TECHNICAL WRITING PROGRAM
Quick Practices WORKBOOK

Section 1: QUICK PRACTICES

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 1: ELIMINATING WORDINESS

DIRECTIONS: The phrases in this Quick Practice are often used in technical writing to perform a job that one word could easily do. For each of the phrases, fill in the blank with a one-word substitute.

1. due to the fact that   _____
2. in the event that   _____
3. in the amount of   _____
4. with regard to   _____
5. it is necessary that   _____
6. in order to   _____
7. undertake a study of _____
8. the possibility exists for   _____
9. on two separate occasions   _____
10. check on   _____

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 2: ELIMINATING WORDINESS

DIRECTIONS: Use the **5 Steps to Eliminate Wordiness** to tighten the following sentences. Keep the sentence's original content and meaning; eliminate only those words that add no meaning to the sentence. *If you printed a copy of the workbook, you can use the proofreader's mark for "delete" to indicate the words that should be eliminated. Run a line through the word(s) and then up above the word(s) to create a pig's tail:*

A deleatur symbol, from Martin Vogel's freeware [[TrueType]] font, MarVoSym.ttf, available at http://www.marvosym.com

1. In my opinion, I generally believe that the given information is actually unreliable.

2. For all intents and purposes, we will basically be applying your payroll deduction towards your insurance premium.

3. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your assistance with the Anderson case.

4. There is the possibility that the Dallas office may close.

5. The consensus of opinion is that the end result will be favorable.

6. Due to the fact that Friday is Christmas Eve, we will close early for the purpose of allowing employees to spend time with their respective families.

7. Please be advised that the new computer program has the capacity for analyzing sales figures and budget figures. This program can also compare these figures. The end result will be a report that basically shows the difference between the two.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 3: PLACING KEY WORDS IN POWER POSITIONS

DIRECTIONS: Edit the following sentences by moving key ideas and actions to power positions. Delete any unnecessary words.

1. There are many key people at ABC who weren't informed of this change.

2. Elaine Thomas made a recommendation that we change the procedure.

3. The cause of the delay was bad weather.

4. Tom's preparing of the work plan was accomplished on Tuesday.

5. The necessity for action on our part in regards to initiating the new program immediately is apparent.

6. The filtering technique involves separation of signals of different frequencies.

QUICK PRACTICE 4: CHANGING PASSIVE VOICE TO ACTIVE VOICE

DIRECTIONS: Determine the action being performed in each of the passive sentences. Determine the doer of that action. Then, rewrite each sentence so that it is active.

1. Review comments were submitted by Tom Decker.

2. A progress report was presented to Corning by Pat Wilson.

QUICK PRACTICE 5: USING COMMAND WORDING IN INSTRUCTIONS

DIRECTIONS: Use active, command wording to make each instruction more direct.

1. Each bag should be inspected to assure that it has been properly sterilized.

2. The weekly customer and product files still need to be uploaded.

3. We need to receive the I-9 information by next Monday, December 5.

4. All returned items must be shipped to Philadelphia.

5. You have to specify each account group.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 6: CHOOSING ACTIVE OR PASSIVE VOICE

DIRECTIONS: First decide whether the verbs in the sentences are in active or passive voice. Then decide whether the voice being used is appropriate or not appropriate. Finally, cite the rule that explains the answer.

1. Enter the following information on the first screen.
Circle correct answers: Active Passive   Appropriate Inappropriate
Rule:

2. Several sentences on the evaluation report were changed after the report was approved.
Circle correct answers: Active Passive   Appropriate Inappropriate
Rule:

3. You haven't provided the requested documentation.
Circle correct answers: Active Passive   Appropriate Inappropriate
Rule:

4. The following updated customer codes should be used after May 1.
Circle correct answers: Active Passive   Appropriate Inappropriate
Rule:

5. ABC Analysis was performed to determine the amount of vibration at both "standstill" and average "in operation" conditions.
Circle correct answers: Active Passive   Appropriate Inappropriate
Rule:

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 7: USING SPECIFIC WORDING

DIRECTIONS: Circle any words in the following sentences that are subjective, abstract, or imprecise.   Explain what information—the answers to what questions—would make each sentence more specific.

1.   We have a huge backlog of ABC's; a lot of them carry potential fines if assigned due dates aren't met.

2.   Label the software copies appropriately.

3.   Dr. A. Topsy is a pharmacologist/toxicologist with a number of years' experience at several leading drug companies.

4.   The error rate was 1.5%, which was quite close to the expected result.

5.   Coding will take much more time than initially allocated.

6.   The secondary containment tank approved by retired Plant Manager D.V. Ous is obviously inadequate.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 8: WRITING SPECIFIC SUBJECT HEADINGS

DIRECTIONS: Read the two document excerpts below. For each, determine the writer's purpose. Then, write a specific title or subject heading for the excerpt that reflects that purpose better than the original subject heading provided.

1. CONTENT: Participants attending the Illinois Nuclear Physics Symposium will depart from Philadelphia International Airport at 9:45 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time), Friday, May 6. They will arrive at Chicago O'Hare Airport at 11:30 a.m. (Central Time). A chartered bus has been arranged to transport participants to the Holiday Inn—City Centre. Rooms are . . . .

ORIGINAL SUBJECT HEADING: Nuclear Physics Symposium

SPECIFIC SUBJECT HEADING: _____

2. CONTENT: Equipment Upgrade Phase 2 is designed to meet the following objectives:
- Meet all XYZ Company equipment upgrade goals.
- Update SOPs for upgraded equipment.
- Document personnel training on upgraded equipment.

ORIGINAL SUBJECT HEADING: Phase 2

SPECIFIC SUBJECT HEADING: _____

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 9: WRITING PURPOSE STATEMENTS

DIRECTIONS: Following are the opening sentences for a variety of documents. Which are effective purpose statements because they state the purpose of the DOCUMENT—not just the purpose of the WORK? Which are not effective purpose statements and need to be rewritten? Select the best answers from the choices provided. *[NOTE: Online answers are in random order.]*

1. To enable departments to select training programs best suited for their employees, a training needs analysis was conducted. This email forwards the results of that analysis.

   a. States both the purpose of the work (the training analysis) and the purpose of the email. Does not need to be rewritten.
   b. States only the purpose of the work (the training analysis), not the purpose of the email. Needs to be rewritten.

