
UNIT 4 APPLYING ENGLISH SKILLS TO SPECIAL PROJECTS

Structure

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to :

- write a project that demonstrates clear, concise English, correct grammar, sentence variety, proper use of factual information, and persuasive arguments;
- use techniques for organising your writing and information;
- use sample forms to gather information and present your own information;
- use techniques for reviewing and revising your materials; and
- incorporate graphic elements into the final design of your project to create added interest.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In your daily business writing, you are asked to produce many different documents. Some of these, such as reports, are very factual and informational, while others, such as brochures, are meant to be persuasive. This unit presents some methods you can use to develop your writing skills and apply them to special projects. Writing interesting and appealing material is always an important consideration. You want your reader to be interested in what you are writing about. The first section of this unit will help you achieve this. The projects in this unit are meant to be ones you might be expected to produce during the course of your work. To start, choose just one project that you most want to spend time on and that is most relevant to you and your organisation. You may want to complete all four projects over time.

Before you dive into a project, review the previous units, as they will help you to focus on what must be done for your project. Make sure that you have a dictionary and thesaurus handy to help you with your writing.

For many readers this paragraph seems flat and stale. One reason that the passage does not make for very interesting reading is that it just does not flow very well. The sentences are all approximately the same length and none of them really connects with the one that follows. The repeated use of "it" does not make for interesting reading either. The result of all of these problems is that the reader quickly loses interest in what the writer is trying to say. You can improve the passage by combining some of the sentences and using transitional words. The passage might read like this:

Just across the water from the downtown core lies False Creek, with its growing "yuppie" population. Once, it had been a centre for light and medium industry, the result of the city's growth as a railroad terminus and port facility. But when False Creek's industrial base later declined, the area was for a long time left largely deserted. Then, in the early eighties, it was targeted by developers, who built hundreds of condominium apartments and townhouses. False Creek finally became a highly desirable place to live.

Notice that the length of the sentences varies more. This variety in sentence length and structure makes it more interesting to read. The writer also uses transitional words such as *once*, *but*, and *then* to tie the sentences together. If you have to write a fairly lengthy piece—a long letter or report, for example—you should be able to make it more lively by deliberately varying the sentence length and structure.

Using sentence variety appropriately can draw the attention of your readers to the key points you want to make. Use a question to get your readers' attention at the beginning of a paragraph. The rest of the paragraph should elaborate on why you asked the question. A series of questions that start simple and then become more detailed might spark your readers to become intrigued over where you will lead them. Be sure to provide an answer in the next paragraph to the question you posed so that they do not lose interest.

Self Assessment Activity 2

Here is another example of a rather monotonous piece of writing. Write your own version so it flows better and the sentence length is more varied. Use a variety of sentences to establish main points in each of your paragraphs.

Supervisors have always tended to be the "best" operational people. This is tradition. One example is promoting the salesman with the highest turnover to sales supervisor. Another example is promoting the best toolmaker to tool room foreman. Their previous positions give them special understanding of the problems of the people they supervise. Supervisors also have to be able to manage people. Being good at one type of job does not necessarily mean they'll be good at another. You need training.

 Compare your version of this passage with the two following.

Example 1: Using questions to focus the main ideas.

Why have supervisors been considered to be the "best" operational people? Is it tradition? The salesman with the highest sales volume gets promoted to sales supervisor and the best toolmaker is promoted to the tool room foreman. What is special about their previous positions? They may have a better understanding of the problems the people they now supervise are facing, but being good at one job does not mean they will be good at another. Supervisors have to manage people and for that they need training.

Example 2: Using sentence variety to make the paragraph flow.

Traditionally, supervisors have tended to be the "best" operational people. Thus, the **salesman** with the highest sales volume is promoted to sales supervisor and the best toolmaker is promoted to tool room foreman. Although their previous positions give them special understanding of the problems of the people they now supervise, being good at one job does not necessarily mean they will be good at the other. Supervisors have to be able to manage people; for that, they need training.

As you work through a project, you can also use some other methods to make your document more readable. You have already seen some of these methods, like use of headings, colour, page design, and graphics, in Unit 3. Tables and charts can help to present information in an understandable manner. Use each method where it will have the most impact on your audience. If you have doubts, try these simple tests:

- Read your document out loud to check for sentence flow.
- Read your document to colleagues and ask them to **summarise** the main points—this will check that your main ideas are clear and understandable.
- Always simplify information and present it in an easily understood format. By doing this you avoid overloading your audience with too much information and losing the main ideas.
- Seek the advice of professionals, such as graphic designers and editors.

4.3 PROJECT 1 : WRITING A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT PROPOSAL

Proposals can be written for many purposes and in a variety of formats. A proposal can range from a one-page summary to a large, complex document detailing all aspects of an intended project.

