

# BUSINESS WRITING

## Does it still exist?

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Rachel Appleby  
MELTA June 2020

rapple18 

<https://rachelappleby.edublogs.org>



## Writing in 2020: T/F/??

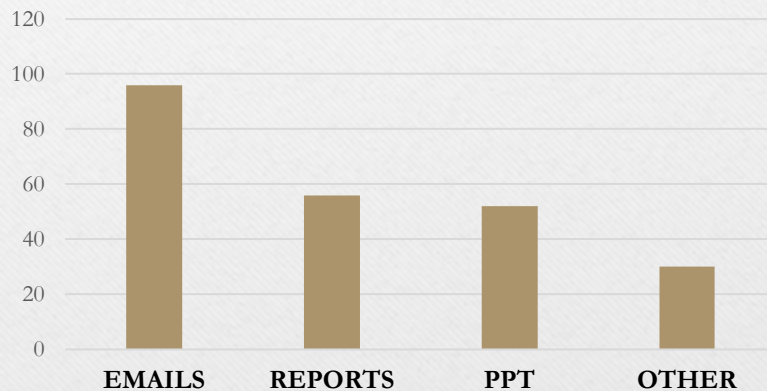
1. Writing includes more facts, and fewer opinions.
2. Writing is best pitched to an 8<sup>th</sup> grader (13-14 year olds).
3. Genre [text] analysis doesn't matter any more.
4. Sophisticated vocabulary and grammar are good.
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# Does Business Writing Exist Anymore?

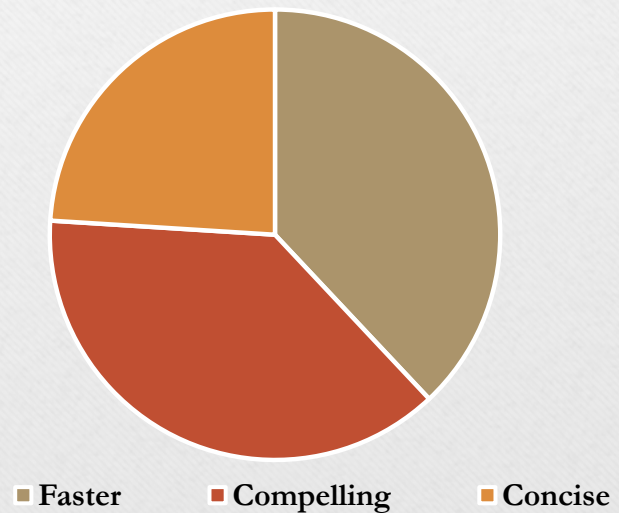
Importance of writing at work? (1-5: 5 = high)

5= 69.5%; 4= 19.5%

**Business Docs: regularity**

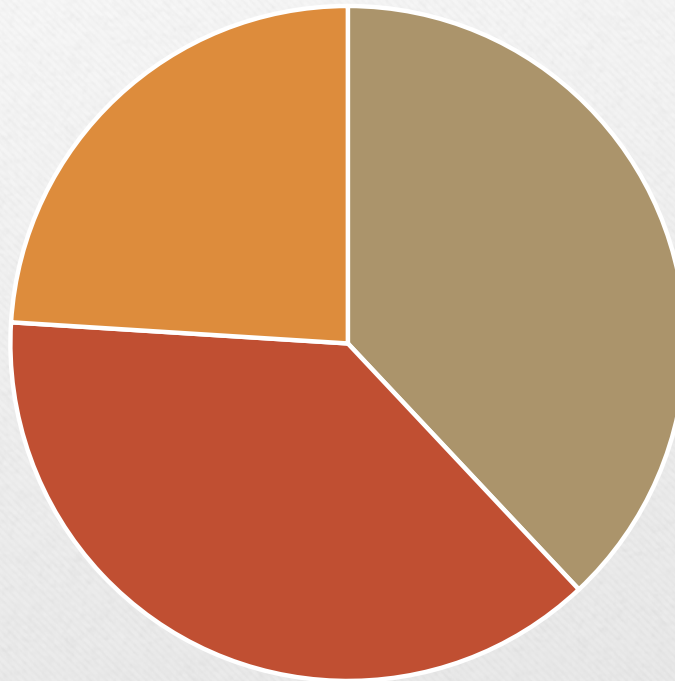


**Writing needs**



# Writing needs

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# Identify the channel / genre

**Fab** conference. 😍 Congrats to all the organisers! 🙌

1

Apologies for the delayed [sic] reply to ...

