

## Eliminating Wordiness

### 1. Avoid using a phrase when a word will do:

at this point in time	=	now
has the ability to	=	can
in this day and age	=	today
is aware of the fact that	=	knows
due to the fact that	=	because
the majority of	=	most
on a daily basis	=	daily
each and every one	=	all
in close proximity to	=	near

### 2. Eliminate redundant words:

the reason [why]	the [final] conclusion
[utmost] perfection	enter [into]
[the month of] August	[totally] oblivious
[the colour] green	[past] experience
mix [together]	correct [amount of] change
[viable] alternative	[future] prospects

### 3. Avoid needless repetition:

In trauma victims, breathing is restored by **artificial respiration**. Techniques of **artificial respiration** include mouth-to-mouth **respiration** and mouth-to-nose **respiration**.

In trauma victims, breathing is restored by artificial respiration, either mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-nose.

### 4. Drop most “There is” and “There are” sentence openers:

Dropping these openers places key words at the end of the sentence where they are best emphasized:

- X There are serious consequences in failing to yield right of way.
- ✓ Failing to yield right of way can have serious consequences.

### 5. Avoid some “It” sentence openers:

- X It gives me great pleasure to introduce our speaker.
- ✓ I am pleased to introduce our speaker.

### 6. Delete needless “to be” constructions:

Forms of the verb “to be” (is, was, are, etc.) often add clutter without adding meaning: I find some of his stories [to be] amusing.

### 7. Avoid weak, wordy verbs:

is in conflict with	=	conflicts
make an assumption	=	assume
come to a conclusion	=	conclude
take action	=	act
make a decision	=	decide
come to the realization	=	realize

### 8. Eliminate needless prepositions:

X Some members of the committee made these recommendations.  
✓ Some committee members made these recommendations.

X A man by the name of Godot is waiting for you.  
✓ A man named Godot is waiting for you.

### 9. Use “that” and “which” sparingly:

This [is a] writing problem [that] is easy to correct.  
The book [, which is] about Hemingway [,] is fascinating.

### 10. Fight noun addiction.

Nouns manufactured from verbs (nominalizations) make your sentences weak and wordy. Weak verbs and needless prepositions often accompany nominalizations:

X Give consideration to the possibility of changing jobs.  
✓ Consider changing jobs.

### 11. Nominalizations can also lead to vagueness by hiding the agent of the action:

X A need for immediate action exists.  
✓ We must act immediately.

### 12. Make negatives positive:

did not succeed	=	failed
does not have	=	lacks
did not prevent	=	allowed