

Practical & Precise Writing: Get Results; Ensure Accuracy & Clarity



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Why?

Clarity can produce Action

- But what action?

Attention is brief

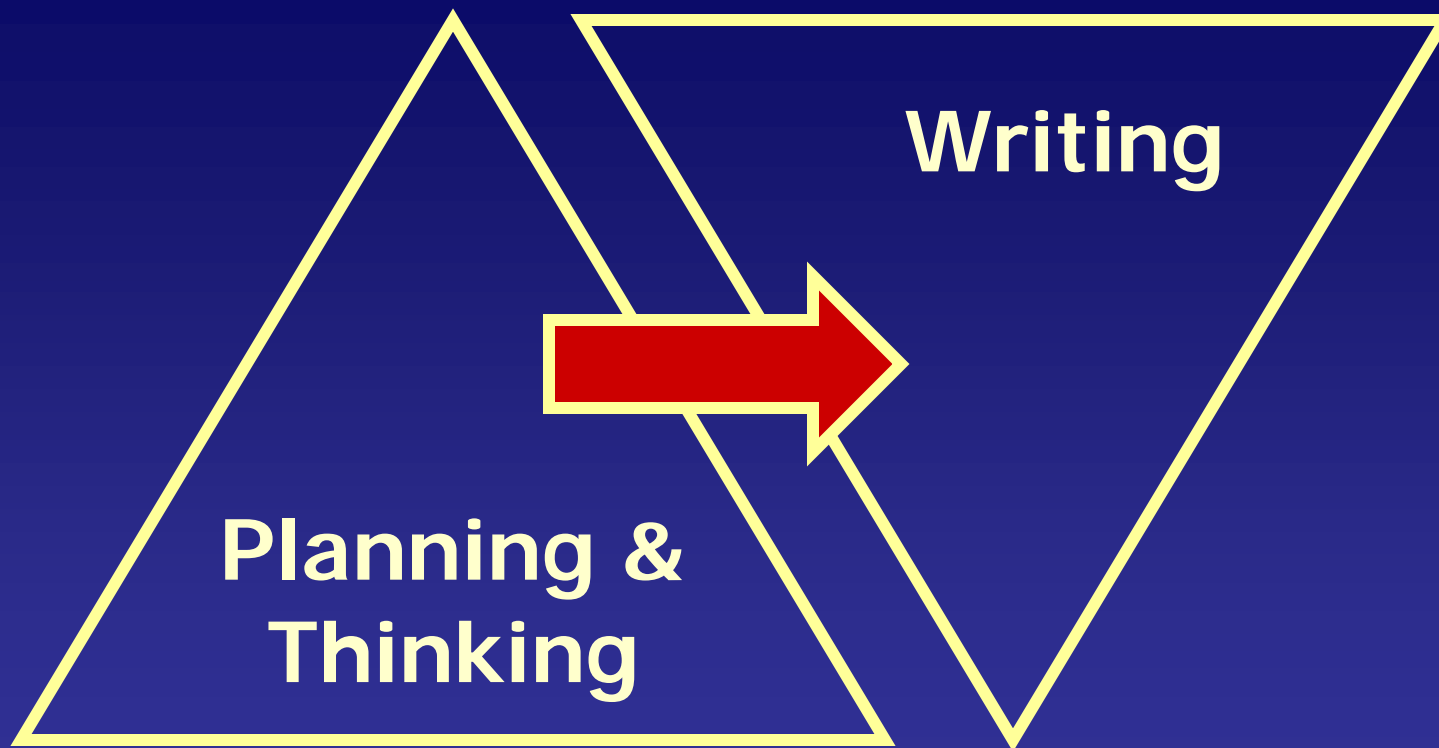
- What will be “heard”?

Writers Can Use

- Structure
- Language
- Mechanics
- Format



Planning & Thinking vs. Writing



Managerial personnel are reminded of their responsibility for advising Security of any information coming to their attention concerning any employee who is cleared or in the process of being cleared of information which indicates that access by that individual to classified material may not be in the interest of national security. Examples of reportable information are: criminal activities, treatment for mental or emotional disorders, use of illegal substances, excessive use of intoxicants, or excessive indebtedness. Any situation that raises questions concerning an individual's judgement, character, or integrity that impairs their ability to safeguard classified information should be reported immediately. Failure to do so is to neglect your responsibility. Once you have reported, the burden of decision is relieved from you. All reports are thoroughly reviewed by Security before any decision is made as to what further action, if any, needs to be taken.

