

The Golden Rule of Writing:
Write as you would be written to.

Get to the point—first.

Use plain English instead of jargon or technical language.

- Choose short words instead of big ones when you can.
- Use personal pronouns--I, we, us, our, you--instead of long titles.

If you can cut a word out, cut it out.

- Edit with a chainsaw.
- Cut glue.
- Cut redundancies.

Choose your verbs well.

- Use active voice.
- Don't change verbs into nouns.
- Avoid "would" and "could" if you mean "will" or "can."

Control sentence and paragraph length.

- Use a very short sentence or paragraph for emphasis.
- Try to average about 15 words per sentence.
- Vary sentence and paragraph length to keep the reader's interest.

Choose a format that attracts the reader's eye. Use

- lists,
- white space,
- subheadings,
- boldface, and
- maps, diagrams or tables.

Read your writing aloud to "hear" what the reader hears. Good writing sounds like a person talking to a person.