2. A follow-up survey on Medical Services support to physicians and Professional Representatives during September and October of 20XX was conducted to test improvements made from the first and second quarters of 20XX.

   a. States both the purpose of the work (the follow-up survey) and the purpose of the report. Does not need to be rewritten.
   b. States only the purpose of the work (the follow-up survey), not the purpose of the report. Needs a sentence describing the purpose of the report.

3. The ABC project will span 18 months and will require approximately 30 people. A timeline indicating project milestones and personnel responsibilities follows:

   a. Orients the reader with background information and predicts the document's content with a purpose statement. Does not need to be rewritten.
   b. States only the purpose of the work (the ABC project), not the purpose of the document. Needs to be rewritten.

4. Some of our vendors are using sub-standard production procedures.

   a. Orients the reader with background information and predicts the document's content with an effective purpose statement. Does not need to be rewritten.
   b. Orients the reader with background information, but does not define the purpose of the document. Needs to be rewritten.

5. Cholesterol is the primary cause of atherosclerosis or coronary heart disease (CHD) in the U.S.   In 20XX, there were 1.5 million heart attacks with one third of these ending in death—all of them related to cholesterol.

   a. Orients the reader with background information and predicts the document's content with an effective purpose statement. Does not need to be rewritten.
   b. Orients the reader with background information, but does not define the purpose of the document. Needs to be rewritten.

6. On March 12, I attended a seminar presented by Hewlett Packard on the new HVACM system. A summary of information learned is presented below.

   a. States both the purpose of the work (the seminar) and the purpose of the report. Does not need to be rewritten.
   b. States only the purpose of the work (the seminar), not the purpose of the report. Needs to be rewritten.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 10: WRITING A CALL TO ACTION

DIRECTIONS: For each set of sentences, select the most effective call to action statement. *[NOTE: Online answers are in random order.]*

1. a. To enable us to address those concerns, please provide recommendations for a standard design for the following system services by June 1.
1. b. Those concerns could be addressed if we created a standard design for the following system services.

2. a. It is imperative that we have this information by March 15.
2. b. If you would like your department's activities included in the final report, please email this information so that we receive it by March 15.

3. a. If you approve of this request, please sign on the line provided below, and return the signed document to me by April 1.
3. b. If you have concerns or questions, please call me immediately. Otherwise, if you approve of this request, sign on the line provided below, and return the signed document to me by April 1.

4. a. I will call you next week to learn how you would like to proceed.
4. b. I hope to hear from you soon.

5. a. Enclosed are the surveys for employees in your area. Thanks.
5. b. Please distribute the enclosed surveys to employees in your area. Have employees complete and return the surveys to me by August 1.

6. a. I would appreciate your support in this matter.
6. b. Please let Hal Roberts know that you share my concern about . . . by voting against . . . at the meeting on Friday, November 4.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 11: AVOID POMPOUS WORDING

DIRECTIONS: What are these phrases? Can you match them with the more familiar phrases below?

__1. Scintillate, scintillate, asteroid minific.
__2. Members of an avian species of identical plumage congregate.
__3. It is fruitless to become lachrymose over precipitately departed lacteal fluid.
__4. It is fruitless to attempt to indoctrinate a superannuated canine with innovative maneuvers.
__5. The temperature of aqueous content of an unremittingly ogled saucepan does not reach 212 degrees.

a. It's no use crying over spilled milk.
b. A watched pot never boils.
c. Twinkle, twinkle little star.
d. Birds of a feather flock together.
e. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 12: USING NATURAL WORDING

DIRECTIONS: Select the sentence in each pair that is written in plain English.
[NOTE: Online answers are in random order.]

1. a. Enclosed please find a copy of the report completed September 12, 20XX.
1. b. Enclosed is the report completed September 12, 20XX.

2. a. Attached hereto you will find said information as per your request.
2. b. The information you requested is attached.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 13: USING POSITIVE WORDING

DIRECTIONS: Locate and rewrite negative wording in the following sentences. For example, tell the reader what you CAN do rather than what you CAN'T do. You may have to invent some information.

1. We don't field test on Sundays.

2. I couldn't complete all of the analyses yet because of scheduled maintenance on the system. Also, nothing could be done about the problems I've uncovered until we review our findings with ABC personnel.

3. As you well know, you should not use the same Purchase Order to order products from different divisions.

4. We can't expect other departments to respond on time if we are slow distributing information.

5. To be honest, it is impossible to measure the swath of destruction caused by your oil spill without the cooperation of your engineers.

6. As we discussed, the following items are ruining the schedule for the move:
- We don't have all the boxes packed and labeled.
- We haven't contacted the Temp Office for secretarial help the first day.
- We haven't arranged to have the equipment moved.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 14: USING READER-CENTERED WORDING

DIRECTIONS: Rewrite the following sentences so that they reflect the READER'S concerns, not the writer's. You may have to invent some information. For example:

> **Original sentences:** This newsletter features important U.S. activities in marketing, technical, and research and development areas. No pictures are included.
>
> **Rewritten sentences:** *To improve communications between U.S. and International regions,* this newsletter features important U.S. activities in marketing, technical, and research and development areas. *To facilitate the file download process for International colleagues,* no pictures are included.

1. I would like to express my appreciation for your help with this project.

2. We need you to complete this medical emergency form so that our records are complete.

3. This product has been the market leader since its introduction.

4. We appreciate receiving the contract for the underground storage system at ABC, Inc. We request that the paperwork be processed by March 1 so that we can send our invoice and start work.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 15: USING ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

DIRECTIONS: Robert Dowling wanted to create an issues database, compiling information from government reports. When he asked Sandra Jerrold if he could receive those reports, he got the email below.

