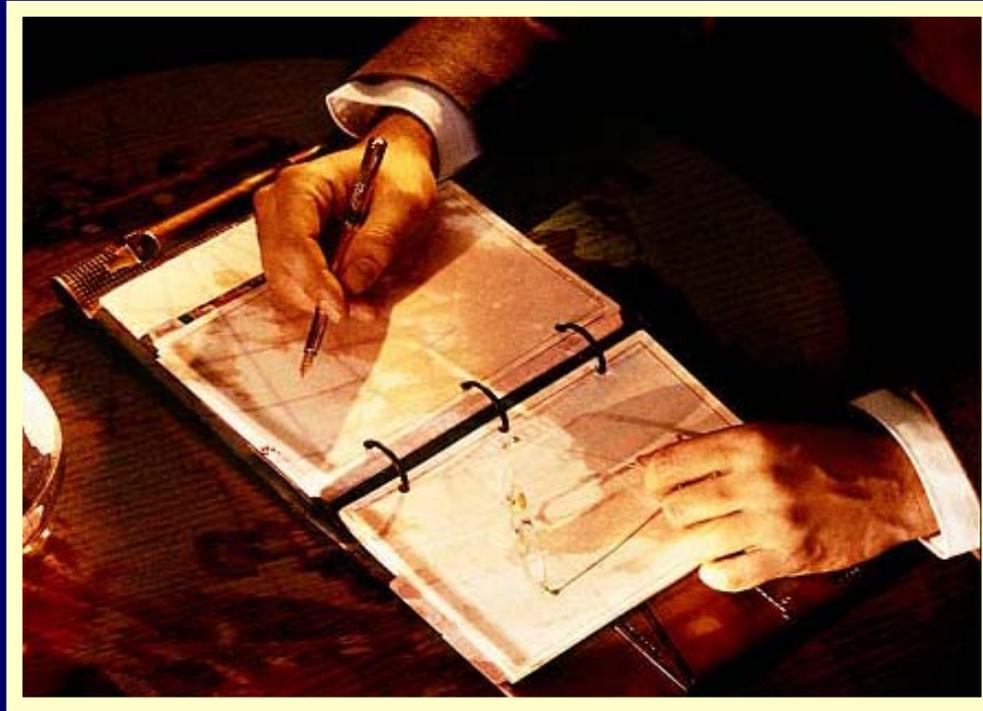


Business Writing



Business Writing

What's wrong with my writing skills?



I write as well as anyone!

(I passed Composition 101!)

Business Writing References



Business Writing



- *The Elements of Style*
- DAU Courseware
- *Contract Management (NCMA)*



We will concentrate in these areas:

Business Writing

- ◆ Purpose
- ◆ Organization
- ◆ Format
- ◆ Editing





Purpose: Why you are writing...

Business Writing

- Explain/Justify an action

J & A
Source Selection Decision
Contracting Officer's Decision

- Inform

← PWS, Contract, Amendment, Modification

- Influence

Negotiation

- Deliver Good/Bad News

Debrief

- Request Action

RFP, RFQ, IFB
Revised proposals
Show cause



Business writing affects the...

Business Writing

- ✓ Performance Work Statement
- ✓ Contract
- ✓ J & A
- ✓ Source Selection Plan
- ✓ Source Selection Decision
- ✓ Amendments / Modifications
- ✓ Contracting Officer's Decision

...to name a few!

Getting Organized

Business Writing

How do I start..?

- Questioning
- Brainstorming
- Tree Diagramming





Questioning

Business Writing

What? Outcome? When?

Point of contact?

How long?

