



Workplace Writing

Do you need to do some writing for work or some other reason?

If you can write and spell a bit already, here are some suggestions to try:

First - find a mentor.

A mentor is just a friend or family member who you can feel comfortable talking to and asking questions about this.

What are the problems?

There are three main things to think about when we need to write something, especially something for work:

- What do I need to say?
- How am I going to say it?
- How about the spelling, punctuation, and grammar?

What do I need to say?

Find the information you need and make some notes.

How am I going to say it?

One of the trickiest parts of writing is deciding on things like the right tone to take. Should it sound formal? Do I need to write in full, formal sentences, or will dot points be better? Do I need headings and sub-headings? How do I start and is there a special way to end?

The best way to answer this question is to find some **EXAMPLES**. That is, find how someone else has written something similar. It is OK to ask people about this, as most workplaces and organisations have their own special ways of writing particular things. We all need to use models.

When you look at the model, ask yourself questions such as:

- Does the writer write directly to the reader, and use 'I' and 'we', or is the tone more distant?
- Is it written in full, formal sentences and paragraphs, or in note form and dot points?
- Are there special headings and sub-headings I should use?
- What is usually said in the opening and closing sentences or paragraphs?

Write a first draft

Use your notes and your model to write a first draft. At this stage don't worry about spelling and punctuation. Just get your ideas down. (You can't think about all the different things involved in writing at the same time.)



Proof-read and edit your draft

If your document is longish, this might be a 2 stage process. Read it through first to make sure you have said what you wanted to say and that your ideas flow logically. Is anything left out? Do any sentences or paragraphs need to be moved around?

Then check it for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Put a line under any words you weren't sure of the spelling of (Or if you are writing on computer, your spell checker will do this for you.) Read it out loud to yourself to see if it sounds right. This is a good test of whether the punctuation and grammar is correct. (Or use the grammar checker on the computer.)

Write your final draft

You might need to proof read and edit again and write yet another draft before you are happy with your document.

What have I learnt to help me for next time?

It is a good idea to keep some examples of the different kinds of writing you might need to do in the future.

You might have made some spelling mistakes in your first draft. Perhaps you worked out the correct spelling yourself or you might have needed to look them up or ask someone before you made your final copy. Now it is time to LEARN how to spell those words. Don't think you will remember how to spell them next time. Improving your spelling will greatly improve your confidence as a writer.

(See the resource on Spelling on the *Reading Writing Hotline* website.)

It is a good idea to write words you will use often, in a special spot in a book you keep with you so you can use them for reference in the future.

Why not call the Reading Writing Hotline and speak with one of our helpful teachers who can give you other ideas to help you with your writing?