Read the email. Identify the information that is most important to Robert Dowling. Where should this email begin? What other information is important to Robert Dowling?

TO: Robert Dowling
FROM: Sandra Jerrold
DATE: April 1, 20XX
SUBJECT: Issues Inventory

Last week James Browning, my associate, informed me that during a recent contact with Angela Peterson in Government Affairs, Angela inquired about obtaining any data we had available on current issues. Jim informed her that we had an Issues Inventory, sent her a copy of the Issues Inventory Report, and gave her my name and number as the Inventory Coordinator.

I called Angela and explained to her what our Inventory consists of and our method of distributing the bi-monthly reports. I asked Angela why she was interested in our Inventory. She explained that you were very interested in maintaining an issues database with current issues data from all the divisions.

I explained to Angela that we do not distribute copies of the issues due to the sensitive and highly proprietary nature of some of the one-pagers. Also, I explained that I keep the only copy of the one-pagers and that the only item that is distributed is the Report.

Angela indicated that you are quite anxious to compile this issues database, so I asked for guidelines for sending this proprietary information, and I have received permission to add you to the Government Affairs Distribution List.

All you will have to do to start receiving this issues data is to apply in writing to receive these reports. Please fill out the attached Form 1067, and return it to me by April 10 along with a memo formally requesting to be added to the Government Affairs Distribution List. You will begin receiving issues April 27.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 16: REFUSING A REQUEST

DIRECTIONS: Use the Guide for Refusing a Request to refuse an invitation to have you speak at a conference. You will have to invent information.

Zero Draft your document before writing. When selecting alternatives to offer, consider your reader's goal in making the request. Say "no" while maintaining your reader's goodwill. Apply the techniques for using positive wording and writing from your reader's point of view.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 17: USING CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

DIRECTIONS: Evaluate and comment upon the effectiveness of each of the following presentations of the same information. Which one is more effective? Why? Consider how the reader would use the information.

Version 1

SUBJECT: COURSE 15 FIELD TRIAL

July 27 - July 31
Lou Davis and I completed preparation for the August 2 Field Trial.

August 1
I met with Susan Blake, SME, and Mark Adams, Instructor, to discuss Course 15.

August 2
Phil Wu, Quality Assurance Group; Lou; Susan and I monitored the course being taught to six Technician Trainees. Course participants filled out critique sheets.

August 3
Lou, Susan, Mark, Phil, and I reviewed the critique sheets. For the most part, comments were positive, but some participants said that they needed more practice with Section 6 before moving on to Section 7. There were several other important recommendations. (See enclosed critiques.)

Joe, we'll need about 400 hours to expand Section 6. We'll also need about 400 hours to implement the other changes.

Finally, all six participants mentioned the effectiveness of the video section.

Version 2

SUBJECT: COURSE 15 FIELD TRIAL RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

Executive Summary
The Course 15 Evaluation is complete. Our conclusions and recommendations are provided below. A detailed chronology and course feedback are attached.

1. The Quality Assurance Group, the instructor, and course participants recommended the following changes, which will require about 800 additional development hours:
  • Rework Section 6 so that it includes more hands-on practice.
  • Print pages 1 and 2 on a separate sheet (front and back), and have the sheet laminated so that it can function as a quick reference guide.
  • Rewrite Section 8 adding explanations. (See attached marked copy.)

2. For the most part, participants' comments were positive. All six participants mentioned the effectiveness of the video section.

If you agree to the 800-hour revision to ensure the effectiveness of the program, please email me your authorization to proceed.

[ATTACHMENT]
Chronology

July 27 - July 31
Lou Davis and I completed preparation for the August 2 Field Trial.

August 1
Lou and I met with Susan Blake, SME, and Mark Adams, Instructor, to discuss Course 15.

August 2
Phil Wu, Quality Assurance Group; Lou, Susan and I monitored the course being taught to six Technician Trainees. Course participants filled out critique sheets.

August 3
Lou, Susan, Mark, Phil, and I reviewed the critique sheets. (See the critique summary, also attached.)

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 18: USING SEQUENTIAL ORDER

DIRECTIONS: For each set of instructions, identify the steps that are out of order. Then number the steps so that they will be in sequential order.

1. DAILY MAIL PROCESSING PROCEDURES

Daily mail is delivered every two hours.

(1)　　Open and date-stamp mail at least twice a day.

(2)　　Separate mail alphabetically into three groups: A-G, H-R, and S-Z.

(3)　　Distribute the mail to the appropriate departments.

(4)　　Do not open any mail marked "Personal & Confidential."

(5)　　Put Nancy Smith's mail in a folder, and put the folder on her desk at the end of the day.

2. ACCESS TO CORPORATE CENTER OUTSIDE NORMAL WORKING HOURS

To gain entry

(1) Run your SWIPE card, with the infrared stripe facing the wall, through the reader located in the foyer at the front door.

(2) Enter your five-digit PIN code.

(3) The door will unlock, the alarm will be temporarily interrupted, and you will be able to enter.

(4) Do not hold the door for others to enter. Each person entering must use his/her own code and card.

(5) You do not have to use your code and card to exit the building.

NOTE: You have 15 seconds to open the door, enter, and allow the door to close. If you hold the door open, the silent alarm will be sent, and the police will be dispatched to this location.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 19: WRITING A TRANSMITTAL EMAIL OR LETTER

DIRECTIONS: Use the following form paragraph to practice writing a Transmittal Email or Letter. Imagine you are sending a journal article or report to a colleague. You won't need to check your answers. Answers will vary.

Because of your work in _____, I thought that you would be especially interested in the enclosed _____.
The section on page _____ should help answer your questions about

_____.

Please feel free to share this information with interested colleagues.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 20: SEPARATING METHODS & RESULTS

DIRECTIONS: One frequent failure in technical reports is the intermingling of Methods and Results sections. The Methods section of a report should contain a description of the steps involved in the testing process. Any data resulting from the testing belongs in the Results section.

