This presentation will discuss and explore:

- Writing to ensure logic and consistency
- Selecting appropriate words to accurately convey the intended meaning
- The critical importance of editing, reviewing, and redrafting
TINA THE TECH WRITER

AS YOU REQUESTED, I INCREASED THE SPEED OF MY WRITING.

MY BREAKTHROUGH WAS REALIZING THAT ACCURACY AND CLARITY ARE OPTIONAL!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MICROMANAGE ME BY READING IT ALL AND POINTING OUT THE ERRORS?
WRITING TO ENSURE LOGIC AND CONSISTENCY

Before you start:

– Know your audience
– Determine the purpose of the report
– Collect adequate information
– Brainstorm by listing relevant ideas
– Develop an outline
WRITING TO ENSURE LOGIC AND CONSISTENCY

Logic

– Assumption: Our readers will understand what we are trying to do and why
  • Correction: Our readers do not always understand
How do you ensure logic?

– Have a premise
– Support for this main idea
– Reasoning, the “why”
What do I mean by “Consistency”?  
- The orderly presentation of a set of linked/associated elements in the text  
- Inconsistent messages create ambiguity

Keep a consistent design/order throughout your documents
Writing to Ensure Logic and Consistency

– Consistency of several elements is needed
  • Grammar
  • Syntax
  • Point of view
  • Message
  • Spelling
  • Documents
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

YOUR SECOND PARAGRAPH IS POINTLESS AND CONFUSING. LET’S JUST DELETE IT.

I’M A HIGHLY TRAINED TECHNICAL WRITER. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU CAN DO MY JOB BETTER?

THAT MIGHT BE A TRICK QUESTION, BUT I’Mretty SURE THE ANSWER IS PARAGRAPH TWO.
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Speaking vs. Writing
“VIGOROUS WRITING IS CONCISE. A SENTENCE SHOULD CONTAIN NO UNNECESSARY WORDS, A PARAGRAPH NO UNNECESSARY SENTENCES, FOR THE SAME REASON THAT A DRAWING SHOULD HAVE NO UNNECESSARY LINES AND A MACHINE NO UNNECESSARY PARTS.”

WILLIAM STRUNK, JR.

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SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Eliminate words that explain the obvious or provide excessive detail

WORDY: I received your inquiry that you wrote about the new equipment, and read it thoroughly. (15 words)

CONCISE: I received your inquiry about the new equipment. (8 words)
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Eliminate unnecessary determiners and modifiers

WORDY: Balancing the budget by Friday is an impossibility without some kind of extra help. (14 words)

CONCISE: Balancing the budget by Friday is impossible without extra help. (10 words)
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Some words and phrases that can often be removed to make sentences clearer:
  - kind of
  - sort of
  - type of
  - really
  - basically
  - for all intents and purposes
  - definitely
  - actually
  - generally
  - individual
  - specific
  - particular
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Omit repetitive wording

WORDY: The supply manager considered the correcting typewriter an unneeded luxury. (10 words)

CONCISE: The supply manager considered the correcting typewriter a luxury. (9 words)
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Omit redundant pairs
  - Past memories
  - Various differences
  - Each individual _____
  - Basic fundamentals
  - True facts
  - Important essentials
  - Future plans
  - Completely finish
- Terrible tragedy
- End result
- Final outcome
- Free gift
- Past history
- Unexpected surprise
- Sudden crisis
- Very unique
SELECTING APPROPRIATE WORDS TO CONVEY THE INTENDED MEANING

- Avoid jargon and abbreviations
  - Jargon is field specific
  - Do others know what that acronym means?
  - Does this word have multiple meanings?
  - How many syllables are in that word?

keep it simple
GAAA! I FEEL A SUDDEN PANG OF CARING ABOUT THE QUALITY OF MY WORK!

GLUG GLUG GLUG

DID YOU KILL IT?

I THINK SO, BUT I’D BETTER ROLL A DONUT IN FRONT OF THE CAVE.
Improve the text

– Is the message clearly defined?
– Are the key points and details easily identified?
– Is there background information that may be missing?
– Is the content accurate and complete with no exaggerations?
– Does the data support the conclusions?
Incorporate peer review

- Request both positive and negative comments
  - Ask why those particular remarks were made
- Consider the comments
- Incorporate those that clarify and improve the message
- Thank the reviewer for their assistance
- Keep it simple, brief, and attractive
- Use appropriate descriptive words
- Avoid abbreviations and jargon
- Verify technical accuracy
- Review, edit, and revise
QUESTIONS?

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