The specific information contained in a proposal includes details about the work you and your organisation want to do for someone. It includes details about the need for the work, methodology you will follow to **carry** out the work, schedule, price, and main personnel who will work on the project. The audience that will read your proposal is made up of the people you are **trying** to convince to have the work done or to fund the work you want to do. Your purpose is to get your audience to select and pay you to do the proposed work.

A proposal is a persuasive document. Keep in mind that you must persuade your audience that your project will help them. To accomplish this, you must be able to answer the unspoken question, "So what?" The major so-what question is how your solution solves the problem or concern of the organisation to which you are making the proposal. Your proposal should address this question.

Proposals fall into two categories: **solicited** and **unsolicited**. A solicited proposal responds to a request for a proposal (RFP), often used by governments and large companies. An **unsolicited proposal** is one that is made on your initiative. This could mean requesting funds for a new project or putting forth a proposal for a new programme you want to develop.



4.3.1 Solicited Proposals (Responding to RFPs)

A request for a proposal will state very carefully what goods or services are wanted. It will specify how the proposal is to be organised. By reading RFPs that are sent out by governments and organisations, you can learn a great deal about how to organise a formal proposal and how information needs to be presented.

Most RFPs will request the following information in this order:

- **Cover sheet:** This can be a prepared page of information to be filled in with information about the project title, contact names and information, and project goals. In today's work world, it is important to include email addresses as an alternative form of contact.
- **Summary budget page :** This is an overview of the planned budget for the project.
- **Budget explanations —** This section must provide a brief but convincing justification for all the direct costs listed on the budget summary page. Items should appear in the same order as the entries in the budget summary. Only the essential costs should be included.
- **Abstract :** This is a one-page summary of the **problem(s)** to be investigated and the proposed approaches or study **plan(s)**.
- **Narrative :** You should provide information on your organisation, experience, and any background related to this proposal. Briefly describe the problem and the methods you will use to provide a solution. Additional supporting documents can be included to lend credibility to your proposal, including client lists and previous project funding received.
- **Appendices :** There may be a separate appendix for such things as detailed curriculum vitae of the principal participants in the project (your team) and a bibliography of sources consulted in background research during the proposal preparation. Inclusion of key references can assure reviewers of the thoroughness of the preliminary study.

Remember that your proposal is a sales document. You must emphasise the value and quality of your own product or services. Point out the unique advantages offered by the experience you and your team possess.

When preparing a solicited proposal, take care to follow the required organisation precisely. The reviewers will be looking for specific information in specific places. You may feel you want to organise the information differently — DO NOT!

4.3.2 Unsolicited Proposals

You are more likely to be writing what is called an unsolicited proposal, seeking funding for a programme or special event. Unsolicited proposals are very much like solicited ones in that much of the same information is required. There is one major difference: in a solicited proposal the solicitors **recognise** a need. Therefore, you do not have to sell them on the need, only on your ability to understand, interpret, and offer a solution to their need. In an unsolicited proposal you must first convince your audience that there is a need. If you cannot, then there is no reason for your audience to hire you to solve anything. Most unsolicited proposals are requests for funding of a programme or the continuation of a programme that you offer.

A small, unsolicited proposal has the following major parts:

- 1 **Cover sheet:** This presents your proposal with a professional beginning.
- 2 **Summary:** This provides a concise statement of the proposal.
- 3 **Introduction :** This establishes the need and identifies the area covered and target population.
- 4 **Project objectives :** These define what you wish to accomplish in your project.
- 5 **Overview section :** This defines the process to be followed or describes the goods or services to be provided.
- 6 **Work and management plan :** This outlines the tasks to be done and schedules their accomplishment. It may be used to review the progress of your project. This section should also provide information on your implementation strategy and how you intend to carry out the project.
- 7 **Expected outcomes :** These are the deliverables from this project and what performance indicators you will use to measure those outcomes.
- 8 **Project schedule :** The schedule sets out a **timeline** for implementation of each step of the project. Realistic milestones for completion of each phase or activity should be included. This provides funders with a measure of how the project is progressing.
- 9 **Evaluation :** This section provides the details of how you expect to evaluate your project and the success of the outcomes. There should be a timetable for completion of an evaluation phase. Indicate in what form the evaluation will be reported.
- 10 **Detailed budget :** The budget gives precise information on costs and possible revenues.
- 11 **Personnel section :** This summarises briefly the relevant qualifications of the people involved. (See sample cumculum vitae.) For some proposals, you may include only a brief biography with a paragraph on the project coordinators and main participants.
- 12 **Attachments :** Indicate any additional information that you will provide with the proposal. These may include copies of previous, related project reports, general information on the organisation, annual reports, or letters of support.

Often, short proposals are drafted in the form of a letter or memorandum. Headings and any applicable graphics such as tables or lists should be included in even a short proposal.