The following selection from an Environmental Report intermingles Methods and Results. To practice separating Methods and Results, label each sentence as a Methods or Results or Results and Analysis statement. (Explanation providing context for the Methodology is provided before the first sentence.)

A manifold system study was conducted to test corrosivity of public water in Westwood Borough and the extent to which it leaches lead into water supplies. The greatest indicator for leaching is the Ph level measured in the Langlier index. The lower the Langlier index, the higher the corrosivity; thus, the lead will be more readily leached.

(1) The municipal water used for the study was obtained from a faucet at the Westwood Borough Department of Water. (2) The water was collected and stored in a cooler until needed for the study. (3) The manifold systems used in the study, as set up in the laboratory, are shown in Figures 2-3 and 2-4.
(4) Each manifold held 1 liter of water or 80 ml per foot of pipe. (5) When sampled, the manifold was drained and composite samples were collected from this 1 liter of water. (6) Samples with a retention time of 12 hours had higher lead concentrations than samples with a 1-hour retention time, indicating that the longer the water is in contact with the manifold, the greater the lead concentrations. (7) Six samples were collected and analyzed from each manifold for total and soluble metals (lead, silver, tin).

(8) Sampling was conducted at 1- and 12-hour intervals and was repeated three times for each manifold. (9) A majority of runs leached concentrations above the drinking water standard. (10) The initial sampling runs of the municipal water contained higher lead concentrations than subsequent runs, suggesting that the amount of water that has passed through the manifold affects concentration levels.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 21: USING ILLUSTRATIONS

DIRECTIONS: Compare the effectiveness of the following three presentations of the same information. When would you use each?
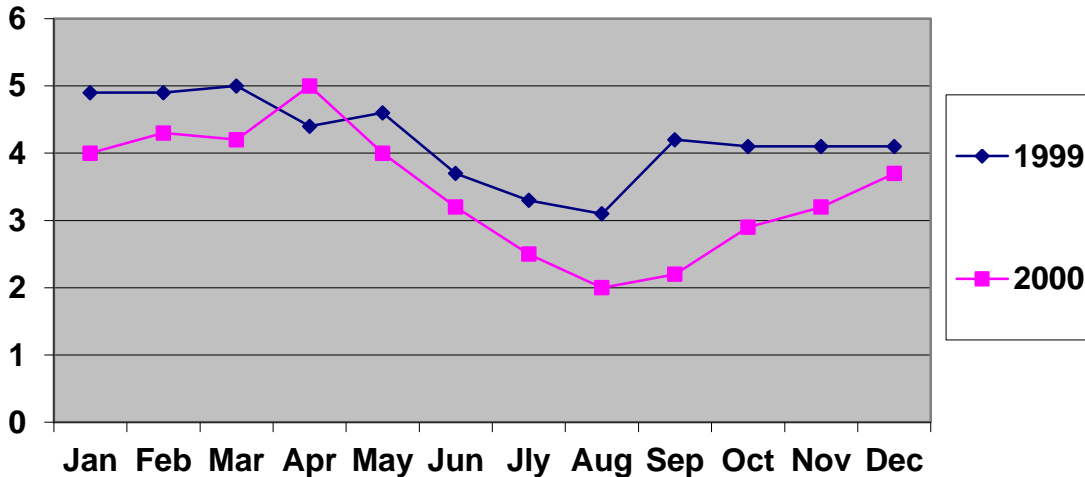
Version 1: a line graph

Figure 1: Marshall Creek Water Level Averages in Feet: 1999 and 2000

Version 2: a table

Table 2 Average Water Level of Marshall Creek in Feet—1999 and 2000

MONTH	1999	2000
January	4.9	4.4
February	4.9	4.3
March	5.0	4.4
April	5.1	4.2
May	4.6	4.0
June	3.7	3.2
July	3.3	2.5
August	3.1	2.0
September	4.2	2.2
October	4.1	2.9
November	4.1	3.2
December	4.1	3.7

Version 3: prose
The January and February 1999 water levels in Marshall Creek were 4.9. The level began to rise in March (to 5.0) reaching a yearly peak of 5.1 in April. With warmer weather, the level began to recede in May (to 4.6) and continued relatively low throughout June, July, and August (3.7, 3.3, and 3.1, respectively). An unusually high rainfall boosted levels to 4.2 in September. October, November, and December levels averaged 4.1 feet. Water levels in 2000, after the diversion of Colton Stream, declined at anticipated levels with 3.4 being the average. January, February, and March levels were 4.4, 4.3, and 4.4 respectively. April and May levels were 4.2 and 4.0 respectively. Lowest levels were recorded in June through September, ranging from a high of 3.2 in June to a low of 2.0 in August. October levels averaged 2.9 Levels climbed again late in the year, reaching 3.2 in November and 3.7 in December.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 22: CHOOSING ILLUSTRATIONS

DIRECTIONS: Select the type of illustration you would use to best meet each objective for the illustration's content. Write the letter of the matching illustration on the line for the appropriate objective. Use each type of illustration only once.

____ 1. Compare items and efficiently show fine distinctions for a large amount of information	a. Bar Charts
____ 2. Compare discrete amounts or sizes of several items when fine distinctions are not important	b. Bulleted Lists, Call-Out Boxes
____ 3. Show how the whole is divided into its parts when fine distinctions are not important	c. Drawings, Photographs
____ 4. Show trends or fluctuations over a given time period, when fine distinctions are not important	d. Flow Charts
____ 5. Give a clear, emphatic overview of organizational relationships or of a complicated process	e. Line Charts
____6. Show what something looks like, show something's shape and spatial relationships, show existing conditions	f. Pie Charts
____ 7. Prevent items from being overlooked; showcase tips, benefits, strengths, or features	g. Tables

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 23: USING TRANSITIONAL WORDS

DIRECTIONS: Select transitional words from the list below to improve the flow from sentence to sentence in the following paragraphs. You may use some words more than once.

