

Business Communication (3cr)

MLI61A130

Session 2



Lecturer: Mark Badham

Today's agenda

1. **Session 1 Reflection feedback**
2. **QFOTY Team Exercise**
3. **Effective Business Writing**
4. **A1 1st Version – Peer review**
5. **Reflection**
6. **Instructions for A2a & A2b Individual Persuasive Presentation Strategy Outline & Presentation**
7. **Instructions for A5 Critical Reflection**

1. Session 1 Reflection feedback

Credibility as a student in business communications

When giving a presentation, how can you really “**read the audience**” besides seeing if people are nodding or sleeping? It is so confusing to look at many people simultaneously. People will have different reactions, so how should the presenter react according to them? Usually presentations are well practiced before presenting. How can/should you change the way of communicating during the presentation, if you notice that your message is not being understood correctly/agreed on/listened to, despite your best efforts and preparation?

I was wondering what happened if some of us would go into **quarantine** during the start of the course. Could it be possible to record the lessons or have a partly interactive Zoom session open for students to follow?

How to **analyze the audience** with virtually **no information** given about it?

How to find a good **WIIFT**?

What are your suggestions to use **pathos** in persuading people you've just met and don't have enough information about their emotions/desires/fears?

I didn't really understand the concept of a **warrant**. How could a warrant consider/address potential counter-arguments? (p.6)

Since audience's benefits are important in business communicating, can you elaborate more about **types of benefits** and how to thoroughly assess them (job/ego/career/...)?

Tangible/Real: Emphasize the value or significance of concrete benefits such as savings, increased productivity, bonuses or greater profits.

Tasks/Careers: Show how you can make their job easier, more interesting more challenging, or enhance their reputation / career prospects.

Group: Appeal to their sense of 'group' / team relationships & success

Ego: Let them know they are valued, important, needed... Appeal to the audience's sense of self-worth and accomplishment.

2. QFOTY



Do you know an
outstanding father
who deserves to be
recognised?

Nominate him now for Queensland Father of the Year.

www.qldfatheroftheyear.org.au

Nominations close 31 July.



Proudly sponsored by:



An initiative of:



TEAM EXERCISE: Queensland Father of the Year (QFOTY) sponsorship request

Fathers Day: early September in Australia

Background context: The state of Queensland (in Australia) celebrates QFOTY every year. SU Qld (a youth and children's not-for-profit organization) hosts and runs the annual QFOTY awards. SU Qld is officially endorsed by the Queensland Government's Education Department as the organization that employs chaplains in government/public schools. (www.suqld.org.au)

SU Qld's CEO, Tim Mander, stated: "Fathers play such a key role in the healthy development of our children. We want to honour our fathers and promote the vital role fathers play in families and society in general."

SU Qld seeks a 5-star resort venue to announce the 2022 QFOTY winner to the news media and to a live audience (eg families of nominated fathers).

Communication Strategy

Audience Strategy:

- Marketing Manager, Hyatt Regency Sanctuary Cove, Gold Coast, Australia – decision-maker & influencer (to CEO) – responsible for events that market resort
- Potential objections: no budget + busy staff (no time & money to get involved) – budget 1 year in advance
- **WIIFT**

Message Strategy - Communication Objective: As a result of this message, I want Marketing Manager to agree to sponsor the event at the resort (catering, room costs, prize for winner).

Communicator Strategy - Credibility Assessment:

- SU Qld track record running QFOTY media publicity & marketing
- Large successful organisation – positive image (*show media reports & marketing material from past years*)
- Common ground: families as our target market (Hyatt & SU Qld)

Channel Strategy:

- Final goal to get a FTF meeting with Marketing Manager
- Email seeking FTF meeting



Do you know an **outstanding father** who deserves to be **recognised?**

Nominate him now for Queensland Father of the Year.

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An initiative of:



QFOTY Media Release

<http://qldfatheroftheyear.org.au>

<https://www.ihg.com/intercontinental/hotels/us/en/sanctuary-cove/bneql/hoteldetail>

Team task: You are asked to seek sponsorship from a 5-star resort for this event.

1. Plan your **communication strategy**. *Approx. 10 minutes team collaboration* How will you obtain sponsorship from the resort? How will you write your sponsorship request?
2. **Begin writing an email** to the resort. *10 minutes individual, then 10 minutes team collaboration*
3. **Submit** your draft text (as document) in MyCourses (under 'QFOTY')



My Channel Strategy:

- Produced and emailed him Sponsorship Proposal document after he agreed to a meeting (so he had enough details to make decision in our meeting)
- In the email I also attached 1-2 media reports + marketing material from last year.