There are three alternatives you can choose to highlight the expertise of key personnel on a project: a curriculum vitae (CV), a resume, or a short biography. More formal proposals usually require CVs of project personnel. CVs tend to be academic, highlighting present and past employment but also educational qualifications and publications. Resumes tend¹ to be short and highlight present and past work-related experience. The education section is usually a-listing of credentials. A biography may be one or two paragraphs that highlight accomplishments in both the academic and work environments related to the project.



4.3.3 Checklists for Planning and Revising Proposals

Planning

Proposals often deal with problems and their solutions. You must begin your planning by defining the problem **and** creating several solutions for it. Plan answers for all the questions that are likely to be asked and note carefully any information or format requirements.

What is the problem your proposal aims to solve?

What solution(s) are you proposing? What are the "so-whats" of your solutions (i.e., why would your audience care about this)? In what ways do they benefit your audience?

Who is the audience for your proposal? What is their purpose in reading it? Do you have differing readers with differing needs?

Will your readers have difficulties with any of the technical vocabulary in the proposal?

- Will the readers react to the proposal with enthusiasm, indifference, or scepticism? What can you do to counteract negative reactions and reinforce positive ones?
- What will be your methodology in carrying out the work proposed?
- What facilities and equipment are needed? Who will furnish them? Are they readily available?

What is your schedule of work? Can you graph your schedule'?

How will projects be managed? Who will be the manager?

What is the cost of what you are proposing? Who pays what? What are the details of the budget?

Who will do the work proposed? Why are they suited to do this work?

- Have you provided an evaluation plan in your proposal?
- Recheck your timeline for the project. Is it reasonable and have you left some contingency time for things that may go wrong?

Revising Your Proposal

In revision, pay attention to organisation, content, style, format, and grammar.

Organisation and Content

Have you provided a summary that can stand alone for a busy reader?

- Does your introduction make clear the problem you propose to solve?

Does your introduction describe your proposed solutions?

Does your introduction define any terms or concepts your readers may find difficult?

Are a few "so-whats" stated in the introduction to interest your readers in reading further?

Does your methodology section make clear the strategy and timing of the method you will use? Are there significant so-whats that can be mentioned here?

Is your work schedule clear? Would a graph help?

- Is your budget complete? Are all expenses accounted for **and** justified?

Will the facts presented convince your readers that the people proposed to carry out the tasks will do a competent job?

Style

- Have you used a clear and concise style?
- Is your vocabulary appropriate to your subject and audience?
- Have you chosen the appropriate format: report, letter, or memo?
- Is your proposal neat and free of errors?
- Do the layout and text generate interest (especially if you use a word processing programme)?
- Have you provided sufficient headings to guide the reader?

If you use a report format, does your table of contents match your headings?

Some of the information that you use in a proposal can be provided in an easy-to-read format. On the following pages, we provide some samples of a cover sheet, a sample proposal budget, and a sample curriculum vitae for the main project participants. You may adapt these formats for your specific proposal.

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet

COVER SHEET	
Programme: _____	
Descriptive Title of Project: _____	
Organisation: _____	
Address: _____	
City: _____	
Project Contact Person: _____	
Start Date: _____	
End Date: _____	
Major Goals of the Project: _____	

Sample Project Budget

Project title: _____			
Start date:	End date:	Total project cost:	Total requested:
Name of organisation	Amount	Type of contribution	
		In-kind	
		Cash	
Item	Total cost	Amount requested from the funder	
Staff salaries			
Project management			
Project assistant			
Social worker			
Consulting fees			
Materials and supplies			
Printing			
Evaluation			
Travel			
Workshop			
Other			
Total budget			
Revenue (<i>If your project will generate revenue, indicate estimated amount.</i>)			
Description and source of revenue:			

Sample Curriculum Vitae for Principal Investigator (optional)

Curriculum Vitae		
Name:		
(Last)	(First)	(Middle)
Nationality:		
Present Institution:		
Present Position:		
Other Institutions Attended:		
Publications:		
Major Field(s):		
Minor(s):		
Academic Qualifications:		
Additional relevant experience related to this proposal:		
References:		



Self Assessment Activity 3 : Writing Your Proposal

Using the information provided in this section, develop a proposal for a new programme that you wish to implement. Your proposal format should be for an unsolicited proposal. Remember to fully describe the needs and the benefits to the funding organisation. It may be a proposal that seeks support internally or it might be sent to an external source of support and funding.

Use the planning and revision checklists to help you organise and format your proposal. A sample proposal covering letter is illustrated below.

February 27, 2005

The Programme Officer
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation
Jawahar Bhawan
Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road
New Delhi, 110001

Re: Project Proposal for Community Initiatives for Self-reliance of Poor Women

Dear Sir/Ms.,

We are pleased to forward our proposal for the project, *Community Initiatives for Self-reliance of Poor Women*, for your consideration. Our proposal addresses particular aspects of the inherent social and economic suffering of rural poor women that have not been dealt with to date.

