The Policy Writing Guide

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What is Concise Writing?
The Writing Process
Outlines and Templates
Craft Sentences and Paragraphs
Review Language Choices
The Policy Writing Guidebook
WHAT IS CONCISE WRITING?

WRITING TECHNIQUE

Concise writers focus on deliberate word choices, sentence construction and grammar. Sentences are crafted to clearly communicate substantive information to readers.

PURPOSE

The goal is to avoid verbosity, not reduce word count. Verbose writing contains redundant phrases, technical vocabulary or unnecessary words.

WORD SELECTION

Concise writers select words with a purpose. The vocabulary is accessible to all audience members.
WRITING TIP

CONCISE WRITING BEGINS BEFORE WORDS ARE PUT ON THE PAGE.

TO COMMUNICATE CLEAR IDEAS TO THE AUDIENCE, THE WRITER MUST CRAFT THE MESSAGE FIRST.
# THE WRITING PROCESS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SELECT A FRAMEWORK</th>
<th>IDENTIFY THE AUDIENCE</th>
<th>EXPLAIN ONE IDEA AT A TIME</th>
<th>EDIT, EDIT AND EDIT AGAIN</th>
<th>READ TEXT OUT LOUD</th>
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<td>Policy templates published in the Management Guides provide standardized frameworks for cabinet submissions.</td>
<td>What does the audience know about the topic? What information do they require? How will the information be used by the audience?</td>
<td>To support reader comprehension, write short paragraphs that focus on one idea.</td>
<td>Critically review each sentence and paragraph. Cut or revise text that is irrelevant or unclear.</td>
<td>Read drafts out loud to flag unnecessary words or phrases.</td>
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Outlines are the most powerful tool in a writer's toolkit. They allow the writer to build a framework, organize information and insert evidence that supports the policy request.

Templates for cabinet submissions are available in the 100 Management Guide. They set writing and research standards for all provincial government departments.
CRAFT SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

AVOID THE PASSIVE VOICE
Passive writing is not grammatically incorrect, but does create wordy sentences.

LIMIT SENTENCES TO 40 WORDS
Long sentences lead to misunderstanding. Communication is more efficient when sentences are compact.

LIMIT PARAGRAPHS TO 300 WORDS
Think of paragraphs as single units of information. Focus on one idea in each paragraph. Organize all paragraphs on the page so they tell one cohesive story.
REVIEW LANGUAGE CHOICES

TIPS FOR DRAFT EDITS

- Start sentences with the subject
- Make deliberate word choices
- Use plain language
- Replace vague words with specific words
- Use the short form of words and phrases
- Roundabout expressions vs. direct expressions
- Replace multiple negatives with affirmatives
- Eliminate excessive detail
THE POLICY WRITING GUIDEBOOK

WRITING AND GRAMMAR TIPS
- Cabinet submission templates
- Outline suggestions
- Editing tips

EMAIL TEMPLATES
- Cabinet submission review requests
- Cabinet submission signature requests

ATTESTATION STATEMENT TEMPLATE
- E-signature approval for cabinet submissions
THANK YOU

Please reach out with any questions or requests.
I am happy to be of assistance!