[Proposal document \(PDF\)](#)

3. Effective Business Writing

Today's learning outcomes

By the end of today, you will be able to

1. Write persuasive, clear and concise business messages
2. Write with a strong audience focus
3. Ensure you get the desired response from readers

BUSINESS WRITING

When you write well...

- Enhances your **credibility**
- More chance of reader **receiving** & **understanding** your message
- More chance of reader **doing** what you want

So let's learn to write well!

Applies to emails, WhatsApp messages, executive summaries, PowerPoint reports...



BUSINESS WRITING

Composing Techniques

FIRST (*yesterday's session*):

- Communicator strategy
- Audience strategy
- Message strategy
- Channel Choice strategy

Then COMPOSE (write)...

Tips:

- Strategize
- Write 1st draft
- Edit &/or ask someone to check &/or test it
- Edit again



Composing Techniques

1. Conduct research:

- Interview/s
- Company documents (eg online public statements)
- Surveys

2. Organize (overall structure):

Group your ideas: mindmap/idea chart

3. Narrow your focus:

- Skim
- Nutshell
- Bottom line
- Elevator pitch

4. Draft your text:

- Organize (eg main points)
- Start writing
- Don't edit yet

5. Edit (in this order):

- a. 1st for strategy & focus
- b. For macro issues
- c. For micro issues
- d. For correctness (eg spelling, grammar & punctuation)

Composing Techniques

3. Narrow your focus

Skim (HSV: High Skim Value):

- Imagine reader skimming...
- What does reader need to know
1st, 2nd, 3rd... if he/she skims text?



Composing Techniques

4. Draft your text

- Don't start with blank page - start with lots of unedited text
- Like sculpture, begin with 'mess' (in Draft stage) & methodically perfect (in Edit stage)



Composing Techniques

5. Edit

MACRO: structure to suit your logical reasoning / arguments (eg headings & paragraphs)

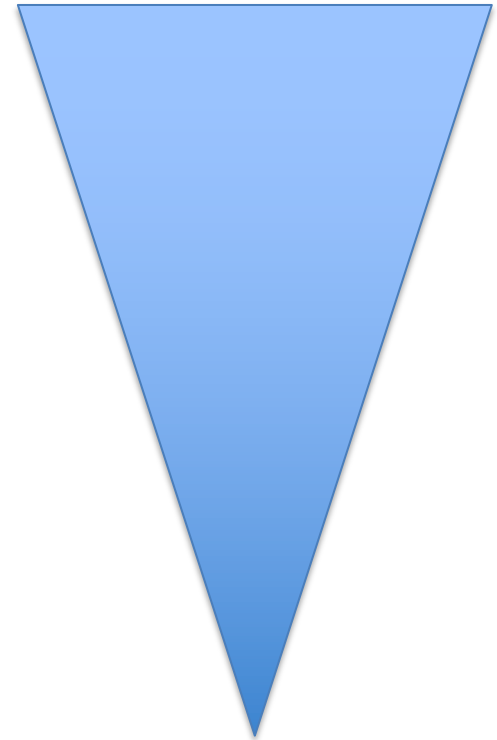
MICRO: sentences & words

- Brevity (conciseness)
- Transitions
- Appropriate style (formal/informal)
- Language correctness (eg spelling, grammar & punctuation)

MACRO



MICRO



MACRO Writing

Effective paragraphs have:

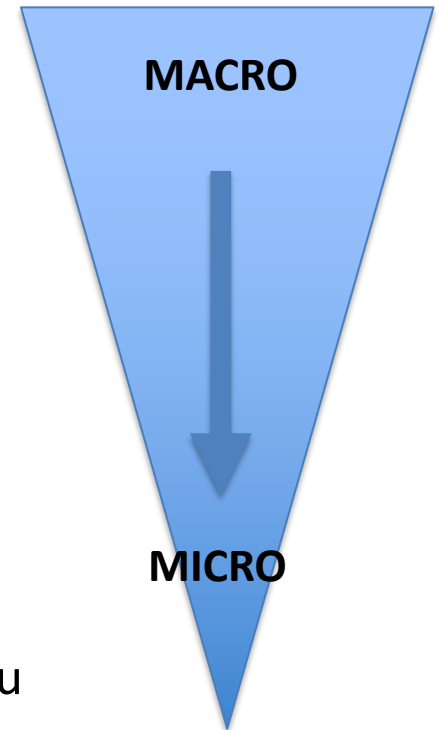
- clear topic sentence +
- supporting sentences +
- signposts +
- are short

Effective paragraph example:

An effective document structure includes three main items. First, you should create high skim value with message headings and enough white space. **Second**, you should use signposts to show connection in the text. **Finally**, each paragraph should start with a topic sentence, which all other sentences then support.

