

Reports, Proposals, and Procedures course

COURSE PLAYLIST: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzLHunnjEdX-bA-v06tV_KjQz4ZkMO3c3

NOTE: Open this PDF on a desktop or tablet for clickable links to the YouTube course playlist and other materials.

This free video course helps professionals save writing time and find effective language for reports, proposals, procedures, and other multisection, high-stakes documents.

You'll see techniques for writing long documents that readers can easily understand and navigate through. These techniques can boost the likelihood of positive outcomes for any multisection document you send out to advance specific business needs.

Workbook: *Reports, Proposals, and Procedures workbook* (available on Amazon [as an ebook](#))

Questions

(THE ANSWERS BEGIN ON PAGE 4.)

1. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - A. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling should be correct.
 - B. Long sentences and paragraphs are good ways to impress readers.
2. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - A. Headings and subheadings can provide a helpful road map through the document.
 - B. A report or proposal should never summarize complex information before launching into details.
3. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - A. All document readers should have the same level of technical expertise.
 - B. If any readers may not know the definition of a word or phrase, then the definition should follow the first appearance of that word or phrase.
4. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - A. It is important to ask what key facts readers need to see when you write an informative document.
 - B. A thoughtful planning process is irrelevant when you write informatively, since readers are responsible for weighing every word carefully.

5. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Documents become easier to understand when the writers try to think from the readers' point of view.
 - B. Documents lose valuable focus when the writers consider readers' informational needs, rather than the most important information that the writers need to convey.
6. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. It is important to identify your readers' needs, interests, and concerns.
 - B. It is not important to identify your own business needs in writing a professional document.
7. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. It is important to identify and answer readers' single most important question about your topic.
 - B. It is not important to consider any questions readers may have. The only essential task is to convey your own information to them.
8. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. The writers should clearly formulate their most important point and lead the document with it.
 - B. The writers should not reveal any section's most important point until the end of that section.
9. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. When you write a persuasive document, it is important to ask what key idea readers need to see.
 - B. A thoughtful planning process is not helpful when you write persuasively, since persuasiveness should proceed from the writers' enthusiasm and not from the quality of the writing.
10. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. It is not helpful to write a statement to summarize a document section.
 - B. Summary statements can make documents easier to follow.
11. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. It adds impact to a document to separate discussions of one point, repeating data that readers have already seen several times, rather than addressing one point per document section.
 - B. Documents become more clear when a heading identifies a long section that addresses a single theme.
12. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Items in a list should usually begin with the same part of speech — e.g., an active verb to begin each item.
 - B. List items should always begin with verbs.

13. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Numbered lists are the best type of list for all situations.
 - B. Bulleted lists are most helpful when ideas are presented in no particular order, while numbered lists are most helpful for a chronological series of steps.
14. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. You should ask yourself if you have given readers enough information to follow your procedures correctly.
 - B. It is always each reader's sole responsibility to determine whether a procedure is followed correctly.
15. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Complex tables can be more clear when the table grid is divided — e.g., when one column has two subheadings.
 - B. Tables with subheadings always represent faulty planning: the only correct way to format a table is as a grid with unmerged, undivided rows and columns.
16. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Visual elements — e.g., photos and charts — should be self-explanatory and never require any description in accompanying text.
 - B. It is almost always helpful to mention a visual element in a sentence of text to explain its significance.
17. Which phrase is more concise and would therefore probably be more effective?
- A. "It is our belief that ..."
 - B. "We believe that ..."
18. Which sentence is more concise and would therefore probably be more effective?
- A. "It is important that these tasks be carried out by them without delay."
 - B. "It is important that they perform these tasks promptly."
19. Which story below follows a more effective sequence of ideas?
- A. "We did an excellent job with rescheduling. We began to send out emails to everyone who had important milestones. We did so because we realized that the company's usual scheduling processes had been wasting money."
 - B. "We realized that the company's usual scheduling processes had been wasting time and causing confusion. We began to send out emails to everyone who had important project milestones coming up. The recipients missed 25% fewer milestones within one month of this change."