Transitional Words: also, and, because, for example, the following, therefore, this, those, to that end

1. Increased quality, shorter construction schedules, (1) _____ reduced cost for each project are our goals. (2) _____, we use several forms of scheduling, and (3) _____ of our smaller size and open communication, we are flexible to the requests and needs of the project. Our schedules are easily changed and updated. (4) _____, a typical ABC project may include (5) _____ planning and scheduling activities: . . . .

2. To allow project stakeholders to read project progress reports quickly and easily, (6) _____ reports should provide only the most important information. (7) _____, highlight the work that you have accomplished and your progress during the reporting period. (8) _____, inform stakeholders of any situations that they would want to know about. (9) _____, there may be equipment, personnel, or scheduling issues; risks; or change requests that you need their input on. (10) _____ different stakeholders will have different interests in the project, you may need to create different reports for different people. Making your project progress reports quick and easy to read encourages stakeholders to read your reports and respond when necessary.

3. Upon completion of the parking lot evaluation, ABC Company will submit a report with cost estimates for repairing failing areas. (11) _____ report will (12) _____ include alternatives for the repair work with comparisons of life span and costs.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 24: USING TRANSITIONAL WORDS

Now that you have reviewed and practiced how to use transitional words, it's time to test your own writing. In a document you wrote recently, can you locate three to five places to improve flow? Ensure that:

- Each transitional word precisely shows the logical relationship between ideas.
- When you use "this," "that," "these," and "those," you repeat key words to link sentences.

You won't need to check your answers. Answers will vary.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 25: USING HEADINGS TO GUIDE READERS

DIRECTIONS: To increase the accessibility of information in the following document, add headings and subheadings on the four lines provided.

Subject: Implementing Our Year 20XX Safety Program

_____

On April 5, 20XX, we discussed our Action Plan reflecting findings in the Workers' Compensation Cost Analysis Report and our progress on the following items:

1.   _____.   The Safety Committee will distribute a management policy statement to employees later this month. This statement, communicating our company's commitment to health and safety, will help kick off our new safety efforts.

2.   _____.   With the management policy statement, employees will also receive a list of written safety rules for them to sign. These signed written safety rules will help document our safety requirements as well as provide proof that employees were told how to perform their jobs safely.

_____

I look forward to attending the April 30 meeting when we can present the policy statement and written safety rules as well as discuss with employees our new employee safety program. I will contact you before this meeting to finalize the meeting agenda.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 26: USING PARALLEL STRUCTURE

DIRECTIONS: Use parallel structure to improve the flow in the following four document excerpts. Make listed items grammatically parallel. Follow through on expected patterns.

1. To prepare for an oral presentation:
    - List three to five main discussion points.
    - A list of visual aids you will use must be prepared.
    - Your opening and closing should be written out.
    - The best presentations "do less better."

2. The ABC report and the XYZ analysis are complete.
    - The XYZ analysis shows that the new internal audit procedure decreased our error rate 5%. Our methodology and results for that analysis are provided.
    - The ABC report highlights our accomplishments in FY 20XX. Each work group's accomplishments are provided.

3. 20XX First Quarter Goals
    - Develop a list of six areas where my department could be more efficient. By 02/01/20XX have strategies in place to improve those areas.
    - Meet with Robert Smith by 01/15/20XX to discuss adding graphics capabilities to our program that would enable us to . . . .
    - Attend ABC Seminar on 01/14/20XX with Kate and Ralph to learn . . . .
    - Improve communications with XYZ department.

4. To obtain training for their people, managers must either request training from Human Resources or they must budget for and obtain training within their own departments.

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 27: USING PARALLEL STRUCTURE

DIRECTIONS: Use parallel structure to improve flow in the following sentences containing comparable content. Rewrite the second sentence of each pair so that it matches the pattern of the first.

Example:
a. Presented prototype for ABC.
b. The development support system was changed.

"b" rewritten to match "a": Changed development support system.

1.a. Chapter 1, "Installing and Using Your Result Programs," describes how to install the software programs on your computer and how to use the Result Manger menu options.

1.b. Chapter 2 is called "Using Calc Result." Here you learn how a spreadsheet operates and how to create a spreadsheet.

_____

_____

2.a. Use the arrow keys to move the highlighted box to the selection you want to make. Press ENTER.

2.b. The first letter of the selection you want to make should be typed, and then press ENTER.

_____

_____

📖 QUICK PRACTICE 28: FORMATTING DOCUMENTS

DIRECTIONS: Read the memo below. Use the proofreader's mark for "insert paragraph" to indicate where new paragraphs should begin (¶). Create a subject heading for the memo, and indicate any format changes, subheadings, etc., that you think will make the document more readable.

Subject: Move

Thank you for attending the March 25 meeting at our Valley Forge office to discuss PSE production and equipment moving. As we discussed, all the process equipment except the cyclone rotary valve drive, the Roots Blower Motor with sheaves, the test equipment, and the air compressor (30 HP rotary Atlas) belongs to our Company and will be trucked to Rahway.

PSE will send data on all existing equipment and spare parts as well as removal recommendations and information on suppliers to D. Latham by April 15. D. Latham will coordinate the off-spec fines, sweeps, and product shipping arrangements with PSE by May 1. Production at PSE will cease May 5. PSE will have all equipment dismantled and cleaned and the drive belt guards installed by May 19. All process flexible hoses, upon dismantling, will be properly tagged for identification and retrofit. The contractor will furnish the truck and trailer and secure and cover the equipment

Section 2: SAMPLE ANSWERS TO QUICK PRACTICES

QUICK PRACTICE 1: ELIMINATING WORDINESS

1. due to the fact that – because, since
2. in the event that – if, when
3. in the amount of – for
4. with regard to – regarding, about
5. it is necessary that – must
6. in order to – to
7. undertake a study of – study, evaluate
8. the possibility exists for – may, might, could
9. on two separate occasions – twice
10. check on – check, confirm, validate

QUICK PRACTICE 2: ELIMINATING WORDINESS

1. I believe that the information is unreliable.
2. We will apply your payroll deduction towards your insurance premium.
3. Thank you for your assistance with the Anderson case.
4. The Dallas office may close.
5. The consensus is that the result will be favorable. **OR** The result will be favorable.
6. Because Friday is Christmas Eve, we will close early to allow employees time with their families. **OR** We will close early Friday.
7. The new computer program analyzes sales and budget figures and reports the difference.