Signposts

Topic sentence

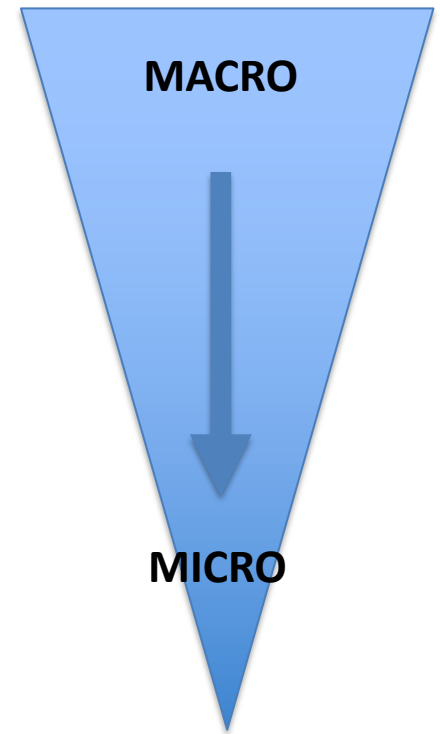


MICRO Writing

Design text to enable reader to read it all **quickly + slowly**

Make text easy to **skim**
- gain **High Skim Value (HSV)**
with:

- **Headings** (that highlight key messages)
- Numbered & bulleted **lists**
- **Parallel headings & lists**
- **White space**
- Easy-to-read **typography**



Headings (& sub-headings)

Effective headings have 3 features:

1. Tell (**summarize**) the message (main point) in the paragraph
2. Are **parallel** (conceptually & grammatically)
3. Have **stand-alone sense**



Headings tell (summarize) the message (main point) in each paragraph

Reader can skim quickly

**Message heading
(conveys main idea)**

Top-level executives with strong background in finance

Readers prefer international trade news over sports

**Question heading
(focuses reader on answer)**

Who's the audience?

What are reader survey results?

**Topic heading
(indicates subject)**

Audience

Reader survey

Action verbs in headings – because most business communication involves making recommendations (persuading)

Compare these:

We recommend that management take the following 4 steps:

1. A clear timeframe for the introduction of the new database is important
2. Communication of the timeframe to all staff
3. Organising training sessions to ensure smooth implementation
4. Important to clarify job descriptions and explain to personnel how their input impacts the whole organisation

We recommend that management take the following 4 steps:

1. Establish a clear timeframe for the introduction of the new database
2. Communicate the timeframe to all staff
3. Organise training sessions to ensure smooth implementation
4. Clarify job descriptions and explain to personnel how their input impacts the whole organisation

Numbered & bulleted lists

Rule of thumb:

- Use numbering when the sequence or number of items is relevant.
- Use bullets when the number or the order of the items doesn't matter.

Example:

Before arriving in Finland, please take the following four actions. First, enroll at **www.abcevent.fi/registration**. In this address, you will be able to indicate any dietary restrictions. Second, pay the registration fee through your mobile bank. If you don't have access to a mobile bank, please contact us. Third, book your hotel room through **www.abcevent.fi/hotel** to be able to benefit from a discounted rate. Finally, if you have any questions, please contact us.

Before arriving in Finland, please take the following four actions.

1. Enroll and indicate dietary restrictions at **www.abcevent.fi/registration**
2. Pay the registration fee through your mobile bank or contact us for payment
3. Book your hotel room through **www.abcevent.fi/hotel** to benefit from a discounted rate
4. Contact us if you have any questions

Notice
action
verbs

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4. Contact us if you have any questions

What can
you notice
here?

Parallel headings & lists

Make sure they are conceptually and grammatically parallel, i.e. equal

Conceptual parallelism – making sure headings/listed items have the same relationship to the title of the document/list

Helps busy reader quickly skim & understand

No conceptual parallelism:

Here are the main findings:

- All the steps in the process were carefully monitored
- 15% of the raw material was defective
- The finished product was tested at 5 minute intervals
- 2% of the seals received insufficient adhesive

Conceptual parallelism:

The pricing of the holiday apartments will depend on:

- location on the coast
- amenities in the neighbouring area
- number of bedrooms
- quality of furniture and fittings

Parallel headings & lists

Parallel headings are similar items

Example: Here are 3 actions you should take:

1. Send contact info to Susan Smith
2. Pay the course fee
3. Prepare the pre-course assignment

Note about emails: treat **subject line** as heading =
put message in subject line

