

**GEB 5212 - Professional Writing ♦♦♦ Dr. Dorothy McCawley**  
**Mod 1 ♦♦♦ Fall ♦♦♦ 2016**

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**August 22-October 6**

Holiday: September 5

**MSM Fall Start Section 0813:**

**Tuesdays 5&6 (11:45 – 1:40) in GER 228**

Office Hours after class and by Appointment

[dorothy.mccawley@warrington.ufl.edu](mailto:dorothy.mccawley@warrington.ufl.edu)

**352-273-3213**

**Bryan 233C**

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### REQUIRED TEXT

 **The Business Writer's Companion**, 7<sup>th</sup> edition  
Gerald Alred, Charles Brusaw and Walter Oliu.

Bedford/St. Martin's: 2014

 **ISBN: 978-1-4576-3299-0**

 Course Pack posted to Canvas

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

 Additional resource for *International Students: CBA9999*. **Send me your gatorlink username for access.**

 UF Writing Studio in Tigert Hall:  
<http://writing.ufl.edu/students/writing-help/>

### E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

Consider email communication as practice for the style you will adopt in business settings. In other words, our communication should be formal in the beginning (*Dear Professor McCawley –OR– Dr. McCawley*), and can become more informal as we continue our communication.

Include the following information when you communicate with me

- **Assure me you have read the syllabus and were unable to find an answer to your question here**
- Frontloaded purpose (don't forget a concise, yet descriptive, subject line)
- Two or three available days and times, if requesting an appointment
- Close with your name and section number or day/time of class meeting (I teach multiple sections each module)

**NOTE:** I review papers *in person* only, not via e-mail. Use e-mail to arrange an appointment.

### ASSURANCE OF LEARNING

Each program at the Warrington College of Business Administration has developed goals and objectives that express the most valued skills and knowledge that students should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the total learning experiences in that program. The following goals and objectives are specifically mapped to **GEB5212**.

Learning Goal 1: Program graduates will be effective communicators

- 1A. Students will demonstrate the ability to write business documents clearly, concisely, grammatically correct, and with convincing analysis.
- 1C. Students will recognize and employ a variety of rhetorical styles, written and oral, appropriate to the goal and audience.

Learning Goal 2: Program graduates will have qualitative thinking and reasoning capabilities

- 2B. Critically evaluate evidence from qualitative sources; relate evidence to appropriate theoretical models; apply critical reasoning process to advance decision making.

Learning Goal 4: Program graduates will have competency in and across business disciplines

- 4B. Students will apply Elemental elements of core business principles to construct and implement decision-making processes in the business environment.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

GEB 5212 is a **writing course** using business topics. So, you will be graded on your writing strategies, grammar, and formatting. Through this focus, you will learn the basic principles that make writing work, gain an overview of business communication principles, and learn persuasive techniques. You will also learn how to replace some bad writing habits with good ones. By the end of this course, you should be able to

- Write action-oriented documents
- Write more clearly and concisely
- Arrange your ideas persuasively
- Deploy approaches for handling different communication forms to a variety of audiences

All of these skills will help ensure your success as managers in the workplace.

## REQUIREMENTS and GRADING SCALE

To pass this class, you must complete all required coursework.

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Proposal.....                             | 200 |
| Team Peer Review.....                     | 100 |
| ICE, Discussion Boards, Video Quizzes.... | 50  |
| Final Exam.....                           | 50  |

| Grade        | A       | A-      | B+      | B       | B-      | C+      | C       | C-      | D+      | D       | D-      | S    |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|
| Grade Points | 4.0     | 3.67    | 3.33    | 3.0     | 2.67    | 2.33    | 2.0     | 1.67    | 1.33    | 1.0     | .67     | 0    |
| Total Points | 400-372 | 371-360 | 359-348 | 347-332 | 331-320 | 319-308 | 307-292 | 291-280 | 279-268 | 267-252 | 251-240 | <239 |

You must

- type all assignments in Microsoft **Word** (unless instructed otherwise)
- upload it to the course website assignment link by the deadline

Late assignments will be reduced by **one letter grade** for each day late. You may request an appointment with me to review assignments before their due date, though. Such reviews are no guarantee of a specific grade, but may prove helpful in honing your writing skills.

