Effective Business Writing

Identify your Purpose

Why am I sending this message?
What do I hope to achieve?

- Inform
  - Explain procedures
  - Announce meetings
  - Transmit findings
- Persuade
  - Sell products
  - Convince managers
  - Win customers

Tailor Document to Audience

- Who will read the document?
- What do they know about the subject?
- Why will they read the document?
- How will they read the document?
- Is there a secondary audience?

Profile the Audience

- Have a specific person in mind as your audience
- Place yourself in his/her position
- Ask: what does he/she want to know
Focus on Benefit to Reader not Sender

Focus on Sender
We are requiring all staffers to complete these forms in compliance with company policy

Focus on Reader
Please complete these forms so that you will be eligible for health and dental benefits

Use a Polite, but Natural Tone

Negative
You failed to include your credit card so we can't mail your order.

Positive
We'll mail your order as soon as we receive your card.

Be Accurate

1. Make sure all information is accurate
2. Include all information to make your document comprehensive
Be Clear and Concise

3. Be Concise
4. Be clear, clear, clear
5. Be grammatically correct
6. Use shorter paragraphs with topic sentences
7. Create sentence variety
8. Edit for errors

Be Aware of Document Appearance

9. Use the correct format
10. Create documents that are visually appealing