**Succinct Writing and Dealing with Jargon**

**Post-Class Activities**

The activities included here are designed to give you more hands-on practice in improving your writing by making sentences more succinct and easier to follow; they serve as follow-ups to the skills that you learned in the pre- and in-class activities for this unit. They also introduce some more specific guidelines.

**Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (1 mark each, 5 marks total)**

When you edit your work, it is a good idea to do it on a sentence-by-sentence basis. The most succinct sentences are those that contain no more words than are needed to get the point across. Consider the commonly used ‘wordy phrases’ shown in Table 1 below. They can all be shortened without losing meaning. It is your task to come up with more succinct alternatives. Use just **one** word as your alternative.

**Table 1: Try to come up with one-word alternatives to these wordy phrases.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Wordy Phrase** | **Succinct Alternative** |
| **Q1: As a result of…**  |  |
| **Q2: At this point in time…** |  |
| **Q3: Despite the fact that…** |  |
| **Q4: In conjunction with…** |  |
| **Q5: Without a shadow of a doubt…** |  |

**Questions 6, 7 and 8 (2 marks each, 6 marks total)**

You can also replace overly complex words with simpler ones. Although different language is suitable for different audiences, you should never be afraid to write something as simply as possible. In the following questions, replace the unnecessarily complex words with suitable alternatives Copy and paste the sentences before making your replacements. *Hint: There are* ***two*** *words to replace in each sentence.*

**Q6:** At any university, there are a myriad of social temptations that afflict study plans.

**Q7:** Allotting enough time to study is pivotal if you are to succeed in your classes.

**Q8:** But omitting all fun events from your schedule can cause emotional capitulation.

**Question 9 (4 marks)**

Read the following two sentences and try to spot the **four** words that are unnecessarily complex. Copy and paste the sentences and **bold** the four words that should be changed (1 mark for each correct answer).

**Q9:** We did not know it at the time, but the professor imparted a lesson of great wisdom by allowing us to flounder with our experiments. In doing do, she imbued us with a greater will to succeed and provided us with a laboratory experience that was far more congruent with reality than some other courses do.

**Question 10 (2 marks)**

Re-write the sentences that appeared in question 9 so that they are more concise (use fewer words) but get the same message across (1 mark), making sure you either remove all four overly complex words or replace them with more suitable alternatives (1 mark). *Hint: You can change the way the whole sentences are written as long as you achieve the goals of the question.*

**Using Strong Verbs**

By now you are hopefully more comfortable using the active voice to make sentences more succinct (see the UBC website student guide for guidance). Another reason for preferring the active voice in many situations is that the verbs associated with actions tend to be stronger. For example, rather than saying: “Calibration of the photometer was conducted,” you should say: “Ben calibrated the photometer”. In this example, the sentence is now more succinct and it is easier to understand; we know exactly who did what, and have gained this information in just four words!

**Questions 11, 12, 13 and 14 (2 marks each, 8 marks total)**

For the following quetions, re-write the sentence in the active voice (1 mark) to make use of a stronger form of the **main verb** in the sentence (1 mark). *Hint: The word that you should use as the* ***main verb*** *in your sentence has been* ***bolded*** *for you.*

For example, “Satisfaction was apparent by the **cheers** of colleagues,” would need to be changed to something like: “Colleagues **cheered** with satisfaction,” to gain both marks for this sentence.

**Q11:** **Categorization** of the affected proteins was still achieved by the team.

**Q12:** The **analysis** of the data was done by two team members.

**Q13:** **Destruction** of the cell buffers was effected by the high temperature.

**Q14: Grading** of the papers was performed by the TAs.