

Verb	An action word	walk / talk / study / decide
Noun	Person, place, thing	Susan / Cork / table / performance
Article	Goes before a noun	an hour / a PRSA / the problem
Pronoun	Replaces a noun	I/ me, you, he/ him, she/ her, it, they
Adjective	Describes a noun	easy / problematic / reassuring
Compound adjective	Two or more words placed before a noun	The long-term study has been approved. The debt-laden company went bankrupt.
Adverb	Describes a verb	She works well. / He spoke too quickly.
Conjunction	Links phrases, sentences & paragraphs	however / and / although / but / so / furthermore / in addition / nevertheless
Clauses	Independent clauses form sentences Dependent clauses cannot stand alone	An application may only be made within 21 days (independent clause) after the demand is served (dependent clause).

Strong sentences

- Show unity of thought: use one main clause and preferably only one subsidiary clause.
- Keep sentences short and simple. The longer the sentence, the harder it is for readers to absorb the meaning.
- Begin with the main subject so readers can understand context (i.e. do not begin with conditions).
- Use a basic structure: subject - verb - object
 - The subject is the noun that 'does' the verb
 - The object is the noun that 'receives' the verb
 This clear, concise structure is called the 'active voice'.

Active sentences

subject	verb	object
Mr Farrell	gave	a presentation.
This email	solves	the problem.
The client	informed	Peter and me.

Where is the building (object) you (subject) bought (verb)?

Use the passive voice when the person 'doing the action' is not known, not relevant or less important than the object.

Passive sentences

The witness was called by the Defence.
The report will be leaked.

Strong paragraphs

- Start a new paragraph for a change or a development of the topic.
- Short paragraphs help readers to absorb information.
- When dividing longer paragraphs, start the new ones with a conjunction (as a signpost for readers).
- Start with the key point
 - you're not writing a suspense novel...

COMMON ERRORS

Singular / plural	Ensure the noun and verb agree: both are singular or both are plural	The IMF is / the Government has / the clients are / one in five clients is . . .
Not using the active voice	The active voice implies transparency. Readers often need to know who did what.	It was decided to proceed. (passive) The TD decided to proceed. (active)
Using wordy phrases	Choose simple verbs instead of wordy phrases.	perform an assessment of > assess carry out an evaluation of > evaluate conduct a review of > review
'that' vs 'which'	When using 'which' to add extra information, you must use commas. When using 'that' or 'which' and you are defining (not describing), do not use commas.	My office, which has a wonderful view, is being renovated. The building that is for sale is over there. The building which is for sale is over there.
Make it reader-focused	Write for readers and address them as 'you'.	Instead of 'I was asked...' write 'you wanted to know...'