

1. What style should I use?

Everyone should develop their own individual style; start by using short words and simple sentence structures so that readers can understand you easily.

2. Can I use industry jargon?

Jargon is sloppy and dangerous. Few people – even senior executives and managers – will admit to not understanding jargon, for fear of looking stupid. Wherever possible, use plain, clear English. Many people will think you're an expert – whether you are or not – because you will be one of the few who can explain the meaning behind the jargon in everyday language.

3. Should I worry about spelling?

Correct spelling is important. Keep a dictionary to hand and look words up when you're unsure of them. Don't rely wholly on the spell-checkers in word processors – they will only check the spelling of words, not their meaning.

4. What about grammar and punctuation?

If you do not feel too confident, keep your writing simple. Gradually, you will build up your confidence as you write more. There are many books on grammar and punctuation which can help you. Also, study books and magazines to discover examples of how to (and how not to) write well.

5. What if it doesn't sound right?

Sometimes, following grammatical rules can result in sentences sounding awkward. While it's best to follow rules most of the time, if they result in clumsy writing, follow your instinct and write what sounds most natural. Language usage does change and the rules change with it.

6. How can I check my writing?

Read your text out loud to ensure that it sounds natural. If possible, ask a colleague or friend to read it and ask for their opinion.

Don't feel embarrassed – if you need to re-write something, it's better that a colleague lets you know before you've published or presented it to your intended audience.