QUICK PRACTICE 3: PLACING KEY WORDS IN POWER POSITIONS

1. Many key people at ABC weren't informed of this change.
2. Elaine Thomas recommended that we change the procedure.
3. Bad weather caused the delay.
4. Tom completed the work plan on Tuesday.
5. We must initiate the new program immediately.
6. Filtering separates signals of different frequencies.

QUICK PRACTICE 4: CHANGING PASSIVE VOICE TO ACTIVE VOICE

1. Tom Decker <u>submitted</u> review comments.
2. Pat Wilson <u>presented</u> a progress report to Corning.

QUICK PRACTICE 5: USING COMMAND WORDING IN INSTRUCTIONS

1. Inspect each bag to assure that it has been properly sterilized.
2. Upload the weekly customer and product files.
3. Please provide the I-9 information by next Monday, December 5.
4. Ship all returned items to Philadelphia.
5. You have to specify each account group.

QUICK PRACTICE 6: CHOOSING ACTIVE OR PASSIVE VOICE

1. Active voice. Appropriate. We should use active voice for an instruction.
2. Passive voice. Inappropriate. Instead we should use active voice to delineate responsibility.
3. Active voice. Inappropriate. Instead we should use passive voice to soften a harsh message.
4. Passive voice. Inappropriate. Instead we should use active voice in instructions. After May 1 should be moved to the beginning of the sentence to prevent its being overlooked.
5. Passive voice. Appropriate. We use passive voice in technical reports when we want to emphasize the completed action rather than the doer of the action.

QUICK PRACTICE 7: USING SPECIFIC WORDING

1. huge—**how big is the backlog?** a lot—**how many and which ones carry fines?** potential fines—**how much are the potential fines?** assigned due dates—**when are the due dates**? And why is there this backlog?

2. copies—**which copies?** appropriately—**how should the copies be labeled?**

3. number of years' experience—**how many years? when? what experience?** several leading drug companies—**which companies? by what standard are they leading?**

4. error rate—**of what?** quite close to the expected result—**is the error rate acceptable? what was the expected rate?**

5. Coding—**of what?** much more time—**how much more time? why? who will be impacted?**

6. tank—**which one? where?** approved—**when?**   inadequate—**in what way?**

QUICK PRACTICE 8: WRITING SPECIFIC SUBJECT HEADINGS

1. Nuclear Physics Symposium—Travel Itinerary

2. Equipment Upgrade—Phase 2 Objectives

QUICK PRACTICE 9: WRITING PURPOSE STATEMENTS
NOTE: Online answers are in random order.

1. To enable departments to select training programs best suited for their employees, a training needs analysis was conducted. This email forwards the results of that analysis.
    a. **States both the purpose of the work (the training analysis) and the purpose of the email. Does not need to be rewritten.**

2. A follow-up survey on Medical Services support to physicians and Professional Representatives during September and October of 20XX was conducted to test improvements made from the first and second quarters of 20XX.
    b. **States only the purpose of the work (the follow-up survey), not the purpose of the report. Needs a sentence describing the purpose of the report.**

3. The ABC project will span 18 months and will require approximately 30 people. A timeline indicating project milestones and personnel responsibilities follows:
    a. **Orients the reader with background information and predicts the document's content with a purpose statement. Does not need to be rewritten.**

4. Some of our vendors are using sub-standard production procedures.
    b. **Orients the reader with background information, but does not define the purpose of the document. Needs to be rewritten.**

5. Cholesterol is the primary cause of atherosclerosis or coronary heart disease (CHD) in the U.S. In 20XX, there were 1.5 million heart attacks with one third of these ending in death— all of them related to cholesterol.
    b. **Orients the reader with background information, but does not define the purpose of the document. Needs to be rewritten.**

6. On March 12, I attended a seminar presented by Hewlett Packard on the new HVACM system. A summary of information learned is presented below.
    a. **States both the purpose of the work (the seminar) and the purpose of the report. Does not need to be rewritten.**

QUICK PRACTICE 10: WRITING A CALL TO ACTION
NOTE: Online answers are in random order.

1. a. To enable us to address those concerns, please provide recommendations for a standard design for the following system services by June 1.

2. b. If you would like your department's activities included in the final report, please email this information so that we receive it by March 15.

3. b. If you have concerns or questions, please call me immediately. Otherwise, if you approve, sign on the line provided below, and return the signed document to me by April 1.

4. a. I will call you next week to learn how you would like to proceed.

5. b. Please distribute the enclosed surveys to employees in your area. Have employees complete and return the surveys to me by August 1.

6. b. Please let Hal Roberts know that you share my concern about . . . by voting against . . . at the meeting on Friday, November 4.

QUICK PRACTICE 11: AVOID POMPOUS WORDING

__1. Scintillate, scintillate, asteroid minific.
__2. Members of an avian species of identical plumage congregate.
__3. It is fruitless to become lachrymose over precipitately departed lacteal fluid.
__4. It is fruitless to attempt to indoctrinate a superannuated canine with innovative maneuvers.
__5. The temperature of aquaeous content of an unremittingly ogled saucepan does not reach 212 degrees.

a. It's no use crying over spilled milk.
b. A watched pot never boils.
c. Twinkle, twinkle little star.
d. Birds of a feather flock together.
e. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

ANSWERS: 1- c, 2 - d, 3 - a, 4 - e, 5 - b

QUICK PRACTICE 12: USING NATURAL WORDING

1. b. Enclosed is the report completed September 12, 20XX.
2. b. The information you requested is attached.