Reminder to all managers with responsibility for security

Managers must report any information that implies or shows that an employee has inappropriate access to classified material, particularly if the classified material presents a threat to national security. Report all events demonstrating questionable judgement, character, or integrity:

- criminal activities,
- treatment for mental or emotional disorders,
- use of illegal substances,
- excessive use of intoxicants, or
- excessive indebtedness.

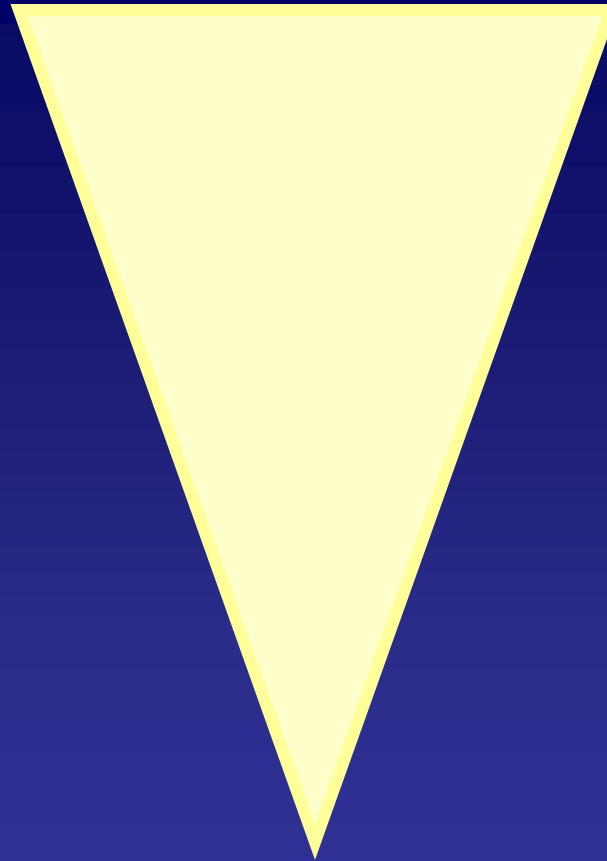
Your responsibility ends after you have reported the situation. Security will review all reports to determine whether action is necessary.

To Write or Edit:

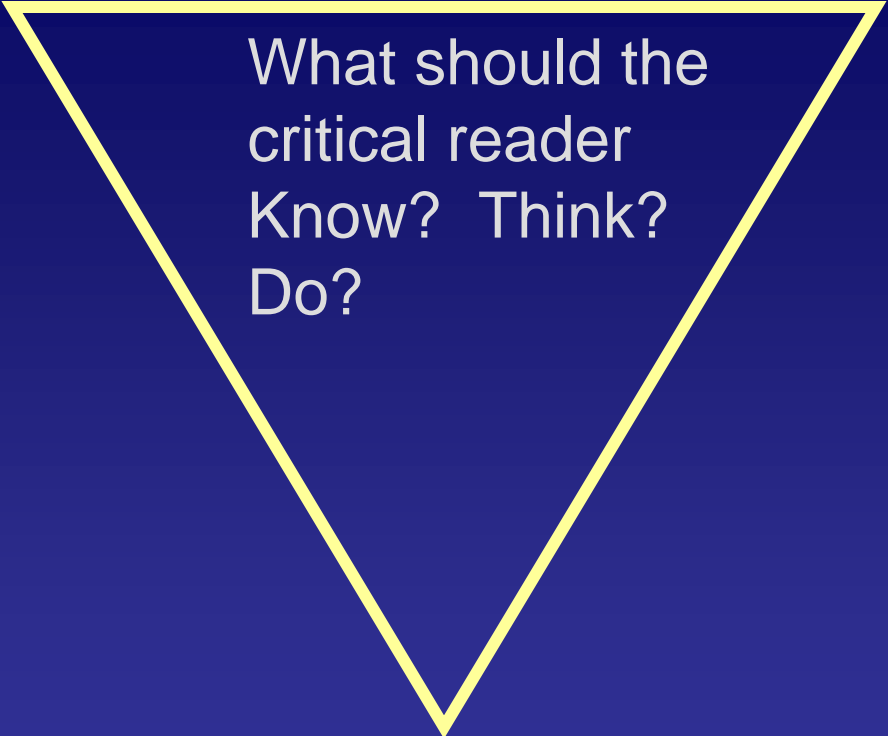
1. Structure the information based on the message (KTD) and sub-messages
- Select language so that each sentence is well-structured, based on a specific verb, up-front
- “Fine-tune” -- Check mechanics, eliminate excess modifiers...