The area of the state we plan to work in has many social problems including a large population of women and children living below the poverty line, widespread illiteracy, and a lack of training options, counselling services, and rural infrastructure. You will find that our proposal deals with many of these issues. Our previous award of excellence for NGOs from the State Government (Meghnad Puroskar, 2000) has allowed us to continue our worthwhile work in this area.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding our proposal. Should you have any questions or seek clarification please feel free to contact:

Yours truly,

Ashok Das
Secretary General

Encl: Project Proposal
Registration Certificate
F.C.R. Certificate
Audited Statement of A/C
• State Award Certificate
Governing Board
By-laws



Reports can be written in any length, from just a few pages up to a thousand-page technical report. When you prepare a report, regardless of length, content, and form, you will be presenting specific information to a specific audience for a specific purpose. The information you include and the relationship with your audience depend mainly on the reason for your reporting. Exactly what information does your reader need and expect? Of what use will the information be? Answering these questions gives you a good idea of the purpose of your report.

Most reports inform; others may analyse and perhaps attempt to persuade. The information report tells the audience what you have found out. It includes little or no commentary or interpretation. The analytical report presents facts together with an analysis of those facts. The persuasive report seeks to influence your reader's beliefs or actions. Think in terms of the purpose of your report and what the function of the information in your report will be, and you will be better able to decide what information to include, what information to emphasise, and how to organise your information.

You should include the following three characteristics in your report:

- **Research** : Reports are based on facts, so you will need to collect all relevant facts before writing your report.
- **More details than a simple letter or memorandum** : A report is a way of documenting project information and progress, so you will need to provide any details that support statements in your report.
- **Organisation** : Sharing information in a report requires that you organise that information in a way that is easy to understand and can be found when needed. Use organisers such as headings and tables of contents.

Style includes the words and phrases you choose, the sentence structure you choose, and the ways that you express ideas. Individual styles can vary widely, but you must take into account the impact of your choice of style on your readers.

Keep in your mind the following style rules for writing reports:

- Never use figures of speech, metaphors, or similes.
- Never use contractions such as *do not* and *we will* — reports are formal documents.
- Do not use slang, colloquialisms, or overly informal language.
- Do not write in a very personal style using **I**.
- Do not use overly long and complex sentences.
- Keep your paragraphs short and well-constructed.
- Do not give unqualified and personal opinions.
- Never use a long word where a shorter one will do.
- Always cut out unnecessary words.
- Always use the active voice.
- Never use jargon, technical words (unless explained), or foreign-language phrases.
- Always check your grammar and spelling.

Reports are objective. You need to keep your focus on the facts and how best to present them to your reader. Be careful that you use the active voice. This can be challenging as you try to maintain an objective tone. As you avoid writing in the personal style, watch that you do not change to an impersonal and passive sentence construction.



Although writers use a variety of processes in constructing their reports, we offer one method that has been used successfully for all types of reports. This method is intended to get you started on your project; feel free to modify it as you gain experience. In writing your report you can follow the five-step method given below:

Step 1 Before you start writing

Determine your audience(s)— Note that there may be more than one audience that will read your report. Choose which audience is your primary one. It should be the audience that you want to influence, that needs your information the most critically, or that will make a decision as a result of your persuasion.

Analyse your audience(s)— Based upon what you know of your primary audience, choose the best method of presenting your report. This choice determines the style, tone, complexity, and format of the report. All of your choices need to appeal to that audience.

Step 2 Organise your information

Outline your information: Develop an outline of how you think the information should be presented. This might be a brainstorming session with colleagues or simply jotting down every idea that you can think of that is related to your topic. Rearranging that information into a logical sequence can provide a rough structure to your report.

Use headings : Developing a table of contents is one way of organising your information. Check to see how sub-headings support the main headings.

Establish a hierarchy of ideas : Your report may be structured as a series of sub-ideas grouped under a prime idea. Your report should highlight your most important idea first, then follow with other important ideas in decreasing order of importance. Should your reader not have the time to read through the entire report, you will have successfully conveyed your most important concerns.

Choose an appropriate order for the ideas : Because most people are very busy, your report should always be constructed with the most important idea addressed first. Fully develop this idea with supporting documentation and statements first, then proceed to the next most critical idea. In this way you quickly provide your readers with the main information they require.

Step 3 Draft your report

Just as you developed paragraphs, so you need to develop your report. Begin by jotting down the main ideas in a logical order. Then write down the supporting materials or ideas for each main point. Use the outline techniques that you learned in Units 2 and 3 to help organise your information.

Write the report using your outline as a guide. Do not worry about the grammar and spelling at this point. Create a flow of thought. You can pick out the errors and correct them later.

