

Examples

Aim of communication: *get the message across!* Consider:

1) Overcomplexity vs simplicity (elegance)

At the Women's Boat Race, it was the Dark Blues who proved more capable of overcoming fierce winds at Eton Dorney as they reclaimed the honours from Cambridge across the very waters that had seen Katherine Grainger epitomise the culmination of many years of passion and perseverance to finally attain her elusive Olympic Gold.

➤ One solution: break with full stop after 'Cambridge', then start new sentence: 'This was across the very waters where Katherine Grainger, after many years of passion and perseverance, finally attained her elusive Olympic Gold'.

They asked us to reconfigure the model from tracking the very large numbers of projects into effectively a retail account tool tracking their investment – so it needed to track training, staff engagement and, ultimately, outcomes.

➤ They asked us to reconfigure the model – instead of tracking the very large numbers of projects it effectively became a retail account tool tracking their investment. To do this it needed to track training, staff engagement and, ultimately, outcomes.

2) Ambiguity

Because we recognise the challenges facing young people we have put helping them to reach their potential high on our list of priorities.

➤ ...young people, helping them to reach their potential is high on our list of priorities.

The company's energy policy is to reduce its building and process carbon dioxide emissions in line with UK government carbon dioxide emission reduction targets.

➤ Clarify: are they carbon dioxide emissions from building and processes, or is the policy 1) to reduce building, and 2) to process carbon dioxide emissions?

There has been a long-term housing shortage in Oxford.

➤ There has been a housing shortage in Oxford for a long time. (To avoid confusion over whether the housing or the shortage is long-term.)

3) Jargon

Dynamic modelling of resource requirements drives human capital strategies through resource optimisation and capability assessments.

- Reader has to work hard to understand this – not good communication

The solution was an integrated programme management model with a good global/local procurement category management exercise, where we were paid on gainshare², so skin in the game³ was absolutely key.

- Two footnotes within six words? Reader is having to work too hard – obscures the message.

We work with the County Council and other organisations at many levels to deliver and enable services for local residents.

- Is there a difference between delivering and enabling services? If not, suggest delete ‘and enable’.

Miscellaneous

‘Cut and paste’ errors

Why have these individuals have risen to such positions of prominence, how have they been able to do so, and what impact have they had?

She acts as an adviser to many of the world’s leading professional service firms in the areas such as accounting, law and management consulting.

Tenses (reported speech)

When they went into a recession I demanded that they have really got to understand where they make money and where they didn’t.

- ...they had really got to understand where they made money and where they didn’t.

Missing word/incomplete construction

As far as sustainability, everyone was waiting for the government to impose regulations but it was the consumers who drove it.

- As far as sustainability **was concerned**

With the increased number of compliance requirements from the University, Bob sees the role of the Sports Federation more important than ever.

- Sees the role...**as** more important than ever

Quoted matter

Make sure that when using quotes, they are grammatically correct and properly punctuated. People don't speak in the way they would write – no one will thank you for quoting them in a way that is ungrammatical or doesn't make complete sense. Stick to the points they made/information they gave, but make sure the language is correct.

Food for thought:

To this end it is important that all of us at Acme Inc are aware that quality of the design and presentation of information from architectural graphics and vehicles to leaflets and letterheads we provide influences how our customers see us.

Now routinely used worldwide to align scanning transmission electron microscopes, Professor Nellist was the first to see real results with this optical alignment method...