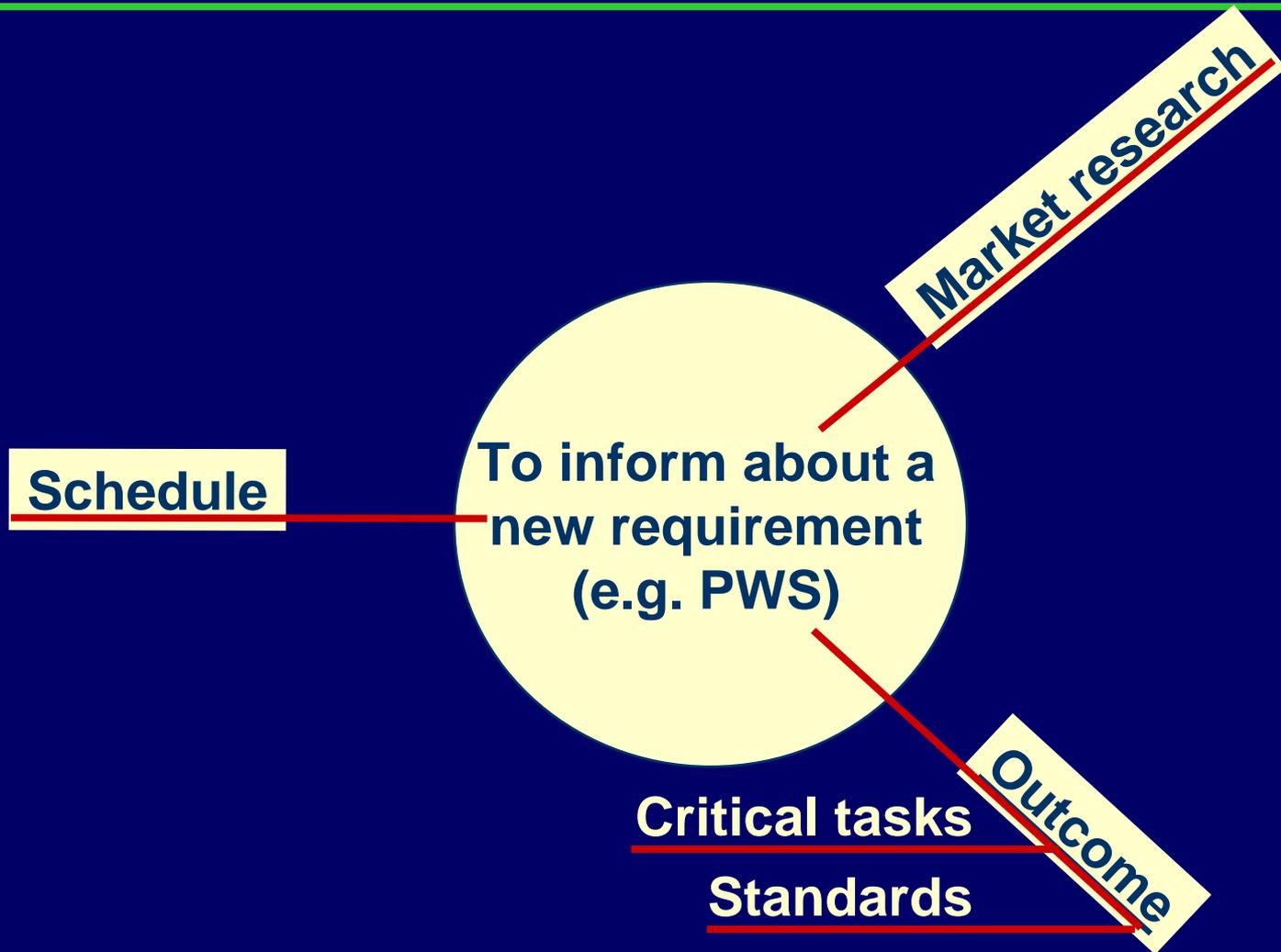
How many?

Where?



