

Instructions for the in-Class Activities on Using Plain English

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My Favorite Assignment

Yingqin Liu, Ph.D., Cameron University, USA

Email: yliu@cameron.edu

Handout for Part III: Small Group Editing Exercise (adopted from *Technical communication* 10th ed. by Mike Markel)

Instruction: With the same peer, please revise the given sentences below by following the instruction for each. Please incorporate your understanding on the principles of Plain English just read into your revisions.

1. The following sentences are too long. Break each sentence into two or more sentences.
 - a). If we get the contract, we must be ready by June 1 with the necessary personal and equipment, so with this in mind a staff meeting, which all group managers are expected to attend, is scheduled for February 12.
 - b). Although we had a frank discussion with Backer's legal staff, we were unable to get them to specify what they would be looking for in an out-of-court settlement, but they gave us a strong impression that they would rather settle out of court.

2. Revise the following sentences to focus on the real verb or to avoid nominalization.
 - a). Pollution constitutes a threat to the Matthews Wildlife Preserve.
 - b). Evaluation of the gumming tendency of the four tire types will be accomplished by comparing the amount of rubber that can be scraped from the tires.

3. Revise the following sentences to remove the redundancies.
 - a). During the course of the next two hours, you will see a demonstration of our improved speech-recognition software, which will be introduced for the first time in November.
 - b). In grateful appreciation of your patronage, we are pleased to offer you this free gift as a small token gesture of our gratitude.

4. Revise the following sentences to eliminate the obvious material.
 - a). After you have installed DataQuick, please spend a few minutes reading the feedback questionnaire, then respond to the questions and send your responses to us.

- b). To register to take a course offered by the university, you must first determine whether the university will be offering that course that semester.
5. Revise the following sentences to eliminate unnecessary prepositional phrases.
- a). The complexity of the module will hamper the ability of the operator in the diagnosis of problems in equipment configuration.
- b). The purpose of this test of your aptitudes is to help you with the question of the decision of which major to enroll in.
6. Revise the following sentences to make them more concise.
- a). The instruction manual for the new copier is lacking in clarity and completeness.
- b). We remain in communication with our sales staff on a weekly basis.
7. Rewrite the following sentences in the form of a list.
- a). There are several problems with the online registration system at Dickerson University. First, lists of closed sections are updated only once a day. Second, there is no waiting list or notification system for students who wish to enroll in a full course. Third, the Registrar's office does not have enough trained people on hand to help with problem.
- b). The causes of burnout can be studied from three perspectives: psychological- the roles of sleep, diet, and physical fatigue; psychological- the roles of guilt, fear, jealousy, and frustration; environmental- the role of physical surroundings at home and at work.
8. Decide whether the passive voice in the following sentences is used appropriately.
- a). The shuttle bus will be driven to local care facilities to provide with shopping opportunities.
- b). The telescope was moved to the Orion system to observe the newly discovered nebula.