

of a continuing series of staff reductions anticipated over the next several years.” However, your boss is concerned about the vagueness and negative tone of the language and asks you to rewrite that sentence to read “This staffing adjustment is part of the company’s ongoing efforts to continually align its resources with global market conditions.” Do you think this suggested wording is ethical, given the company’s significant economic presence in the community? Explain your answer in an email message to your instructor.

4. **Writing: Using Plain Language; Media Skills: Blogging [LO-3]** Download the Security and Exchange Commission’s (SEC’s) *A Plain English Handbook*, from www.sec.gov/pdf/handbook.pdf. In one or two sentences, summarize what the SEC means by the phrase *plain English*. Now scan the SEC’s introduction to mutual funds at www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/inwsmf.htm. Does this information follow the SEC’s plain English guidelines? Cite several examples that support your assessment. Post your analysis on your class blog.
5. **Writing: Creating Effective Sentences; Media Skills: Social Networking [LO-4]** If you are interested in business, chances are you’ve had an idea or two for starting a company. If you haven’t yet, go ahead and dream up an idea now. Make it something you are passionate about, something you could really throw yourself into. Now write a four-sentence summary that could appear on the Info tab on a Facebook profile. Make sure the first sentence is a solid topic sentence, and make sure the next three sentences offer relevant evidence and examples. Feel free to make up any details you need. Email your summary to your instructor or post it on your class blog.
6. **Writing: Crafting Unified, Coherent Paragraphs; Media Skills: Email [LO-5]** Suppose that end-of-term frustrations have produced this email message to Professor Anne Brewer from a student who believes he should have received a B in his accounting class. If this message were recast into three or four clear sentences, the teacher might be more receptive to the student’s argument. Rewrite the message to show how you would improve it:

I think that I was unfairly awarded a C in your accounting class this term, and I am asking you to change the grade to a B. It was a difficult term. I don’t get any money from home, and I have to work mornings at the Pancake House (as a cook), so I had to rush to make your class, and those two times that I missed class were because they wouldn’t let me off work because of special events at the Pancake House (unlike some other students who just take off when they choose). On the midterm examination, I originally got a 75 percent, but you said in class that there were two different ways to answer the third question and that you would change the grades of students who used the “optimal cost” method and had been counted off 6 points for doing this. I don’t think that you took this into account, because I got 80 percent on the final, which is clearly a

B. Anyway, whatever you decide, I just want to tell you that I really enjoyed this class, and I thank you for making accounting so interesting.

7. **Writing: Crafting Unified, Coherent Paragraphs; Collaboration: Evaluating the Work of Others [LO-6], Chapter 5** For this exercise, work with four other students. Each of you should choose one of the following five topics and write one paragraph on it. Be sure one student writes a paragraph using the illustration technique, one using the comparison-or-contrast technique, one using a discussion of cause and effect, one using the classification technique, and one using a discussion of problem and solution. Then exchange paragraphs within the team and pick out the main idea and general purpose of the paragraph one of your teammates wrote. Was everyone able to correctly identify the main idea and purpose? If not, suggest how the paragraph might be rewritten for clarity.
 - a. Types of cameras (or dogs or automobiles) available for sale
 - b. Advantages and disadvantages of eating at fast-food restaurants
 - c. Finding that first full-time job
 - d. Good qualities of my car (or house, or apartment, or neighborhood)
 - e. How to make a favorite dessert (or barbecue a steak or make coffee)
8. **Writing: Using Technology to Compose Messages [LO-7], Chapter 5** Team up with another student and choose some form of document or presentation software that allows you to create templates or another form of “master design.” (Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, or their equivalents are good choices for this assignment.) Your task is to design a report template for a company you know about firsthand or whose general communication style you are able to analyze from its website and other materials. You can start your template from scratch or adapt an existing template, but if you adapt another template, make sure the final design is largely your own. Chapter 5 offers information on document design.

Expand Your Skills

Critique the Professionals

Locate an example of professional communication from a reputable online source. Choose a paragraph that has at least three sentences. Evaluate the effectiveness of this paragraph at three levels, starting with the paragraph structure. Is the paragraph unified and cohesive? Does it have a clear topic sentence and sufficient support to clarify and expand on that topic? Second, evaluate each sentence. Are the sentences easy to read and easy to understand? Did the writer vary the types and lengths of sentences used to produce a smooth flow and rhythm? Is the most important idea presented prominently in each sentence? Third, evaluate at least