2

Salam, Rachel 😊 Pls let me know if you'd be available for an hour next week, e.g. Fri. afternoon 12 June?

3

Dear Ilona,  
Hope you had a successful conference!

4

“When Technology lets you down” ~ many great ideas & solutions from @janosujlaki at @iateful\_hu conference in #Budapest 🇮🇪 #Tech [+ foto]

5

Follow our blog, IATEFL BESIG's ‘Meet a Member’, where every other week we feature an interview with a different BESIG member. This week, we present your fellow BESIG member Dolon Gupta.  
[#besig](#) [#BE](#) [#cpd](#) [besig.iatefl.org/mam-dolon...](#)

6



# Emails

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- The last semi-formal email you wrote / received?
- Features?



# Considerations

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Add a **subject line**

## Emails



Dear Ilona,

I trust the conference you attended last week was hugely successful. I will look forward to hearing your report on this event, and I sincerely hope that you have since had the opportunity to relax.

I should like to inform you that this afternoon I shall be travelling to Croatia. I return only on Wednesday late in the evening.

Meanwhile, I look forward very much to seeing you on Thursday, for our next lesson.

I wish you an excellent week.

Rachel

**Re-order** the lines below!

## Emails



Dear Ilona,

- a. Have a good week meanwhile!
- b. I hope you had a wonderfully successful two days last week – really looking forward to hearing all about it.
- c. Will look forward to seeing you here on Thursday!
- d. I'm off to Croatia this afternoon .. back late Weds.

Rachel

b, d, c, a



# Emails

Dear Ilona,

I hope you had a wonderfully successful two days last week – really looking forward to hearing all about it.

I'm off to Croatia this afternoon .. back late Weds.

Will look forward to seeing you here on Thursday!

Have a good week meanwhile!

Rachel

Can you outline a **structure**?

Would you revise **subject line**?



Rachel Appleby

To: [redacted]

2019. 09. 09.

## See you on Thursday 12th, 2pm

Dear Ilona

I hope you had a wonderfully successful two days last week - really looking forward to hearing all about it ... - and I hope you've managed to relax this weekend.

I'm off to Croatia this afternoon.. back late Weds.  
Will look forward to seeing you here on Thursday!

Have a good week meanwhile!

Rachel

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Rachel Appleby [Budapest]

Dear Rachel,

Thank you for your very kind email.  
The workshop is over: it was nice but extremely exhaustive – I'll tell you everything...

I wish you a great trip to Croatia!  
See you on Thursday.

Best wishes,  
Ilona



# A genre: emails

Dear Ilona,  
Hope you had a  
successful conference!

- **Vocabulary**

- Clear; not complex; not idiomatic

- **Grammar**

- Active (not passive); simple; instructions; pronouns



- **Organisation / Layout**

- Subject line
- 4 parts (open / action ↔ details / close)
- Short, clear sentences (bullet-pointed)

- **Style:** Neutral / friendly



# Language



- 
1. I should like to inform you that I'll be ...  
I'll be ....
  2. Sincere apologies for the belated reply to your email.  
Sorry for not getting back to you sooner.
  3. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.  
Get back to me if you have any questions.
  4. Please inform me of your arrival time at your earliest convenient.  
Please tell me when you're arriving.

# Practice:

Gapped phrases; Jumbled phrases; Cue words

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know / have / you / if /  
Please / questions. / me /  
any / let



Please let me know if you  
have any questions.

\_\_\_\_\_ getting back to  
you sooner.



Sorry for not getting back to  
you sooner.

