

Fundamentals of Business Communication © 2012

Chapter 8: Writing Style—Glossary

active voice. Indicates the subject of the sentence performs the action when action verbs are used; the subject, or noun, of the sentence is doing the action.

bias-free words. Neutral words that impart neither a positive nor negative message.

cliché. Overused, commonplace, or trite phrases.

condescending. To assume an air of superiority.

connotation. A word's meaning apart from what it explicitly names or describes.

context. The environment or setting in which something occurs or is communicated; context is the other words or situation that surround a word, action, or idea and helps clarify meaning.

direct approach. A method for organizing information in which the topic is followed by descriptive details; it is a very readable format often used in business writing.

euphemisms. A word that expresses unpleasant ideas in more pleasant terms.

indirect approach. A method for organizing information in which details come before the main idea of the paragraph; often useful when one must present bad news to the reader.

industry language. Language specific to a line of work or area of expertise.

passive voice. Indicates the subject of the sentence is acted upon when action verbs are used; the subject, or noun, of the sentence receives the action.

redundancy. Repeating a message or saying the same thing more than once.

Standard English. Word choice, sentence structure, paragraphs, and the layout or format of communication follow standard, accepted conventions used by those who speak English.

tone. An impression of the overall content of the message.

transitions. Words, phrases, and sentences that connect ideas and clarify the relationship between sentences and paragraphs.

writing style. The way in which a writer uses language to convey an idea.