If your grade any individual assignment is below a B-, you may **e-mail me to request** the option to rewrite your assignment for a potential 10 percent increase in grade (remember to be persuasive and professional).

## CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation is a valuable part of this course. You are permitted one absence without penalty. If you have more than one absence, your final grade will be reduced by 30 points. If you miss more than the first 30 minutes of class, you will be counted as absent. You must do in-class work on the assigned day and may not make it up another time.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES

*University's Honesty Policy Regarding Cheating and Use of Copyrighted Materials*

The University Honor Code embodies some common-sense values: [http://www.reg.ufl.edu/01-02-catalog/student\\_life/](http://www.reg.ufl.edu/01-02-catalog/student_life/).

The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines

will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017).

***Cheating.*** “*The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit.*” Taking of information includes copying graded assignments from another student; working together with another individual(s) on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted by the teacher; looking or attempting to look at another student's paper during an examination; looking or attempting to look at text or notes during an examination when not permitted. The tendering of information includes, but is not limited to, giving of your work to another student to be used or copied; giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after taking an exam; giving or selling a term paper or other written materials to another student; sharing information on a graded assignment.

***Plagiarism.*** “*The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student.*” Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.

Needless to say, plagiarizing the work of others is a sign of inadequate character and insecurity about one's writing ability. Bottom line: ***all work must be original.***

## **STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

The classrooms should prove effectively accessible, but please let me know if you require any special accommodations. The official statement on ADA issues states: “Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.” Moreover, we will do everything we can to support your individual needs and concerns.

## **STUDENT COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH**

Campus resources are available for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals which interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

- [UF Counseling & Wellness Center](#) (CWC): (352) 392-1575 for documentation, stress and wellness, mental health screening, concerns about a classmate, self-help, sexual or physical abuse
- [Career Resource Center](#): First floor, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance

## **SOFTWARE POLICY**

All faculty, staff and students of the University must obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Students are expected to use computers, tablets and cellphones only when instructed by the instructor. At all other times, turn off your devices.

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## Schedule of Classes and Assignments

\*schedule is subject to change

**Before the first class: Read the e-mails on pages 4-6 of the course pack (posted to Canvas)**



### MEETING 1 (August 23)

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- ◇ Intro: schedule, syllabus
- ◇ Audience, Purpose & Frontloading
- ◇ Proposals and White Papers
- ◇ Persuasion
  - ✍ ICE: Review poorly written proposal
  - ✍ Begin portfolio

#### FOR NEXT WEEK

- 📖 Read *The Business Writer's Companion (BWC)* pp. xxxix-xxxvi, Chapters 1, 11, 12 and Appendix
- 📖 Workshop Proposal Due (submit to Canvas)
- 📖 [Watch video on visuals \(Quiz\)](#)
- 📖 [Watch video on word choice \(Quiz\)](#)
- ✍ Post to first discussion board by August 30

### MEETING 2 (August 30)

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- ◇ Writing Process
  - ✍ Exchange draft proposals
  - ✍ Begin peer review

#### FOR NEXT WEEK

- 📖 Read *BWC* Chapters 5, 7 and 10
- 📖 Draft Team Peer Review (post to Canvas)
- 📖 [Watch video on executive summary \(Quiz\)](#)

### MEETING 3 (September 6)

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- ◇ Bad News & Letters
  - ✍ ICE: Bad news message
  - ✍ ICE: review & exchange draft peer reviews (meet with me for reviews, as well)
  - ✍ **Final version** Team Peer Reviews due September 12 @ 11:55 p.m.

#### FOR NEXT WEEK

- 📖 Read *BWC* Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6 and 9

### MEETING 4 (September 13)

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- ◇ Electronic Communication
  - ✍ ICE: Review of second version of Proposal (meet with me for a review, as well)
  - ✍ **Final version** Individual Proposal due September 22 @ 11:55 p.m.