Start With a Message-Based Overview:

- Context
- Message
- Roadmap



To Identify the Message, Answer:



What should the
critical reader
Know? Think?
Do?

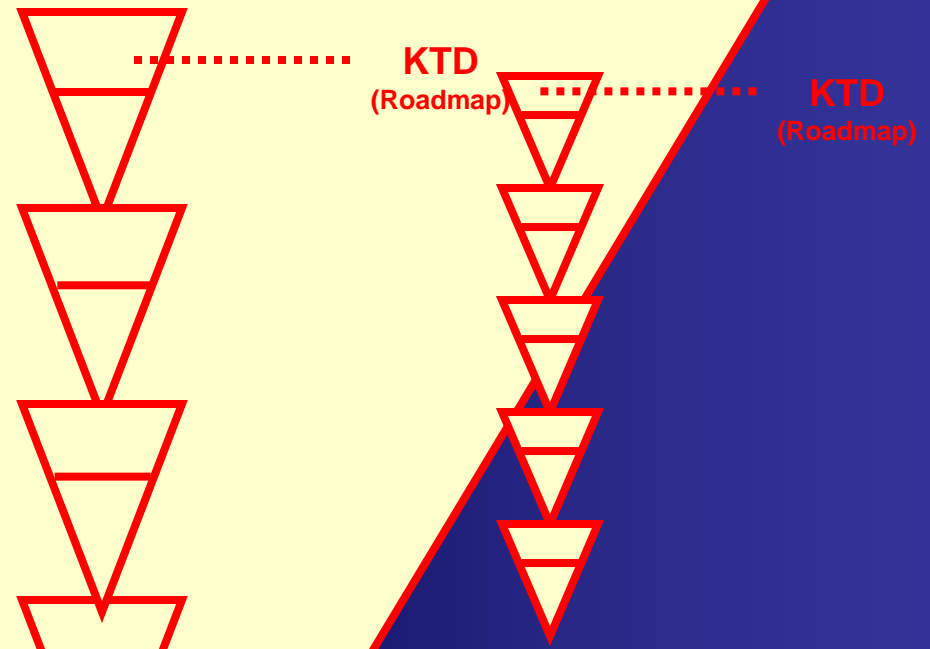
KTD?

- By Wednesday, December 27th, please send me an analysis of the three options discussed at the meeting, including cost-benefit analysis, time to completion, and most likely risks.
- We need to identify the top six action items and assign individuals to get answers on each for our conference in two weeks before we end this meeting.
- The resource discussion is scheduled for Wednesday morning, so send me all project requirements in an Excel spreadsheet by Tuesday noon.



Specific
Measurable
Agreed
Realistic
Timed

**Context
Message -- KTD
Roadmap**



Who Does What Next When?

Recently, I had the opportunity to hear a presentation on “people magic,” a hypnosis demonstration by David Davidson. The presentation was very interesting, and he kept the attention of the entire group, seventy five people.

This is not just entertainment because he ties it all together demonstrating and telling stories of how we put on many faces in our job.

I spoke with him after the half day session and he travels the world giving this type of presentation and has given many presentations at large national meetings. I thought you might want to put his name in a file for future reference.

The Training Section will be temporarily disrupted due to the installation of Systems Furniture in Room 1019. The furniture is expected to be shipped from the Design Furniture Association on September 29th, and the proposed installation date is October 4, 2006.

September 29th through October 4th have been designated as CLEAN-UP-DAYS. Please assure that your staff dress appropriately and are prepared to clean up their work areas. It is essential that you go through your areas to clean and/or dispose of any excess paper, folders, boxes, furniture, etc. Your new space will have new carpet and furniture, therefore, we want to create a clean and uniform work area that is presentable to the general public.

You are responsible for preparing and submitting the necessary paperwork to Audrey Adams by COB, October 6th, to rid the room of excess equipment and furniture. You will have to submit a form for the removal of equipment and one for the furniture. Trash bins will be stationed in the hall for your use and materials such as desk trays, can be stored in room 1718. Audrey will provide packing boxes for you.

Additionally, please prepare a memorandum to Heads of Services and Staff Offices, the Mailroom and all vendors you are in contact with informing them of the move/new location.

Recently, the Voice Mail directory was distributed. Here is a brief description of how to use the Voice Mail System:

Call 1600 and go into your own mailbox. Select menu item 2 to send a message. Record a message. When you are finished, enter the destination by putting the node number first, followed by the mailbox number.

