

WRITING EFFECTIVE SENTENCES
Regis Writing Center

Revise the following sentences to address identified problems.

Use Active, not Passive, Voice

1. The accident was caused by mechanical failures.
2. The decision was made by the board of directors at its meeting in March.
3. In the experiment, it was assumed that workers would be resentful of a capricious supervisor.

Use Strong, Forceful Verbs

1. Many writers show a definite preference for using nouns made from verbs.
2. Every Saturday night the cowboys would stream into town looking for baths and hell-raising.
3. We are often fearful of things and situations that are unknown.

Begin Sentences with the Logical Subject

1. It is possible that airline profits will suffer further.
2. There are many reasons why students fail.
3. What is obvious about this plan is that it is ill-conceived and ill-timed.

Be Concise

1. The receptionist wanted the walls painted blue in color.
2. In design, the mall will be rectangular in shape with regard to its appearance, but in function, with regard to the smooth, unimpeded flow of pedestrian traffic, it will act as if it were circular in shape due to the internal layout and design.
3. The reason for what appears at first to be madness is a theory, which has been shown to have validity, that extended endurance training perfects the ability of the muscles to use energy and actually results in greater endurance capacity.

Delete Unnecessary Words

1. The concept of freedom is sometimes difficult to explain.
2. The nature of man's intellect is impossible to define uniquely.

Delete Strings of Prepositional Phrases and Compound Prepositions

1. Many of the members of the club will be available for the official photograph of the club during the party on Wednesday evening.
2. Many of the senior officers of some of the leading corporations in this city are among the staunchest of supporters of this bond issue.
3. In connection with the original investigation, a number of welds were reinspected with regard to the composition of the weld material and to check the integrity of the welds.

Use Parallel Thoughts and Phrases

1. A new employee orientation program is both worthwhile and a necessity.
2. The chosen site should have adequate facilities for receiving raw materials and distribution of finished products.
3. As a merger prospect, the company is well capitalized, soundly managed, and a good profit potential has been demonstrated.

Use Complete Comparisons

1. The Xerox copier is better.
2. This copy of the report is more confusing.

Avoid Clichés and Jargon

1. There is a fine line between the brink of disaster and the road to success, often causing people to seek any port in the storm.
2. Students must utilize the learning resource center and construct a grapho-motor representation of their sources.

Reorder Words for Emphasis

The end of the sentence is most memorable; therefore, put new or important material at the end. While the beginning of the sentence is less emphatic and usually contains words or ideas from the preceding sentence, it is the other option for emphasis. Words in the middle of a sentence just get buried.

Example: He gave a significant contribution to the campaign in April.
 In April he gave the campaign a significant contribution.
 A significant contribution was what he gave to the campaign in April.