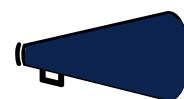# What is Professional Writing?

Professional writing is a style of writing that is clear, concise, and seeks to convey information and ideas quickly in a professional setting. Professional writing is geared towards informing or persuading an audience in the world of work and commerce.

Purpose
To persuade and/or to clearly convey information and ideas

Tone
Professional, objective, respectful (not emotional), formal (not conversational)

Audience
Colleagues, employers, employees, and/or clients

Examples
Resumes, cover letters, reports, grants, emails, presentations, proposals

Why Professional Writing?

A professional writing style is used because it communicates need-to-know information quickly. Professionals expect to receive the information they need right away. Time is of the essence and professional communications are often read quickly, or even skimmed, rather than read in depth. This type of writing is expected when applying for a job; when giving presentations at work; and when communicating with colleagues via email, to name a few situations.

How is the Format of Professional Writing different than Academic Writing?

Academic Writing
- Uses discipline-specific jargon
- Includes scholarly sources
- Uses third person point of view
- Avoids "I" statements
- Employs active voice
- Varies sentence length & structure
- Paragraphs are well-developed (using P.I.E. structure)
- Fully developed introduction and conclusion

Professional Writing
- Avoids discipline-specific jargon
- Seldom use of research
- Uses first person point of view
- The purpose is stated directly (e.g. "I am writing to...")
- Uses active voice
- Sentences are direct and concise
- Paragraphs are brief and focused
- Brief introduction and conclusion

Resources

Active Voice
Business Writing
First Person vs. Third Person

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