I would also like to make note of 3 printing errors. The main number for Boston is xxx-xxx-xxxx; the main number for Boise is xxx-xxx-xxxx; and “Des Moines” is the proper spelling for node 103.

If you have any questions, please call me on Extension xxxx.

Choose Words Carefully

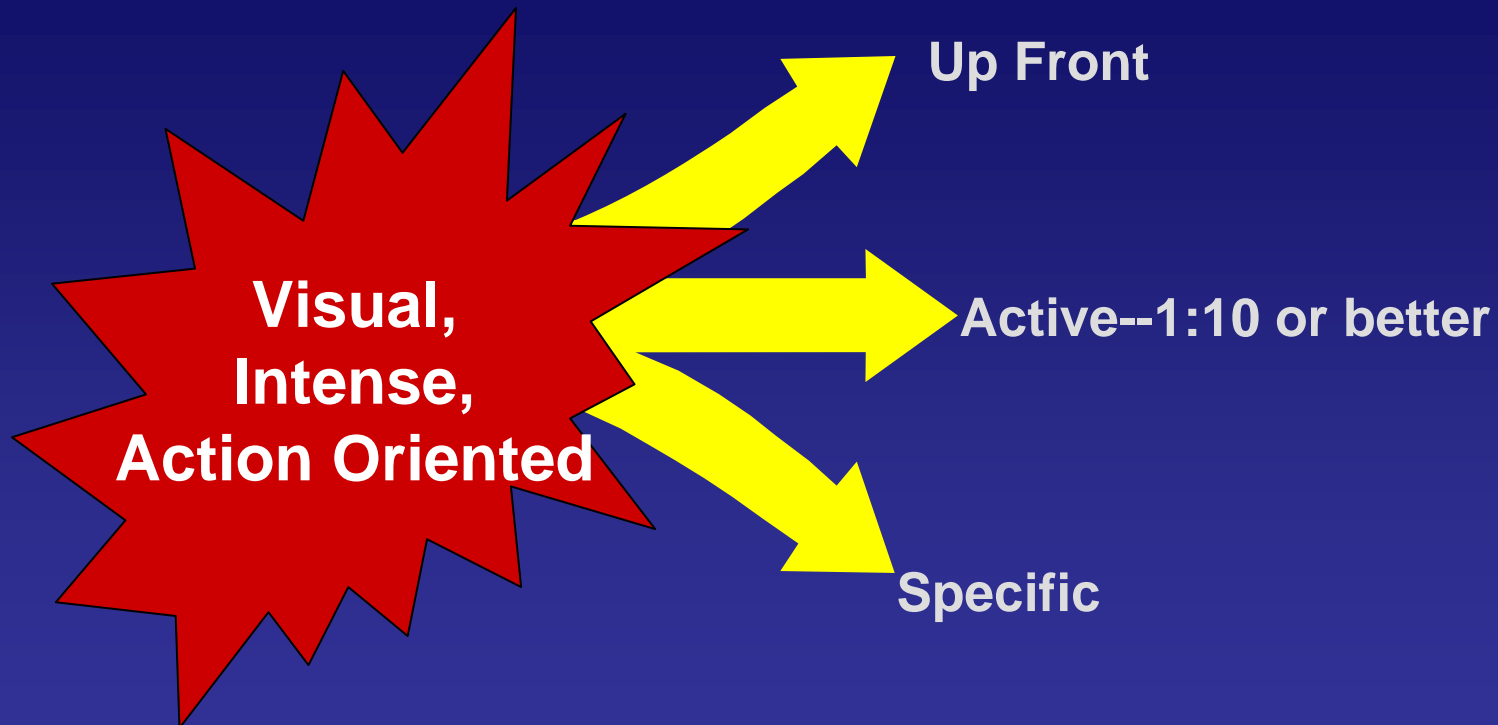
- **Specific**
- **Familiar**



Precision Wins; Familiarity Helps

- On a timely basis
- Reflect
- Comprise

Verbs Are The Key:



For Example --

It was determined that the indicated costs of the layoffs were off by at least 15%.

versus

We re-figured the costs of the layoffs and corrected the estimates. The estimates were off by at least 15%.

Verb Choice

During this entire period his character, along with his unsurpassed technical competence and superior leadership were dominant factors in the successful mission accomplishments of this unit.

Verb Choice

Analysis by computer has confirmed the capability of our quality assurance procedures to detect inaccurate computations.

Verb Choice

Three of the above individuals reside on the vendor master file, and thus could precipitate a disbursement to themselves.

What Matters?

- Clarity: KTD Up Front
- Precision & Familiarity
- Specific Verbs, Up Front!