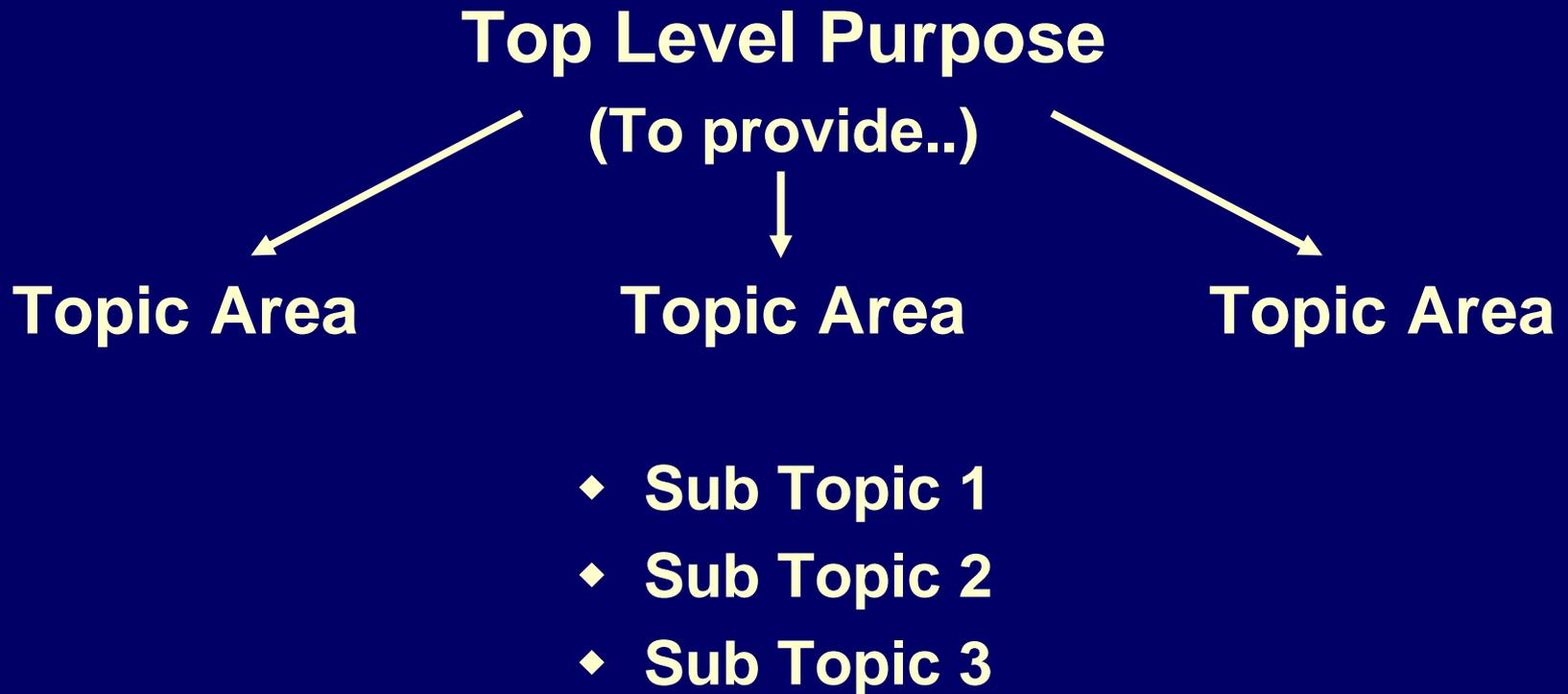
Brainstorming

Business Writing





Tree Diagramming





Performance Requirements Summary

Business Writing

Task	Performance Standard	Performance Indicator	ALP %	Surveillance Method	Incentive
		Actual Performance			
	Type of Standard "How Wells"			Type of Sampling	

Critical Tasks
"Do Whats"

Acceptable Level of Performance

Y/N
+/-



Format

Where do I start..?

- Order of importance
- Chronological
- Process
- General - Specific



Choose an approach before you begin drafting!