*attached*

*touch*

	<b>Faster</b>
	<b>Concise</b>
	<b>Compelling</b>

# More on business texts / writing:

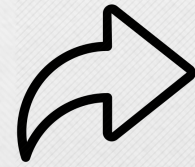
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+ John Hughes - Changing our approach to business writing skills - Apr. 2011

<https://besig.iatefl.org/membership-preview/webinars-2/>

# Other genres: social media

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# A writing project: online

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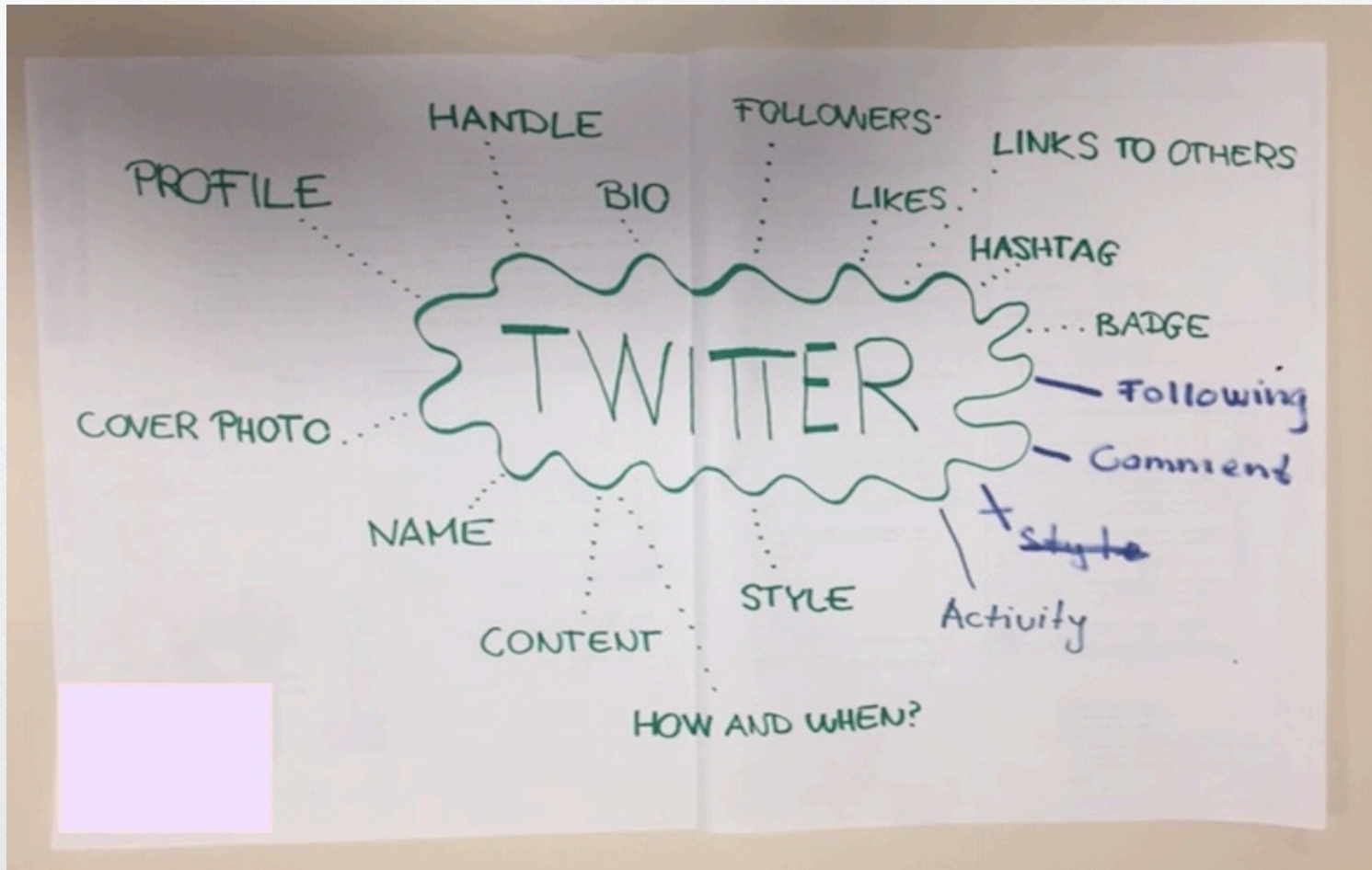


edublogs





# Considerations of online writing



# Characteristics

- informal language
- #hashtags
- image
- links 'call to action'
- vocab use
- length
- tag @people





# Vocabulary: improve the WORDS

GREAT conference. NICE sessions and GOOD networking opportunities. I have left with a headful of ideas and met LOTS OF people. Well done and thanks to all the organisers.

