voice

Prefer the **active voice**, where the subject does the action. "The project was completed by the engineers" is an example of the **passive** voice — the engineers (the doers) are hidden at the end. The active version, "the engineers completed the project", is shorter and clearer.

Avoid jargon

Avoid industry jargon, acronyms and the latest "business speak". These force the reader to decode your meaning, and they date quickly. If a term is unavoidable, explain it plainly on first use.

Keep it simple and direct

Use simple, direct words and short, concise sentences. Plain words and short sentences respect the reader's time, reduce the chance of being misunderstood, and are far more likely to produce the action you want.

Key facts to remember

- Prefer the active voice ("the engineers completed the project"), not the passive.
- Avoid industry jargon, acronyms and "business speak".
- Use simple, direct words and short, concise sentences.

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