QUICK PRACTICE 13: USING POSITIVE WORDING

1. We don't field test on Sundays.

We field test six days a week, Monday through Saturday.
Now the reader knows when field tests are done.

2. I couldn't complete all of the analyses yet because of scheduled maintenance on the system. Also, nothing could be done about the problems I've uncovered until we review our findings with ABC personnel.

Scheduled maintenance on the system is June 1 - 4, so I will complete the analyses June 8. Also, once we review our findings with ABC personnel, we can resolve their validation process efficiency concern.
Now the reader knows the impact of scheduled maintenance on completing the analyses, and the writer is connected with solutions. The word "problems" has been replaced by a factual identification of the problems.

3. As you well know, you should not use the same Purchase Order to order products from different divisions.

Please use different Purchase Orders to order products from different divisions.
The condescending "As you well know" and scolding tone have been eliminated. Now the focus is on what to do.

4. We can't expect other departments to respond on time if we are slow distributing information.

By distributing information quickly, we can ensure that other departments respond on time.
Now the focus is on what to do and the benefits of doing so.

5. To be honest, it is impossible to measure the swath of destruction caused by your oil spill without the cooperation of your engineers.

With your engineers' input, we can measure the oil spill's impact.
Now factual "can do" wording replaces inflammatory, judgmental, negative wording.

6. As we discussed, the following items are ruining the schedule for the move:
- We don't have all the boxes packed and labeled.
- We haven't contacted the Temp Office for secretarial help the first day.
- We haven't arranged to have the equipment moved.

As we discussed, the following steps will ensure that we maintain the schedule for the move:
- By [date], pack and label all the boxes.
- By [date], contact the Temp Office for secretarial help the first day.
- By [date], arrange to have the equipment moved.
Now the focus is on what needs to be accomplished to maintain the schedule.

QUICK PRACTICE 14: USING READER-CENTERED WORDING

1. Thank you for staying after hours on Thursday to proofread the ABC proposal. You helped us meet our deadline!

2. So that you receive prompt, appropriate care in a medical emergency, please complete and return your medical emergency form.

3. This product's time-tested reliability ensures you low maintenance costs and long-term productivity.

4. Thank you for selecting XYZ Contractors to install your underground storage system at ABC, Inc. If you process the enclosed paperwork by March 1, your system can be installed before the high groundwater period, thus saving you up to 30% on installation costs.

QUICK PRACTICE 15: USING ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

The answer to Robert Dowling's question, "May I receive these government reports?" is contained in the next to the last paragraph:

I have received permission to add you to the Government Affairs Distribution List.

The first two paragraphs describe actions that Sandra Jerrold took to learn the answer to Robert's question. But Robert is interested only in the answer, to his question, not in these "predecessor actions." Therefore, the first two paragraphs should be deleted.

Robert is also interested in the information in the last paragraph of the email. If Sandra had used Order of Importance organization, the email would have been shortened as follows:

I have received permission to add you to the Government Affairs Distribution List.

To start receiving this issues data, simply apply in writing to receive the Issues Inventory Reports. Please fill out the attached Form 1067, and return it to me by April 10 along with a memo formally requesting to be added to the Government Affairs Distribution List. You will begin receiving issues April 27.

QUICK PRACTICE 16: REVERSE ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

Thank you for thinking of me to speak at your upcoming ABC Conference.
The writer begins with a neutral but reader-centered purpose statement that names the request specifically.

Although I will be on a business trip in San Francisco that week, the following people are excellent public speakers and may be available. Please feel free to contact them directly:
1. [Name, Credentials, Phone Number]
2. [Name, Credentials, Phone Number]
The reader can easily infer the refusal. The writer uses no negative words and offers an alternative that moves the reader closer to his/her goal—finding a speaker for the conference.

I know you will have an interesting group attending—you always do! Please keep me in mind as a speaker for future conferences.
The writer ends with a positive, reader-centered message that sounds sincere and maintains the reader's goodwill.

QUICK PRACTICE 17: USING CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Version 1 makes the reader wade through the chronological detail of the Field Trial activities and sends readers to the "enclosed critiques" to find "other important recommendations." Executive readers are busy and concerned with the bottom line: What were the Field Trial's most important results and conclusions? What happens next?

Version 2 focuses on results and conclusions. The Executive Summary pulls to the beginning important information from the critiques so that readers understand the rationale for the 800 additional hours. Version 2 is better organized and therefore more persuasive than Version 1.

QUICK PRACTICE 18: USING SEQUENTIAL ORDER

1.   DAILY MAIL PROCESSING PROCEDURE

Steps 4 and 5 are out of order. By the time the reader reaches these steps, he or she will have already opened, separated, and distributed the mail. The correct order is 4, 1, 5, 2, 3.

2.   ACCESS TO CORPORATE CENTER OUTSIDE NORMAL WORKING HOURS

The *NOTE* is out of order. By the time the reader reaches this information, the police will be on their way to the location. *Steps 4 and 5* are also out of order. **Step 4** and the **NOTE** should be first. **Step 5** is not a step "to gain entry." **Step 5** should be listed under a separate topic heading, "To exit the building."

QUICK PRACTICE 19: WRITING A TRANSMITTAL EMAIL OR LETTER

Answers will vary.

QUICK PRACTICE 20: SEPARATING METHODS & RESULTS

1. Method
2. Method
3. Method
4. Method
5. Method
6. Result and Analysis
7. Method
8. Method
9. Result
10. Result and Analysis

QUICK PRACTICE 21: USING ILLUSTRATIONS

Version 1 (a line graph) enables readers to notice trends and fluctuations.
Version 2 (a table) allows readers ready access to specific data.
Version 3 (prose) does <u>not</u> allow the reader to notice trends or to access data quickly. In fact, it buries information and may confuse or annoy the reader. Prose should be used to highlight and explain the data presented in graphics.