*[BESIG conf. feedback, Oct. 2019]*

[Fiona Dunlop](#)

[13 October at 13:35](#)

**Fabulous** conference. **Engaging** and **thought-provoking** sessions and **great** networking opportunities. I have left with a headful of ideas and met **loads of lovely** people. Well done and thanks to all the organisers.



**Andy Crestodina** @crestodina

Content Promotion Strategies

Here are the 50 ways to drive traffic to your next post

[orbitmedia.com/blog/content-p...](http://orbitmedia.com/blog/content-p...)

How many of these are on your checklist? ✓ ✓ ✓

Features #ContentMarketing insights from @bestofjess and @MaryG\_PR  
@PrmteOnPurpose, you guys might like this one...



**Content Promotion Strategies:  
50 Ways to Drive Traffic**

# Tags / Cover comments



**Iatefl BESIG**

Yesterday at 07:43 · 🌐

Follow our blog feature, IATEFL BESIG's MEET A MEMBER where every other week we will feature an interview with a different BESIG member. This week, we are extremely pleased to present your fellow BESIG member Dolon Gupta.

**#iatefl #besig #businessenglish #teacherdevelopment #cpd**

[https://besig.iatefl.org/mam-dolon\\_gupta/](https://besig.iatefl.org/mam-dolon_gupta/) ... See more

# Plain English Campaign

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*... the main ways to make writing clearer:*

- Keep your sentences short
- Prefer active verbs
- Use 'you' and 'we'
- Use words that are appropriate for the reader
- Don't be afraid to give instructions
- Avoid nominalisations (*noun phrases*)
- Use lists or bullets where appropriate



# Too many words

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## Redundant pairs:

- p~~x~~st memories
- various differences
- future plans
- free gift
- past history
- unexpected surprise

## Too many words:

- at this moment in time >
- for the purpose of >
- in the event that >
- now
- for
- if

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing)

“Due to a frequent regrettable inability to prevent my presence in other locations, I find that I must convey to you my goodwill in a correspondence format. It was when I was still a juvenile future constitutional figurehead substitute that I first became sensitised by mother-tongue abuse awareness. How many of us, I wonder, when faced with pretentious gobbledygook and empty jargon, experience a kick start into despair mode? My feelings towards all of you at today's Awards are, attitudinally, those of enormous encouragement....

God bless the Plain English Campaign.

– *Charles, Prince of Wales*



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**Task:**

**Imagine you're Prince Charles. Re-write his letter as a tweet.**

**Put your answers on the new Padlet:**

<https://padlet.com/rachelappleby/dfzcanacle9e>



## Feedback

Due to a frequent regrettable inability to prevent my presence in other locations, I find that I must convey to you my goodwill in a correspondence format. It was when I was still a juvenile future constitutional figurehead substitute that I first became sensitised by mother-tongue abuse awareness. How many of us, I wonder, when faced with pretentious gobbledygook and empty jargon, experience a kick start into despair mode? My feelings towards all of you at today's Awards are, attitudinally, those of enormous encouragement.... God bless the Plain English Campaign.

— *Charles, Prince of Wales*

Sorry for not coming, got loads on! Hence, tweet! As a kid @mum made us speak properly... bit of a faff! Those days are gone. Good luck from here on in, @PlainEnglishCampaign

[#ihbcnelt Feb2020]