Visual Presentation

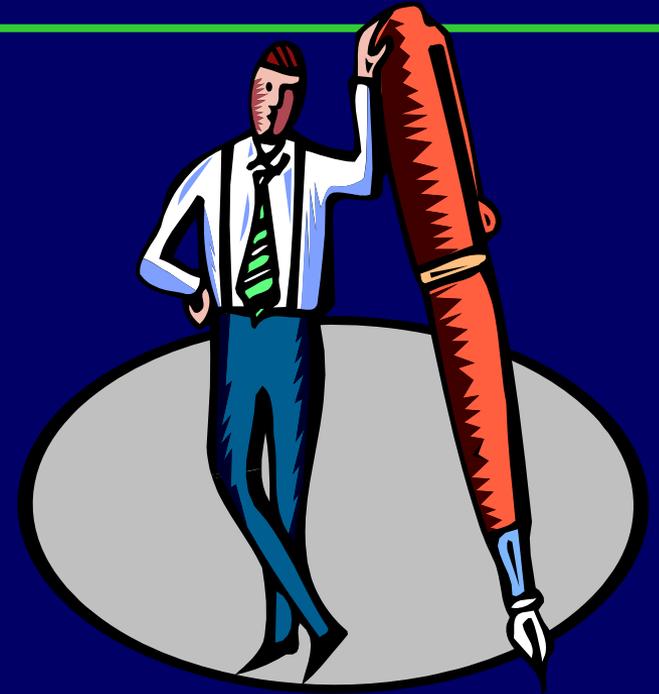
Business Writing

- Font type
The Army requires. ..
The Army requires...
THE ARMY REQUIRES...
- Font Size
The Army requires...
The Army requires...
The Army requires...
- Margins
No margin, 1/2", 1"
- Use of 'white space'
 - Line spacing
 - Indentation
 - Paragraphs
 - Margins (again)



Drafting

- ✓ Organization
- ✓ Format
- ☐ Editing



Rules of the *draft*:

- Write main points; don't worry about details
- Rough sentence structure, grammar, spelling
- Start point may be front, middle, end



Editing is...

'Happy'? or 'Glad'?



- **iterative**
- **dynamic**
- **potentially never-ending**

- **Basics**
- **Tighten**
- **Fine tune**



'Readability'

Business Writing

I must communicate!



- Sentence length
- # multi-syllable words
- Writing standard
- Complexity

How well does my document convey the purpose?



Paragraphs

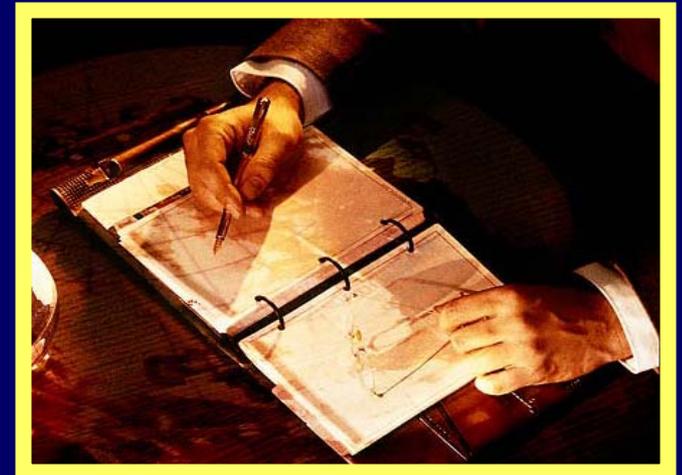
How many... words? lines? sentences?

Single topic

Introductory or Transition sentence

Signal to the reader

Visual presentation





Edit for Content & Clarity

CONTENT

✓ Organization

✓ Format



Tasks & schedule identified?

All information required for a response?

CLARITY

Accurate?

Complete?

Require assumptions?

Conflicts and contractions?



Brevity

~~At her Director's suggestion, and with the help of~~
~~counsel, the Contracting Officer wrote~~ detailed
debriefing letters to the three unsuccessful
offerors ~~in hope of avoiding a challenge.~~

The Contracting Officer wrote a detailed
debriefing letter to the unsuccessful offerors.