A good check is to read your draft of a report. Reading it out loud may help to check that it flows smoothly and makes sense. As part of this step, confirm the objective and purpose of your report. Check that your main ideas support the objective.

Step 4 Edit your report

Once you are satisfied with your draft report, you will revise the report. Careful editing after a short period of reflecting on your writing can be an effective way to spot errors, unsupported statements, and areas for improvement. Look first for the big issues such as how **well** the report supports your objectives.

Does your report keep in mind the intended reader(s) and appeal to their level of understanding? Look at the arrangement of ideas and check that they hold together. Finally, look at the structure you have used for each paragraph and check that they are constructed using the techniques learned earlier.

Some guidelines for you to follow are:

- **Keep** your reader and the purpose of the report in mind.
- Mark any good passages.
- Check that each paragraph has a main point.
- Re-write those paragraphs that do not support the main point clearly.
- Add any missing information.
- Write an introduction.
- Write a conclusion.
- Check your use of language to clarify and shorten any difficult passages.
- Check and correct grammar and spelling.

Step 5 Proofread your report

The **final** step in the report-writing process is to double check your writing to ensure that it is error-free. This step is called **proofreading** or proofing your document.

Often a professional may be asked to do this step, in order to bring **fresh** eyes to the writing and spot errors more easily.

If you do not have this resource you may need to take a few steps to check your own writing. Here are a few things you can try:

- **Read** your report out loud.
- Cover up the document except for the line you are reading. This prevents you from filling in the text mentally and jumping ahead. It forces you to see every word **line-by-line**.
- Read through the document with a single purpose in mind. Look only for spelling the first time, punctuation the second time, and then sentence and paragraph structure.
- Take a break between readings so that you do not become bored with the process and start to interpret without really seeing the words on the page. Familiarity with the content can cause you to mentally fill in components that may be missing.
- Refer to Unit 3 for proofreading guidelines.



Self Assessment Activity 4 : Writing Your Report

Using the process described above, develop a report for a programme or project that you have run or been involved with in the past year. The report should be persuasive to your director, convincing her or him that a second year of funding is necessary to ensure the success of the project. The director of programmes is the initial audience for this report, but it may also be used to request additional funding from a body outside of the organisation.

Check the following points which help you to organise and format your report:

- Decide on the purpose of your report.
- Is it to provide information? If so, to whom? And for what purpose does he or she want it?
- Are you being asked to investigate a problem? If so, what is the precise problem and how much authority do you have for your investigation?
- Decide who is likely to read your report. This will affect how you write it. If it is to be read by people in other departments in your organisation, you may well have to explain any processes, procedures, or technical terms that you use.
- Find out whether there is already a standard form in your organisation for the report you are going to write (for example, an accident report).
- Find out whether your company has its own "house style" for reports (for example, do they expect recommendations to come at the beginning or the end, or do they expect a separate executive summary to accompany the report?).
- Collect and organise your material carefully.
- Write the introduction.
- Say what the report is about and why it is necessary. Explain any limiting factors (for example, lack of time to investigate further) and any relevant background information.
- Use suitable sub-headings and paragraph numbering to describe how you set about collecting the information for the report and what, exactly, you found out.
- Analyse the information you have presented and state what conclusions you have drawn from your analysis.
- Write your recommendations for what should be done on the basis of the evidence you have given.
- Make your recommendations very specific. A vague recommendation, such as, "we should consider trying to reduce waste," is really no recommendation at all. A better one would be, "I recommend that, beginning November 1, we implement the waste reduction programme described in this report, with the objective of reducing waste by 40 per cent by the end of the following quarter."
- Do not introduce new material or arguments in your recommendations. Recommendations should be short and very much to the point.
- Write a summary that states briefly what the report is about and what the main recommendations are. Although you have to write the summary last, it should appear at the beginning of the report. This allows your readers to very quickly get an idea of what the report contains.
- Check the report for mistakes—content as well as language—and make sure that it still meets its original purpose.
- Sign and date it at the end.

4.5 PROJECT 3 : WRITING FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Writing for community relations may be very difficult. Your audience in many cases is not very specific and the purpose of your writing may not be very clear. This type of writing allows you a great deal of freedom to make choices that might influence your audience. For this reason you need to determine what purpose you have in writing the piece. Are you trying to influence? Are you providing information? Do you want a community of supporters to contribute to the programme or the organisation? There are people who study and make a career out of this type of writing, and the aim of this section is not to provide you with the full range of skills that these professionals have. Rather, the focus is on a personal style of writing that you may be called upon to deliver to a local community. In most cases, you will be writing to shape the commitment of your local community. You may want to advertise your organisation's commitment to helping in the community or the advantages that a new programme brings to your community.