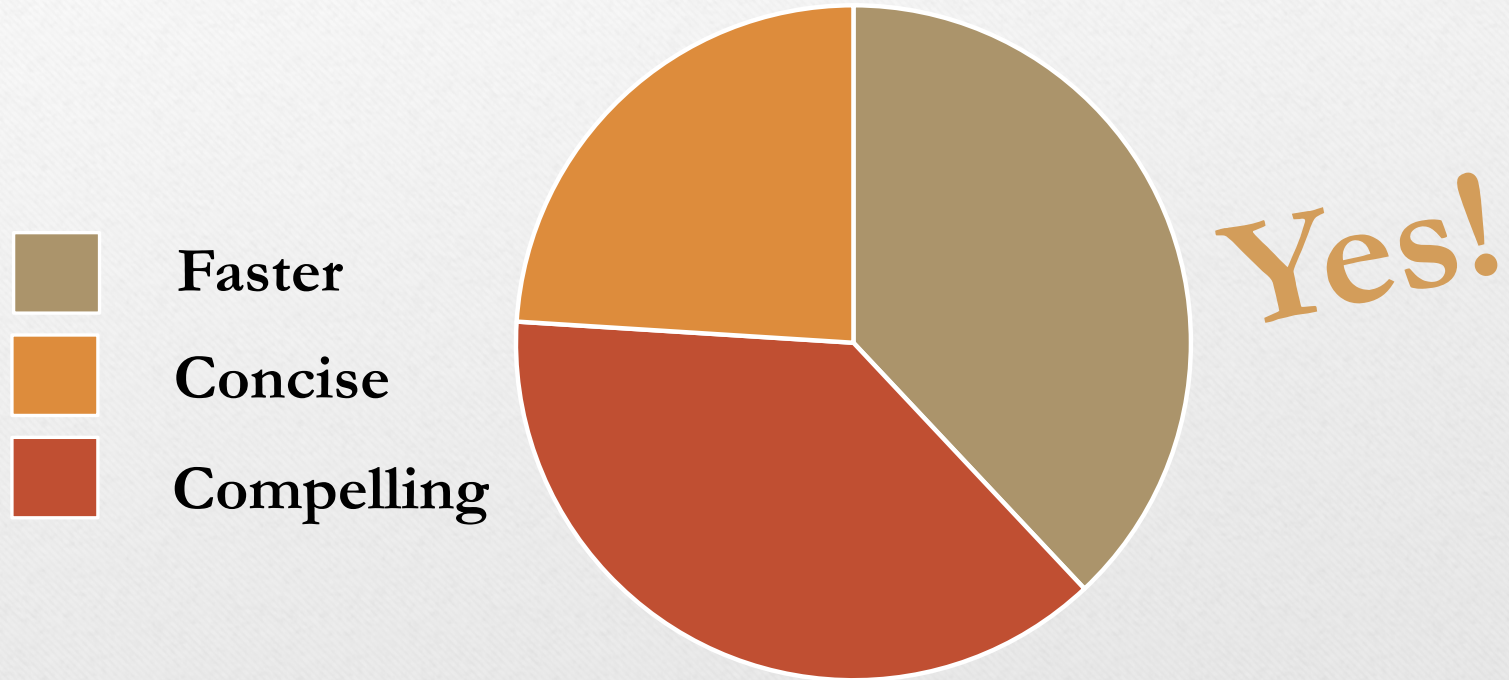


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# Learners: Business Writing 2020

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- Use examples
- Analyse the genre
- Identify key features
- Consider the reader!
- Plain English Campaign –



# References

**Brown, L.** (2019). 'Does Business Writing Matter Anymore? The Answer Seems To Be "Yes"'

[www.forbes.com/sites/laurambrown/2019/04/26/does-business-writing-matter-anymore-the-answer-seems-to-be-yes/#bdeff8232846](http://www.forbes.com/sites/laurambrown/2019/04/26/does-business-writing-matter-anymore-the-answer-seems-to-be-yes/#bdeff8232846) (retrieved 5 Feb. 2020)

**Hughes, J.** (2011) 'Changing our approach to business writing skills' – webinar, hosted by IATEFL-BESIG. <https://besig.iatefl.org/membership-preview/webinars-2>

**Thornbury, S.** 'G is for Genre' in *An A-Z of ELT*. <https://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/tag/genre-analysis/> (retrieved: 27 January 2020)

**Plain English Campaign:** <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk> (retrieved 5 Nov. 2019)

**Eliminating words:**

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/academic\\_writing/conciseness/eliminating\\_words.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/conciseness/eliminating_words.html) (retrieved 5 Feb. 2020)

## **FURTHER READING:**

**Goodwin, J.** (2018). 'The Top 10 Business Writing Skills You Should Learn Today'

<https://magoosh.com/pro-writing/business.writing.skills>

**Hockly, N. et al** (2019). 'Global skills: Creating empowered 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens'

<https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2019/11/04/empowered-21stcentury-learners> (retrieved 29 Jan. 2020)

**Thaine, C.** (2015) 'E-genres and the relevance of writing', *Modern English Teacher*, (24:4), Pavilion Publishing. Hove, UK.

# BUSINESS WRITING

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Thank you!

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MELTA, June 2020