



Business Communications – Getting Started



Bowker COMM 390

Learn the rules like a pro so you can break them like an artist.

– Pablo Picasso



Basic Purpose of Business Writing

- ▶ To inform
- ▶ To request or persuade
- ▶ To build goodwill
- ▶ To promote yourself or your company – in the best light possible

WHAT'S YOUR PURPOSE?



School vs. Work

SCHOOL

To demonstrate what you know

Information is known to your instructor.

Instructor will read and assess even if they disagree with your opinion.

BUSINESS

To offer a solution that meets the needs of the company.

Information is usually new to your reader.

Will be scanned and read only if it seems relevant and important.

Mini-Assignment – answer on Connect

You will find this in **Module 2**.

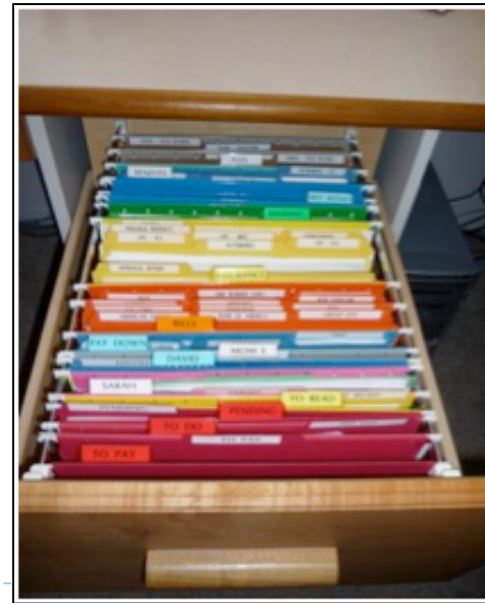
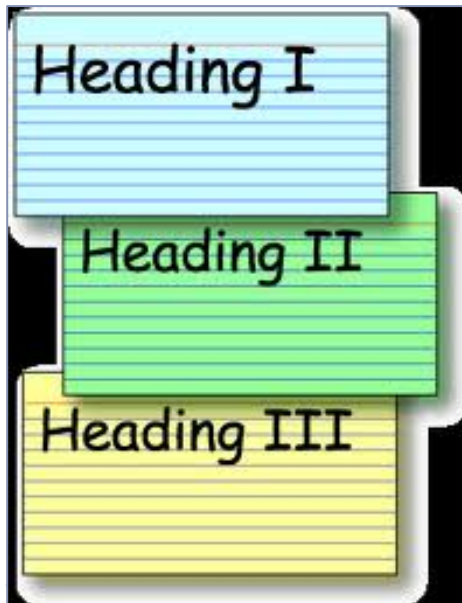
Identify 5 different purposes for a business report. Provide specific examples.

E.g. To evaluate the response our customers have to our new online store.



Good Writing is:

- ▶ Organized to meet the needs of the reader
- ▶ Formatted to make scanning easy.
 - ▶ Most readers will scan and read only if it seems relevant and important.



Ask yourself:

- ▶ Is it clear?
- ▶ Is it complete?
- ▶ Is it correct?
- ▶ Does it save the reader time?
- ▶ Does it build good will?



The 8 Cs of Communication

- ▶ Clear.
- ▶ Concise.
- ▶ Concrete.
- ▶ Correct.
- ▶ Coherent.
- ▶ Complete.
- ▶ Courteous.
- ▶ Credible.



Source: mindtools.com



Know Your Audience

- ▶ You will write differently for different audiences.
- ▶ You must use a tone appropriate to your audience and to your company.
- ▶ Some readers may have little background knowledge or context.
- ▶ Your work might not be read thoroughly or to the end.
- ▶ Understand your reader's level of expertise and technical knowledge.



Make a **Reasonable** Assumption

Only if you audience can be categorized fairly. Consider:

- ▶ **Demographics** – age, gender, ethnicity, education, income, occupation, home ownership, children...
- ▶ **Geography** – rural, urban, northern, Canadian, North American...
- ▶ **Values** – religious or political affiliation, attitudes, lifestyle...
- ▶ **Behaviour** – purchasing habits, where they shop, how often they buy certain items...



Mini-Assignment – answer on Connect

Why could you reasonably categorize a group as *North American*, but not reasonably categorize another group as *Asian*?

List 3 reasonable assumptions you can make about the difference between recent BComm Grads from Sauder, and a group of lawyers who are all working mothers.



A Professional Tone

- ▶ Use plain English
 - ▶ Say what you mean
 - ▶ Ensure it is easy to read
- ▶ Avoid:
 - ▶ Obsolete language
 - ▶ Intimacy
 - ▶ Humour
 - ▶ Preaching & Bragging



Plan Your Approach

- ▶ Know what you want to say before you start writing.
 - ▶ What are your key points?
 - ▶ Plan the order you will say it in.
- ▶ Identify the background info or data required.
- ▶ Determine the level of detail necessary.
- ▶ Complete the analysis.
- ▶ Draw the conclusions.



Impress them with your smart ideas, rather than your smart words.