Examples:

“Brochure” vs. “New brochure for comments by Monday”

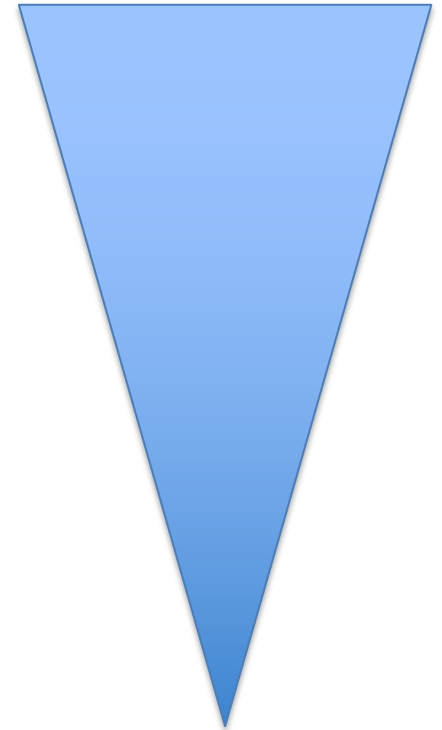
“Meeting” vs. “Board meeting: Tue 9 am, Room 102”

- Avoid **wordiness** (*Pleonasm*: the use of unnecessary words)
- Shorten & vary **lengths of sentences**
- **White space**: increases readability
- **Typography**: Bolding, underlining, italics – use sparingly, don't combine them

MACRO



MICRO



Transitions (Hansel & Gretel's white pebbles):

Addition: And, in addition, again, also, similarly, finally...

Contrast: But, however, or, nevertheless, on the other hand...

Example: For example, for instance, such as, that is...

Sequence: First, second, third... then...

Conclusion: Finally, therefore, in conclusion, as a result...

Clarification/summary: In other words, what this means is, to summarize...



Clear & logical structure

Introductions (openings): provide background, explain why you are writing, preview rest of text

Length depends on how familiar reader is with topic

Effective intro does 3 things

1. Explains why you are writing
2. Establishes context
3. Previews rest of text



Examples:

As Alina told us last week, our customer feedback has been below target. To address the issue, we (Mikko, Matti and Salla) were assigned to suggest strategies to enhance our customer experience. This report outlines...

*We met at the *Speak IT!* event last month, and you told me* that you give presentations on inspirational leadership.

I am writing to ask if you would be interested in giving a presentation on this topic to our employees...



Closings: reinforce main ideas, state action points, give deadlines, offer help

Examples:

I will call you at the beginning of next week so that we can talk more about the workshop and possibly start organizing the details.

In order to take this process a stage further, could you please let us have ...

I look forward to receiving your comments on the attached draft by 3 pm on 31 August.

If you require more data on ... I would be happy to collate it for you.

Styles

Formal or informal? Professional or casual?

Depends on who is writing to whom + what you are trying to achieve (communication objective).

3 different examples:

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or would like additional information. Our office hours are ...

If you'd like more information, feel free to call me anytime between 8.00 and 16.30 Monday to Friday.

Want to know more? Just give me a call. I'm in the office 8-16, Monday to Friday.

Styles

- Use a reader-centric 'you' attitude: what's in it for them (WIIFT)
- Beginning (salutation) and ending (complimentary close) that reflects your relationship with the reader

Formal messages	Salutation	Complimentary close
1. Know the name, but have not written to them before	Dear Mr / Ms / Mrs / Miss + name, e.g. Dear Mr Sypniewska Dear Ms Ang Bee Hong Dear Ms T H Schaefer	Yours sincerely Sincerely yours Sincerely Cordially (Am.)

Note:

- Dear Ms + name is the most common way to address women, regardless of marital status.
- If you do not know whether the recipient is a man or a woman, simply use the full name

Informal messages

1. Know the recipient

Dear + recipient's first name, e.g.

Dear Mehdi
Hello Jaana
Hi Marlotte

Best regards
Kind regards
Kindest regards

2. Write to a personal
friend or close
colleague

Hi
Hi Peter
Peter

BR
Cheers
By for now
See you



Jen & the Sales Navigator Team

Hi Mark,

As a valued LinkedIn member, I'd like to offer you a special gift - a free trial of Sales Navigator!

Sales Navigator gives you the following additional features:

- **20 InMail messages** (per month) so you can contact anyone, even if you're not connected
- **Who's Viewed Your Profile**, to see everyone who viewed your profile over the last 90 days
- **Unlimited Searches** with special filters including Job Function, Seniority Level, and Groups
- **Actionable Insights and News** that keep you updated on your Saved Accounts and Leads
- **Lead Recommendations** to help you find the right prospects at target accounts

Start your free trial today, and tap into the power of LinkedIn, the world's largest professional network of 630M+ members.

