

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE ANSWER KEY

Active Voice

Re-write the following sentences into the active voice. (Hint: The order of parts of speech should be S–V–O.)

1. To be included in the proposal will be a list of issues, their solutions, and strategies for implementation.

This sentence has a few problems; however, we're concerned only with the active voice. We don't know who will include the items in the proposal. The following examples are potential ways to rewrite this sentence:

- Our proposal will include... [list of items]
- We will include in the proposal... [list of items]
- The team will include in the proposal... [list of items]

2. The updated coding samples were sent to several reviewers last Tuesday, but the document wasn't received.

Who sent the coding samples and which reviewers didn't receive them? All of the reviewers? Some of the reviewers? The following example is one way to rewrite this:

- Cindy sent the coding samples to the reviewers, but three of the five reviewers didn't receive the document. [You could name which three.]

3. The delivery van was driven by Kumar, but the log book wasn't updated with the mileage.

We know Kumar drove the van, but we don't know who was supposed to update the log book. Kumar? Someone else?

- Kumar drove the delivery van, but he didn't update the log book with the mileage.
- Kumar drove the delivery van, but Susan didn't update the log book with the mileage.

4. The narrative written by our team wasn't included in the final proposal.

- Our team's narrative wasn't included in the final proposal.
- The narrative our team wrote wasn't included in the final proposal.

5. The SOP was written by who?

- Who wrote the SOP?

Strong Verbs

Rewrite each the following sentences using a strong verb and to clarify ambiguous adverbs, if any.

1. Be sure to check that you have edited the report before you do any more work on it in order to be ensured that everything is correct.
 - Edit the report before you do any more work on it.
 2. The purpose of the warehouse is to store all of the equipment that the state owns.
 - The warehouse stores all of the state-owned equipment.
 3. We are in the investigative stage for determining why the data seems doesn't seem correct.
 - We are investigating why the data appears incorrect.
 4. There are several reasons why we would recommend writing a new procedure for collecting water related data.
 - We have several reasons for recommending a new procedure for collecting water-related data.
 5. We asked the land owner to correct the problem immediately.

Depending on the meaning, these rewrites are more precise:

 - We immediately asked the land owner to correct the problem.
 - We asked the land owner to immediately correct the problem.
 6. Julietta was very enthusiastic about her finding of the resolution of the system problem.
 - Julietta was enthusiastic about solving the system problem.
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Improving Clarity and Conciseness

The following sentences are examples of ways to improve the clarity and conciseness of the originals. In addition, all grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors have been corrected.

1. Please let us know if you have additional concerns we can help with.
 2. If you follow these instructions, your computer should provide good service for years to come.
 3. The number of employees enrolled in our training sessions has decreased.
 4. Our new data collection device shows an improvement in data quality.
 5. Because of the upcoming holiday, no one will be in the office for the next two weeks.
 6. For you to be in compliance with your effective permit, you must submit quarterly DMRs.
 7. After all of the information has been filled out and the proper quote is attached, your manager must be asked to approve the purchase but not if the purchase is on a form because then a manager's approval is not needed because the items will be listed on the form.
 8. The completed document will be signed by both the project engineer responsible for the build and the future facility manager. It is incumbent upon the project engineer and facility manager to validate the work and sign the document. The document should be fully complete six weeks after handoff to DNRC.
 9. BLM data indicates that the permittee developed the spring and that, at that time, the flow was 1.00 GPM. The guideline for this diversion and conveyance system is 1.00 GPM. In the Motion to Amend, the claimants request a reduction in volume to 1.61 AC-FT.
 10. Note the following important deadlines:
 - To keep the priority date on your permit application, you must send us all of the required information identified in this letter within 30 days of the date of this letter.
 - The priority date on your permit application will change if you send us all of the required information between 31 and 90 days of the date of this letter. [state in what way it will change]
 - Your application will be terminated if you fail to send us all of the required information after 90 days of the date of this letter.
 - If you would like to request an extension, you must do so in writing. If granted, the extension, will be for a maximum of 15 days.
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Reducing the Fluff

Rewrite each of the following sentences to get rid of the words and phrases that don't add meaning.

1. I am writing you this email because I want to ask you if you could work my shift for me on Tuesday, July 18?
 - Would you work my shift for me on Tuesday, July 18?
2. It has come to our attention that we need to address several safety issues.
 - We must address several safety issues.
3. Each technician performing work is required to be properly trained and authorized for the task at hand. Qualifications need to be assessed in advance of scheduling the work in order to avoid production delays due to lack of training.
 - Technicians must be properly trained and authorized for the tasks they perform. To avoid production delays, we will assess their qualifications before scheduling work.
4. Our end goal is to take the bull by the horns and solve the problem once and for all by thinking outside the box.

The clichés in this sentence create ambiguity, which makes rewriting it difficult. What is the problem that needs solving? What is the proposed solution? Is there a solution, or is the writer asking for suggestions? Following are two potential rewrites, depending on the context and writer's intent, with a made-up problem:

- Our goal is to create a custom software tool that will flag where data is missing.
- To solve the problem of missing data, we are working with two other teams who also use this software tool.

As a writer, your goal is clearly state what you mean to say rather than relying on hollow clichés to make your point.

Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation

All of the errors in the original sentences are corrected in the following sentences.

1. Based on the materials recieved to date, the Department cannot approve the monitoring-well installation plan as is.
2. For the reasons given in the following five factor analysis, the Department believes the proposed rules, as described above, are justified.
3. The project manager showed me her “secret hideaway,” a place she goes to escape from the “worker bees.”
4. DNRC inspected the facility on September 25, 2011, and again on October 24; however, the permit violations had still not been corrected.
5. Therefore, the city should submit copies of laboratory results with the reporting limits for all parameters that were analyzed by the contract laboratory, including, but not limited to, metals, volatiles, and semi-volatiles.
6. My favorite season is summer, but I also like winter for the skiing.