(THE ANSWERS BEGIN ON THE NEXT PAGE.)

Answers

EACH CORRECT ANSWER IS IN BOLDFACE BELOW.

THE [COURSE WORKBOOK](#) PRESENTS THE TECHNIQUES BEHIND EACH OF THESE WRITING QUESTIONS.

- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - Grammar, punctuation, and spelling should be correct.**
 - Long sentences and paragraphs are good ways to impress readers.
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - Headings and subheadings can provide a helpful road map through the document.**
 - A report or proposal should never summarize complex information before launching into details.
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - All document readers should have the same level of technical expertise.
 - If any readers may not know the definition of a word or phrase, then the definition should follow the first appearance of that word or phrase.**
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - It is important to ask what key facts readers need to see when you write an informative document.**
 - A thoughtful planning process is irrelevant when you write informatively, since readers are responsible for weighing every word carefully.
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - Documents become easier to understand when the writers try to think from the readers' point of view.**
 - Documents lose valuable focus when the writers consider readers' informational needs, rather than the most important information that the writers need to convey.
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - It is important to identify your readers' needs, interests, and concerns.**
 - It is not important to identify your own business needs in writing a professional document.
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - It is important to identify and answer readers' single most important question about your topic.**
 - It is not important to consider any questions readers may have. The only essential task is to convey your own information to them.
- Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
 - Writers should clearly formulate their most important point and lead the document with it.**
 - Writers should not reveal any section's most important point until the end of that section.

9. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. **When you write a persuasive document, it is important to ask what key idea readers need to see.**
 - B. A thoughtful planning process is not helpful when you write persuasively, since persuasiveness should proceed from the writers' enthusiasm and not from the quality of the writing.
10. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. It is not helpful to write a statement to summarize a document section.
 - B. **Summary statements can make documents easier to follow.**
11. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. It adds impact to a document to separate discussions of one point, repeating data that readers have already seen several times, rather than addressing one point per document section.
 - B. **Documents become more clear when a heading identifies a long section that addresses a single theme.**
12. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. **Items in a list should usually begin with the same part of speech — e.g., an active verb to begin each item.**
 - B. List items should always begin with verbs.
13. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Numbered lists are the best type of list for all situations.
 - B. **Bulleted lists are most helpful when ideas are presented in no particular order, while numbered lists are most helpful for a chronological series of steps.**
14. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. **You should ask yourself if you have given readers enough information to follow your procedures correctly.**
 - B. It is always each reader's sole responsibility to determine whether a procedure is followed correctly.
15. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. **Complex tables can be more clear when the table grid is divided — e.g., when one column has two subheadings.**
 - B. Tables with subheadings always represent faulty planning: the only correct way to format a table is as a grid with unmerged, undivided rows and columns.
16. Only one of these sentences is a correct description of long professional documents. Identify the correct sentence.
- A. Visual elements — e.g., photos and charts — should be self-explanatory and never require any description in accompanying text.
 - B. **It is almost always helpful to mention a visual element in a sentence of text to explain its significance.**

17. Which phrase is more concise and would therefore probably be more effective?

- A. "It is our belief that ..."
- B. **"We believe that ..."**

18. Which sentence is more concise and would therefore probably be more effective?

- A. "It is important that these tasks be carried out by them without delay."
- B. **"It is important that they perform these tasks promptly."**

19. Which story below follows a more effective sequence of ideas?

- A. "We did an excellent job with rescheduling. We began to send out emails to everyone who had important milestones. We did so because we realized that the company's usual scheduling processes had been wasting money."
- B. **"We realized that the company's usual scheduling processes had been wasting time and causing confusion. We began to send out emails to everyone who had important project milestones coming up. The recipients missed 25% fewer milestones within one month of this change."**