In any community relations writing you must have facts to support your claims. Beyond factual information, you will need to use words that appeal to your readers. Many readers respond to writing that appeals to their emotions, so choose words that have strong emotional appeal. Other readers may only respond to global associations that make them feel they are a part of a bigger enterprise. Be careful not to over-represent.

Again, in community relations writing you must always be able to support any statement that you make.

When you write in support of your programme and you want to have facts to rely on, you should have on hand materials such as the following:

Your organisation's annual report.

- A copy of the annual budget for your organisation, project, or programme.
- Any project proposals that were written to obtain the initial funding.
- Other documents that have been submitted previously to support your project or programme.

These documents can provide you with valuable information about your main target audience, some facts that you can use in your writing, and the supporting information to illustrate the success of your programme.

You will notice that each document may have a different tone, style, format, and organisation, as they were written with very different purposes in mind. One challenge you will have is to write a new piece based upon these documents but with your own style, tone, and format. All of these characteristics need to appeal to your audience.

As the term *community relations* implies, you are writing primarily for a diverse audience, "the public." Retain a broad appeal to your writing. A more personal style and tone would be appropriate to enlisting public support. The one type of public relations writing that is more formal is that intended to solicit a corporation for funding. In this specific case you should write your piece more formally.

In Unit 3, you tried your hand at writing one type of community relations piece, a community flyer. In this project you will expand those ideas to write a larger piece.

Consider the following rules, which apply to almost every type of writing:

- Identify your target **audience(s)**.
- Write to the audience level.
- Organise your writing to present the most important ideas or aspects of your appeal first.
- Provide evidence to support your assertions.
- Write in a personable style.
- Present the **information** in a variety of **formats**—**for example**, use graphics and pictures that directly relate to your **information**. Your audience may consist of people who prefer to absorb **information** visually rather than **through** the written word.
- **Check** your **writing** for grammar, punctuation, and wordiness,
- In most community relations writing you have a minimal **amount** of space (or the reader's attention) to get your message across. When space is at a premium, you need to select your words very carefully to carry maximum impact. This may mean using **emotionally** charged words that will grip your reader's attention.

a Self Assessment Activity 5 : Writing a Community Relations Piece

Based on the information above, choose a specific community relations piece to write in support of your organisation's activities. This might be a fund-raising endeavour, the launch of a specific new **programme**, or a newspaper release on a new project. You may have to write a letter to funders in which you provide an overview of the project activities and services and the successes that the project has enjoyed so **far**. Newspaper releases usually have very specific formats. You should contact your local newspaper to see **what** guidelines they have regarding release formats. Use the points listed above to guide you in writing a community relations document.

Sample Letter Appealing for Funding

Dear _____,

Namaste

My name is Yosuf. I ~~am~~ 10 years old. Sometime I only get a very little rice and dhal to eat. You see, I was forced to live on the street... alone.

My daddy ran away and my mummy sent ~~me~~ from my home, as there was no money for food. I am very sad, hungry, and sick with fever.

I wish I could attend SKCV Child Care Centre. I could go to classes and also become healthier. ~~Then~~ I could try to help my mother.

Please help me.

S. K. Yosuf

P.S. What more can we say? This problem of children like Yosuf and the many poor girls and boys like him is desperate... more desperate than you could imagine, unless you were to help us here at the SKCV Child Care Centres. Your immediate gift will certainly help save a child's life.

With best regards to you,

N. S. Manihara and N. Bhak
Secretaries General
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation
Jawahar Bhawan
New Delhi, 1100001



4.6 PROJECT 4 : TURNING CASE STUDIES INTO SUCCESS STORIES

There are many success stories that come from working in the area of **community development**. These stories need to be told to the public so that they understand the good **that** results from the hard work that you, your colleagues, **and** your organisation are doing.

In some cases, writing these stories is similar to writing a community **relations** piece. **You** are turning a set of facts into a good story with broad appeal to the public. Essentially, you are appealing to a general ideal that the average person should support your activities for the good of society, **These** stories may be **part** of a newsletter, **an** annual report, or even get posted to a web site.

Your starting point for writing a success story may be a case history. These are **formal** documents detailing the contacts and **progress** of interactions between your organisation and a client. Such documents **start out formal and** fairly impersonal, They generally **contain confidential information**; be sure to get written permission from the client before using a confidential case history. Your challenge is to **turn** this formal document into something **that** most people **can** relate to and empathise **with**.

You **need** to **determine** what components of a case history **might** be written in a different **style** to convey a human interest story that **the public** understands,

When considering the **information** in a case history, think **about** those **facts** that have **appeal**. **Appeal** may mean something that appeals to the emotions or "draws upon **the heartstrings**" of a person. Also consider those details that will appeal **to** the "rational" person, **such** as the facts and **the cost/benefit** of the **programme**. **A** third **component** that **you** should draw out is the "good story" factor.

