

# THE EFFECTIVE WRITING CHECKLIST

Effective writing is clear, concise, correct, complete, and appropriate in tone. The questions below will help you evaluate your own writing, and other writing you must review.

## Is it clear?

- Is the *purpose* stated clearly?
- Will the reader know what *response* you expect from him or her?
- Is it clearly *organized*?
- Are the ideas organized in a way which would persuade the reader to accomplish your purpose?
- Have you used *language* which the reader can easily understand?

## Is it concise?

- Have you eliminated all information which is unnecessary to your reader's ability to understand and act on the purpose?
- Have you eliminated all redundant or unnecessary word and phrases?

## Is it correct?

- Have you checked the accuracy of your information, and of your spelling and grammar?

## Is it complete?

- Does it contain all the information the reader will need to accomplish the purpose?

## Is it appropriate in tone?

- Is the tone appropriate to:
  - The reader's needs?
  - The image you want to convey?
  - The context and form of your communication?

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A classic guide to writing is "The Elements of Style" by William Strunk and E. B. White. Several editions are available, including the original 1918 version online at <http://www.bartleby.com/141/index.html>

Another useful checklist is at <http://www.mantex.co.uk/samples/rules.htm>