#### FOR NEXT WEEK

- 📖 How to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8WZxYFaSml>  
<http://linkhumans.com/blog/perfect-linkedin-profile>
- 📖 [Watch video on LinkedIn \(Quiz\)](#)

### MEETING 5 (September 20)

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- ◇ Résumé & LinkedIn
  - ✍ LinkedIn Profile/Résumé review
  - ✍ Review graded papers

- 📖 Post to second discussion board by September 27
- 📖 Course Evaluations (bring laptops)

### MEETING 6 (September 27)

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- ◇ Résumé & LinkedIn
  - ✍ LinkedIn Profile/Résumé review

### MEETING 7 (October 4)

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- ✍ **Final Exam** (multiple choice)

- ✍ **Final version** of Portfolio due October 5 @ 11:55 p.m.

## Writing Checklist – use to review your writing before submitting

**NOTE: GEB 5212 is primarily a *writing* class. Business topics are the content, but you must still display exemplary *writing* techniques and avoid errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, you'll notice that your writing must be clear and properly formatted. Poor writing techniques can damage your credibility in the workplace as much as poorly thought-out content.**

### Clarity

- Did you replace all vague/filler subjects (pronouns or expletives such as there is/there are/this is/it is) with concrete subjects?
- Did you use active voice 75-80 percent of the time?
- Did you properly format lists?
  - 2-6 items in list
  - Introductory phrase and concluding sentence
  - List parallel in specificity and grammar

### Structure and Coherence

- Is the purpose frontloaded?
- Did you provide a preview in the first paragraph?
- Did you provide a reader roadmap by using properly formatted headings?
- Did you follow head→body→foot formatting in your paragraphs?
- Are your paragraphs just the right length (fairly short)?
- Did you use transitions to connect the ideas in your paragraphs?
- Is your concluding paragraph a summary and personalized?

### Concision

- Did you delete any redundant phrasing?
- Did you transform nominalizations into energy-filled verbs?
- Did you get the “not”s out of your writing?
- Did you eliminate all hedging and throat-clearing language (I believe, I feel)?

### Other

- Did you picture your audience as you wrote so you used the right words and tone for your audience?
- Did you double-check your formatting for correctness?
- Did you proofread to catch those small grammar/mechanical errors that could damage your credibility?
- Did you provide specifics to support your generalizations?
- Did you use the appropriate writing style (direct vs. indirect)?
- Did you develop your thoughts/argument logically in each paragraph and in your paper as a whole?

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## Formatting for “GEB5212, Inc.”

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- ◇ **Word** document
- ◇ 1-inch margins on all sides, 8.5 x 11 inch
- ◇ 11- or 12-point businesslike font
- ◇ Ragged right margin (left justified only)
- ◇ Block formatting (no indented paragraphs)
- ◇ Single spaced, with an extra space between paragraphs
- ◇ Paragraphs → spacing → before (0 pt.), after (0pt.)
- ◇ Saved as yourlastname\_assignmentname

| Page        | Topic                                      |
|-------------|--|
| 74-81/82-86 | APA/MLA Citation for Articles in a Journal |
| 165-166     | Formatting titles                          |
| 181         | Title page of report                       |
| 215         | Figure 7-14. Using Headings                |
| 214         | Checklist: Using Headings                  |
| 222-223     | Lists                                      |
| 128         | Letter format                              |
| 133         | Memo format                                |
| 397         | Dates                                      |
| 403         | Numbers                                    |
| 404         | Percent vs. %                              |

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## Style Guide **Correct use of commas**

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### USE a comma

- a. after introductory information
- b. to set off nonessential elements (can you remove the phrase from the sentence without changing its meaning? Then the phrase is nonessential and should be surrounded by commas)
- c. between coordinate adjectives (if you can put *and* between the adjectives and not change the meaning they are coordinate adjectives). Today is a hot, muggy day = Today is a hot and muggy day.
- d. to separate items in a series (unless the items include commas, then separate with semicolon)
- e. in a compound sentence (i.e. two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction: FANBOY [for, and, nor, but, or, yet])

**Comma Splices.** AVOID comma splices – which is joining two complete sentences (or independent clauses) by only a comma – remove comma, read both sides; complete sentence on both sides? Add semi-colon or connective or make two sentences. REMINDER: a complete sentence includes a subject and verb without any subordinating clauses preceding the subject and verb.