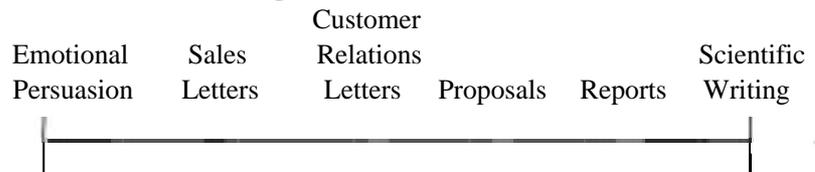
You have likely realised that writing for the public is more an art than a prescribed **method**. Much is determined by the motive for writing as well as by the audience you think will be reading your composition.

When are you most likely to write a community relations piece? You might use it for a **news** release, a newspaper story, or for added interest in a newsletter, a community brochure, or an advertisement for a new programme. Each will have restrictions on word count, layout, and document structure. News releases will be very concise as there is **limited** space to print any story. You must choose your words carefully, selecting each for its meaning and impact on the reader. Newspaper staff usually write a newspaper story, but you can supply a ready and accurate story beforehand. A newspaper may then send someone to follow up with an interview to clarify details or collect more insight into the **story**. Generally they need factual information but also look for a human-interest side to a **good** story. The following general rules should be followed for any community relations writing:

- It must be short, clear, and very, very concise.
- It must have some emotional appeal – choose words that will trigger that emotion in your audience. Words and phrases have the most impact when they have a personal note of involvement for your reader. The following sentence has no direct appeal:
 - Help us to provide a safe place for young girls to learn.
 - Rather, phrase the sentence as:

- By contributing to our fundraiser you can help provide a safe learning environment for young girls.
- It should be written in a very personal style—use **I** or **we** to convey personal involvement or first-hand experience.
- You might have, at most, four to five paragraphs to present your information. This means that you need to have one or two central objectives and ideas to develop. Do not overdo the complexity of your writing or your main ideas may be lost.
- Use the formats suggested by the media outlet you intend to publish in—whether a local magazine or a newspaper. If you are self-publishing, get experienced help to determine the format.

The Emotional Continuum of Writing



Remember to always ask, "So what?" of your writing. This is what your readers are thinking while reading. Both facts and emotions must respond to the so-what question. Why is it relevant to the reader?

Finally, when writing your success story, you should draft your first version and ask others to read it. Check on how they respond to your writing, which will tell you if you are appealing to the right emotions and thinking the way the public does. When you write for PR, you may be able to use the same information to create several different pieces. The formal case history can lead to a short newspaper story on a client's success. This can lead to a testimonial that is used in an annual report for the organisation or a fund-raising letter. The same information in a different style can add personal touches to an endorsement for a programme.

Self Assessment Activity 6 : Use Case Studies to Write a Success Story

Write a short piece of about four paragraphs telling the success story of a street child who was impoverished and ill-educated but overcame this handicap to become the lead hand of a warehouse. In the case history outline that follows, fill in any information that you think might have gone into a file or case history. Turn these facts into a story that has appeal, flows well, and portrays a young child who was able to succeed through the support and encouragement of your organisation. Assume that the person has given permission to use his story in your article. Your article may be published in the annual newsletter or in a local paper.

Case History Format for a Street Child

Name of centre:

Name of social worker:

Date:

Child picked up from:

Period between first meeting and case history meeting:

Number of contacts:

Name of child:

Age:

Sex:

Father's name:

Mother's name:

Address:

Family background:

Number of brothers:

Number of sisters:

Others in the family:

Father's occupation:

Family income (approx):

Overall financial situation of the family (type of house, earning members, total family members, etc.):

Leaving Home

Reasons for leaving home:

Ambition for which he ran away:

Police record, if any:

Present Status of the Child

Educational status:

Wearing:

Physical status:

Mental status:

Income/Wages: per day/per month

Duration/working hours:

Nature of work:

Any other information:

(After learning family background, reasons for running away, and present status of the child, the social worker decides on a course of action— whether and how to rehabilitate the child)

Does the child want to continue education? Yes/No

The child's ambition/what he wants to be:

In case of an older boy, type of vocational training he is interested in:

Interests of the Child

Arts & crafts:

Music:

Dance:

Painting:

Drama:

Indoor games:

Outdoor games:

Writing a Succ'essStory

Write your article in a friendly tone but use expressive words that appeal to the emotions of your audience. Highlight your programme's role in helping the client achieve success. After completing this initial writing, turn it into a concise news release about the programme. Remember to write it so that the facts that are given have an appeal to a wide reader audience. Finally, using the same success story, write a story that can be used in an annual general report to illustrate the type of work the programme is involved in. This will involve researching some material from previous annual general reports or information from other stories. For each of your articles, draw a sketch of how you think the layout should be presented. This may include pictures, graphs, tables, or other diagrams. Recall the rules for effective layout of appealing documents. Examine your layout to see that it is effective and ask others for their opinions of your sketches. You may want to present several versions of each article.

