

## WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

This semester you will have the opportunity to communicate in both written and oral formats. To be an effective communicator, then, it is imperative that your writing skills allow your reader (essentially this is me.....the guy who is going to be giving you a grade, remember!?) to understand what you are saying and to become engaged with, and impressed by, your ideas.

Does this mean that you must have perfect writing and grammar skills to be understood? Well, it certainly doesn't hurt! Therefore, I encourage you to pay very close attention to your written communications. Whether you like to write or not, your professionalism and competence will be judged by your ability to communicate effectively through writing.

With that in mind, let me give you a few checkpoints that will come in handy while you are responding to our course activities:

1. **Keep It Simple** - "Content is King", so *what* you write is obviously the key to good written communication. But many people don't like to read any more than they like to write. Therefore, to completely engage your reader (including myself, as I am grading your assignments), as Albert Einstein said, "Make everything as simple as possible.....but not too simple." Don't pile on, get to the point and get out.
2. **Stay Organized** - Follow a pattern/sequence with your ideas, which will make it easier for your reader to follow and understand what you are saying.
3. **Maintain Standards** - All written submissions must be typed and stapled. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count. Do not use Instant Messaging protocol. This is business and you are evaluated on your communication abilities. If you need help, there is plenty available. And don't hesitate to have someone proofread your work.
4. **Look Good** - As one of my friends used to say, "if you're not good looking, you can still look good". How do you make your writing look good? Use short paragraphs (4-6 sentences) and keep your paragraphs focused on 1 primary thought. If necessary, use bullet points to highlight key thoughts. Also, use white space....empty lines between paragraphs, which contributes to good eye appeal.
5. **Remember Your Audience** - Never forget why you are communicating. You are attempting to convey your ideas to another person, and without that other person there will be no communication. Make your ideas interesting, understandable and to the point. If your communication is not engaging (doesn't draw the reader into the process) or interesting (doesn't keep the reader in the process), you have wasted both your time and their time.
6. **Style/formatting** - All written work should be submitted in Memo format. This is not complicated, and has nothing to do with the content, but rather the physical format on the page. A memo format simply is a method of including the following at the beginning of your communication:
  - o To: (name of the individual you are communicating with)
  - o From: (your name)
  - o Date: (the date)
  - o Re: (the topic of the memo)

page 2:

A further discussion on writing a business memo can be found online at the Purdue Online Writing Lab. The cite is:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/01>

As stated by Myke McMullen, Department Chair, Business Administration, Long Beach City College, the creator of this Written Communication outline, "If you keep these points in mind throughout your careers, not just in class, you will become a very effective communicator."

A Grading Rubric for your written assignments can be found at:

<http://business.lbcc.edu>

- Select: Business Faculty and Staff
- Select: Greenberg, B.
- Select: Grading Rubrics