Sincerely,

Jen & the Sales Navigator Team

[Upgrade Free →](#)

4. A1 1st Version – Peer review

1. Share your A1 Written Task 1st Version with another team – each *individual* member of that team to write their feedback on document. See '[A1 Team Feedback Guidelines](#)' PDF under Session 2: “A1 1st Version - Feedback Guidelines + Submission”. (10 minutes)
2. Read their comments & make changes - each *individual* member to read feedback, discuss in team, make changes. (10 minutes)
3. Submit your 1st Version for Teacher Feedback. Show me what you have written – [submit in “A1 1st Version - Feedback Guidelines + Submission”](#).

5. Session 2 Reflection – “Your Feedback” (in MyCourses)



6. A2 Individual persuasive presentation (15%)

Due 13.00 Session 4

Deliverables

The assignment is divided into 2 parts as follows:

A2a Presentation Strategy Outline: submit to the MyCourses submission box before class on Session 4

A2b Presentation (to peers): held in Session 4

5-minute individual persuasive presentation that you will deliver in class

Your target audience could be:

- **school:** Aalto Mikkeli management, fellow students, potential students, exchange students, corporate partners, student club management
- **company where you (used to) work:** top management, colleagues, company personnel, customers, suppliers, buyers, partners etc

2019 Topics:

- Supporting a football team is an effective investment to improve mental health
- The Fidget Cube: new, *revolutionary device* that will make you more productive during the day + help reduce stress.
- Why is negative economic effects a bad argument against immigration?

2020 Topics:

- Why buying sustainable clothing is worth it
- Is the legalization of marijuana a plan made by the devil?
- Why do we need to hire more women?
- Why is it important that we start plastic recycling in Mikkeli?
- Why should employers pay interns?

The presentations will be given in small groups (in rooms) - you will get and discuss feedback on the presentations in these small groups.

Before the actual presentation (assignment A2b), you will need to **analyze the situation and plan properly** to ensure that your presentation will be effective.

As an outcome of your analysis and planning, you will need to **present your plan** as a written outline (A2a).

Length: 1-2 pages, single-spaced

Evaluation criteria: See grading rubric (in MyCourses submission box)

SEE MORE DETAILS IN ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS IN MYCOURSES

7. A5 Individual Reflection on Presentation Performance (20%)

Due: 11 pm on Friday 14 January

Length: maximum 3 pages.

This assignment requires you to write a critical appraisal of the two persuasive presentations you have given in this course – A2 individual and A4 team – and to assess your overall presentation performance.

The assignment thus has 3 parts:

1. Critical appraisal of A2 individual presentation
2. Critical appraisal of A4 team presentation
3. You as a presenter: overall assessment of your presentation performance

Use comments & written feedback from lecturer and fellow classmates + theories of communication.

Part 1: Critical appraisal of A2 individual presentation

- To what extent was your presentation persuasive? Discuss 3-5 points.
- What areas could you have done better in terms of persuasion? Discuss 3-5 points.
- What do you intend to do differently in the next persuasive presentation assignment?

Part 2: Critical appraisal of A4 team presentation

- What aspects of your team's presentation made the presentation persuasive? Discuss 3-5 points.
- In what ways could it have been more persuasive? Discuss 3-5 points.
- How did what you learnt in the first presentation affect the way you approached the second presentation in terms of preparation and delivery?

Part 3: You as a presenter: an overall assessment of your BCS presentation performance

- What seem to be your strengths as a presenter?
- What areas do you feel you still need to develop?

All three parts (A,B & C) of the appraisal should cover:

Communication strategy

- Audience analysis (Input 1)
- Choice of content and structure (Input 1)
- Argument: claims & evidence (Input 2)
- Benefits (Input 2)

Presentation delivery

- Introduction & conclusion (Input 4)
- Slide design (Input 4)
- Nonverbal communication (Input 4)
- Language (Input 4)

Work due Session 3

Read Input 4 (impactful presentations) available in MyCourses

[A1: Written request](#) final version (team). Due **13.00** (upload to MyCourses)

[A2a 1st version](#):

- Choose A2 topic
- Prepare A2a draft version to show peers in class
- Come to class prepared to present your topic (max. 2 minutes, no slides) - explain context + how you will plan your presentation (eg arguments)

References / Acknowledgments

See in-text citations

Mike Baker, Christa Uusi-Rauva