We have included some very short examples of success stories below. Use these to start your own writing if you do not have an idea in mind.

Rajwati

Rajwati, the widow of an accident victim, was left to fend for herself and her extended family. Already traumatised and shattered, the nagging poverty almost drove her to suicide. Pratidhi intervened to counsel her and provide both immediate financial assistance and medical attention to the family. A job was arranged for her. She is now the bread-earner of her family and is putting her life together.

Jeevan Ramesh Malvi

Jeevan entered our programme when he was 11 years old. Today, at 17, he is completing his 7th pass. Jeevan was a slum dweller of Palda village. As a child labourer in the rag-pickung work, he was exposed to numerous dangers. He suffered from malnutrition and was in a very weak condition. Spotted by one of the workers, he was brought to our shelter where he regained his health. A training programme was started and Jeevan will appear before the board for his board exam this year. Over a five-year period, Jeevan has worked in a flour mill and taken a 3-month course in motor rewinding. He has also taken a one-week training programme in arts and crafts. His training has provided Jeevan with the skills to run a flour mill on his own. With the savings he has put away from regular work, Jeevan has started his own tea stall in a location that provides for all of his daily needs, and he has plans to expand as he earns more.



Samina

Samina is an eighteen-year-old girl from Narima colony in Yakutpura. She was married at the age of sixteen to a lorry driver. It was an arranged marriage and only afterward did Samina find out that he was abusive and a heavy drinker. After the birth of their first daughter, Samina's husband became more abusive toward her and the child. After enduring this for two years, Samina finally gave up on the marriage and returned to her parents' home.

Hearing of the centre from friends and community workers, Samina arrived at the centre to try to change her life by studying and learning new skills. Her family supported her in this move. During the time Samina has been attending the centre, she has been trained as a tailor, beautician, and embroiderer. The centre has opened new doors for Samina, and she can now write letters to her family on her own. Samina says, "Education is absolutely necessary for girls. Employment and jobs are important, but education is essential, without which even a job has no meaning or significance." Today, Samina sees a new and better life for herself and, eventually, her daughter. Her experience will ensure that her daughter also receives an education so that she can take charge of her own life.



4.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you learned how to apply in English Skills to Special Projects. In this unit, we discussed how to maintain the interest of your reader by varying sentence lengths and types. Your sentence choice will affect how the reader responds to your writing. This is important if you are requesting funds for a project or making recommendations concerning a client. Whatever the purpose behind your writing, sentence variety will help you achieve it. Also stressed the need to use outlines to write a project that demonstrates clear, concise English, correct grammar, sentence variety, proper use of factual information, and persuasive arguments; use techniques for organising your writing and information; use sample forms to gather information and present your own information; use techniques for reviewing and revising your materials; and incorporate graphic elements into the final design of your project to create added interest. Finally, this unit discussed the four projects, Project 1: Writing a Successful Project Proposal, Project 2: Writing Reports, Project 3: Writing for Community Relations, Project 4: Turning Case Studies into Success Stories

4.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What is a report ? State various kinds of reports relevant to your organization.
2. Consider any paragraph of your own to do the following.
 - i) Form questions of your own to focus the main idea.
 - ii) Using sentence variety to make the paragraph flow.
3. Write: good titles for long reports on these subject areas :
 - a) Employee theft
 - b) Medical benefits
 - c) Speaking skills for managers
 - d) Conflict resolution among employees
4. "Proposals can be written for many purposes and in a variety of a formats". Comment on the statement.
5. Write a notes on the following:
 - a) Solicited proposal
 - b) Unsolicited proposal
6. What aspects should be checked for planning and revising proposal ?
7. What rules are to be kept in mind for writing reports ?
8. Describe the process of report writing.
9. What are the important points to be checked to organise and format a report ?
10. What do you mean by writing for community relations ? state the related rules.
11. Why is logical reasoning a crucial part of any proposal ?

Note : These questions will help you to understand the unit better. Try to write answers for them, but do not submit your answers to the university for assessment. These are for your practice only.



SOME USEFUL BOOKS

The following textbooks may be used for more in depth study on the topics dealt within this unit.

Clive G. Bruckmann, Peter Hastley, Business Communication, Routledge : New York 2004

Philip J. Kitchen, A Reader in Marketing Communication Routledge, Taylor & Francis 2005.

Bhatia, R. C. , Business Communication, Ane Book, New Delhi., 2006.

Srevalsan M C, Spoken English A Hands-on Guide to English Conversation Practice, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. 2005.

Madhukar R. K. "Business Communication", Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 2005.

Wright Chrissie, "Handbook of Practical Communication Skills", Jaico Books, 2006.