Spelling

succedaneum

Spell check won't help you with these:

there - their - they're

its - it's

were - we're

affect - effect

principle - principal

complement - compliment

accept - except

to - two - too

night not 'nite'

through not 'thru'



Word Choice: Phrases

Business Writing

change the paradigm

think outside of the box

It is important to note...
Notwithstanding the fact that
During such time...

Avoid unnecessary preambles



Word Choice

~~may, should, can~~

~~any either and/or~~

The Contractor shall wash the window **thoroughly**.

The Contractor shall provide services that meet or exceed ISO xxxx. Electronic reports shall be made to the COR by 1600 hours daily. It shall reflect the areas of management, availability, and timeliness of response. When it cannot comply with the standard, it shall give him notice before it is breached.



Grammar

Business Writing

**Rule of the last
Antecedent**

split infinitives

gerunds

dangling participles

intransitive verb



Voice

I shall always remember my visit to Hawaii.

My visit to Hawaii shall always be remembered .

There were a great number of dead leaves lying on the ground.

Dead leaves covered the ground.



Use the *active voice*...

Sealed proposals will be received at this office until 12 o'clock noon on February 1, 1908, on behalf of the Board of Ordnance and Fortification for furnishing a heavier-than-air flying machine. All proposals received will be turned over to the Board of Ordnance and Fortification at its first meeting after February 1 for its official action.



Activities and Accomplishments

Activities are the actions taken to produce results and are generally described using verbs.

- *developing software programs*
- *answering customer questions*
- *writing reports*

Accomplishments are (the results of) the products or services of individual contractor and team activities and are generally described using nouns.

- a software program that works
- accurate guidance to customers
- a report complete and accurate



Ambiguities

Ambiguity:

- A requirement that is susceptible to more than one reasonable interpretation.
- The interpretation is consistent with the solicitation when read as a whole.

Ambiguities are construed against the drafter



Avoid Ambiguity...



Common Ambiguities:

- Inconsistent requirements
- Calling a requirement by different names
- Conflicting or unreasonable schedules
- Incomplete requirement descriptions
- Language



Avoid these pitfalls

Business Writing

- ◆ **Insufficient information – answer the reader's questions**
- ◆ **Assuming the reader's knowledge**
- ◆ **Vague or ambiguous**
- ◆ **Too specific**
- ◆ **Working alone**





Let's apply some of this...

Business Writing

Oh-oh, here comes the quiz!



Pick the grammatically correct sentence!



Common Grammatical Mistakes

1. Your home and all it's contents are only protected if you lock the door when you leave.
2. Your home and all its contents are only protected if you lock the door when you leave.
3. There going on they're weekly lunch date to the restaurant over their.
4. They're going on their weekly lunch date to the restaurant over there.
5. Gold prices have no affect on purchasing power.
6. Gold prices have no effect on purchasing power.
7. The earning report is not expected to effect the stock price in the long-term.
8. The earnings report is not expected to affect the stock price in the long-term



Common Grammatical Mistakes- II

9. I'm going to lay down for a nap.

10. I'm going to lie down for a nap.

11. Your smart to realize that your flip-flops aren't appropriate office attire.

12. You're smart to realize that your flip-flops aren't appropriate office attire.

13. Don't loose that house key.

14. Don't lose the house key.



Common Grammatical Mistakes- III

15. First, you write and polish your resume, than you look for a job.

16. First, you write and polish your resume, than you look for a job.

17. Joyce is prettier then Sarah.

18. Joyce is prettier than Sarah.

19. My computer at work is different than the one I have at home.

20. My computer at work is different from the one I have at home.



Common Grammatical Mistakes- IV

21. The principle reason for the set-aside is the *Rule of Two*.

22. The principal reason for the set-aside is the *Rule of Two*.

23. The principal of full an open competition is basic to federal procurement.

24. The principle of full an open competition is basic to federal procurement.

25. The prime's subcontractors complemented its basic capabilities.

26. The Director complimented the work of the staff.

Summary: Business Writing

Business Writing