QUICK PRACTICE 22: CHOOSING ILLUSTRATIONS

_g_ 1. Compare items and efficiently show fine distinctions for a large amount of information	a. Bar Charts
_a_ 2. Compare discrete amounts or sizes of several items when fine distinctions are not important	b. Bulleted Lists, Call-Out Boxes
_f_ 3. Show how the whole is divided into its parts when fine distinctions are not important	c. Drawings, Photographs
_e_ 4. Show trends or fluctuations over a given time period, when fine distinctions are not important	d. Flow Charts
_d_ 5. Give a clear, emphatic overview of organizational relationships or of a complicated process	e. Line Charts
_c_ 6. Show what something looks like, show something's shape and spatial relationships, show existing conditions	f. Pie Charts
_b_ 7. Prevent items from being overlooked; showcase tips, benefits, strengths, or features	g. Tables

QUICK PRACTICE 23: USING TRANSITIONAL WORDS

1.   Increased quality, shorter construction schedules, **(1) and** reduced cost for each project are our goals. **(2) To that end,** we use several forms of scheduling, and **(3) because** of our smaller size and open communication, we are flexible to the requests and needs of the project. Our schedules are easily changed and updated. **(4) For example,** a typical ABC project may include **(5) the following** planning and scheduling activities: . . . .

2.   To allow project stakeholders to read project progress reports quickly and easily, **(6) those reports** should provide only the most important information. **(7) Therefore,** highlight the work that you have accomplished and your progress during the reporting period. **(8) Also,** inform stakeholders of any situations that they would want to know about.
(9) For example, there may be equipment, personnel, or scheduling issues; risks; or change requests that you need their input on. **(10) Because** different stakeholders will have different interests in the project, you may need to create different reports for different people. Making your project progress reports quick and easy to read encourages stakeholders to read your reports and respond when necessary.

3.   Upon completion of the parking lot evaluation, ABC Company will submit a report with cost estimates for repairing failing areas. **(11) This report** will **(12) also** include alternatives for the repair work with comparisons of life span and costs.

QUICK PRACTICE 24: USING TRANSITIONAL WORDS
Answers will vary.

QUICK PRACTICE 25: USING HEADINGS TO GUIDE READERS

Subject: Implementing Our Year 20XX Safety Program

SAFETY PROGRAM OPEN ACTION ITEMS
On April 5, 20XX, we discussed our Action Plan reflecting findings in the Workers' Compensation Cost Analysis Report and our progress on the following items:

1. Distribute a Management Safety Policy Statement. The Safety Committee will distribute a management policy statement to employees later this month. This statement, communicating our company's commitment to health and safety, will help kick off our new safety efforts.

2. Distribute Written Safety Rules. With the management policy statement, employees will also receive a list of written safety rules for them to sign. These signed written safety rules will help document our safety requirements as well as provide proof that employees were told how to perform their jobs safely.

NEXT STEPS: Finalize April 30 Safety Meeting Agenda
I look forward to attending the April 30 meeting when we can present the policy statement and written safety rules as well as discuss with employees our new employee safety program. I will contact you before this meeting to finalize the meeting agenda.

QUICK PRACTICE 26: USING PARALLEL STRUCTURE

1. To prepare for an oral presentation:
    - List three to five main discussion points.
    - List your visual aids.
    - Write your opening and closing.

The second and third bullet items now each start with a verb to match the first bullet item. Also, the last bullet item is deleted since it is not logically parallel. That is, it is a general suggestion, not a specific preparation step.

2. The ABC report and the XYZ analysis are complete.
    - The ABC report highlights our accomplishments in FY 20XX. Each work group's accomplishments are provided.
    - The XYZ analysis shows that the new internal audit procedure decreased our error rate 5%. Our methodology and results for that analysis are provided.

The order of the bulleted items is changed to match the order predicted by the lead sentence: ABC and then XYZ.

3. 20XX First Quarter Goals
    - Immediately begin sending weekly updates to XYZ department to improve communications.
    - Attend ABC Seminar on 01/14/20XX with Kate and Ralph to learn . . . .
    - Meet with Robert Smith by 01/15/20XX to discuss adding graphics capabilities to our program that would enable us to . .
    - By 01/31/20XX, develop a list of six areas where my department could be more efficient. By 02/01/20XX have strategies in place to improve those areas.

Information is added to the last bullet item so that it matches the specificity of information provided in the other bullet items. The pattern used for all items is (a) a concrete action, (b) the target completion date, and (c) the goal. Also, items are placed in chronological order—an expected pattern.

4. To obtain training for their people, managers must either request training from Human Resources or budget for and obtain training within their own departments.

Words introduced by the correlative conjunctions ("either . . . or,") are made parallel. "Not only . . . but also" are another pair of commonly used correlative conjunctions.

QUICK PRACTICE 27: PARALLEL STRUCTURE

1. Chapter 2, "Using Calc Result," describes how to create and operate a spreadsheet.

2. Type the first letter of the selection you want to make. Press ENTER.

QUICK PRACTICE 28: FORMATTING DOCUMENTS

Subject: PSE Production & Equipment Move Schedule

Thank you for attending the March 25 meeting at our Valley Forge office to discuss PSE production and equipment moving. As we discussed, here are the actions and responsibilities for the move:

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROCESS EQUIPMENT
All the process equipment belongs to our Company and will be trucked to Rahway except the following:
- Cyclone rotary valve drive
- Roots Blower Motor with sheaves
- Test equipment
- Air compressor (30 HP rotary Atlas)

PSE PRODUCTION & EQUIPMENT MOVE SCHEDULE
April 15: PSE will send data on all existing equipment and spare parts as well as removal recommendations and information on suppliers to D. Latham.

May 1: D. Latham will coordinate the off-spec fines, sweeps, and product shipping arrangements with PSE.

May 5: Production at PSE will cease.

May 19: PSE will have all equipment dismantled and cleaned and the drive belt guards installed. PSE will properly tag for identification and retrofit all process flexible hoses, upon dismantling.

May 19: Contractor will furnish the truck and trailer and secure and cover the equipment.