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## Academic degrees

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<http://stylebook.urel.ufl.edu/list-of-terms/list-of-terms-a/>

For materials other than news releases, B.A. *Bachelor of Arts*, M.A. *Master of Arts*, M.S. *Master of Science*, Ed.D. *doctor of education*, Ph.D. *doctor of philosophy*. No space after periods in abbreviations. The word degree should not follow a degree abbreviation: *he has a B.A. in history*, NOT *he has a B.A. degree in history*. Use *bachelor’s* and *master’s* degrees, never *bachelors* and *masters* degrees. When referring to degrees in general, lowercase the first letter of the degree and use the ‘s’ ending *they all had master’s degrees in engineering*. Capitalize formal names of academic degrees *Bachelor of Science*, *Bachelor of Arts in Accounting*, *Doctor of Philosophy*

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## ASSIGNMENT: Individual Writing Portfolio

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Save your document, in *PDF*, as yourlastname\_portfolio

**Purpose:** You will practice your organization and formatting skills and have the opportunity to review information from the class to reinforce your learning.

### CREATING A PORTFOLIO

**Title Page.** Following the content for a title page on p. 181 of your textbook, design your title page.

**In-Class Exercises (ICE).** Then, insert a <page break> and add a heading (perhaps “In-Class Exercises”). Copy and paste your in-class exercises or ICEs (if you miss a class, note your absence). Be sure to note the date of each class and organize your exercises under each date. Perform this task each week so you don’t miss a posting.

*No need to correct any errors.* You submit all the other ICEs for a complete/incomplete mark. You are permitted one missed session without a point deduction. Just note that you missed an ICE under the date.

- Rank the emails
- Denotation/connotation exercise
- Re-write the email (bad news)
- Re-write the email (David Yarn)
- *LinkedIn Summary*

Let me know if you need help

**Discussion Boards.** Insert another <page break> and add a new heading for your discussion board postings and comments. In your portfolio, include the prompt for each discussion board, a copy of your original post, the name of the student you commented to and your comment.

*Correct any grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors in your discussion board posts and LinkedIn writing for your portfolio.*

## Discussion Board Guidelines

**Purpose.** In the discussion boards, you will have the opportunity to practice concise, thoughtful writing on a specific topic, and reinforce your classroom lessons. You will have the chance to share your experiences and to learn from your classmates.

Create your posts in a *Word* document (the task is much easier if you create your posts in Microsoft Word first, and then copy and paste to the discussion boards).

Each post is limited to **200** words, so work on clarity and concision (no expletive constructions, nominalizations, or unnecessary passive voice). Make sure your grammar and spelling are correct.

1. Post your thoughts on the topic (post #1)
2. Make a meaningful comment on at least one other student’s post (post #2)
3. Repeat for each discussion board for a total of six posts

**Post early in the week.** You'll get more response and become more engaged in conversation.

Remember, **less is more!** Posts have a 200-word maximum

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**What will be Graded?**

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Some parts of the portfolio will be graded according on clarity, formatting, and correctness.

**Title Page.** Must include same information as on p. 181 of the *BWC*, but you may use your own design

**Visual Design.** Your portfolio must be easy-to-navigate and include headings and formatting to organize the sections

**Video Quizzes.** Include your scores on the video quizzes (you may take the quiz more than once, and report your highest score)

**Discussion Board.** Your original posts (2) and your comments on one other person's post (2) – be sure to identify the discussion board and their names

**LinkedIn.** Summary paragraph(s)

The ICEs will be graded as complete or incomplete, except for the  
LinkedIn Summary Paragraph(s)

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Submit your portfolio to the assignment link online using PDF format.

Save your document as yourlastname\_assignmentname

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## **ASSIGNMENT: Individual Proposal**

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### **OBJECTIVES**

Deploy persuasive writing techniques in addition to standard business writing strategies: concise, frontloaded, audience appropriate, and clear.

### **DESCRIPTION**

Write a persuasive memo that proposes a new procedure, purchase of new equipment, or organizational restructuring at your workplace.

### **CONTENT**

You must propose a well-supported solution to a current workplace problem. The solution could be about a project for your company, a change you would like to see in your company, or other similar ideas. Try to find a topic that interests you, so that you are invested in the outcome and understand the stakes and benefits involved.

The proposal must be internal to your company and addressed to the appropriate executive or manager for approval.

Incorporate the persuasive principles you have learned, as well as all the writing techniques and strategies.

### **FORMAT**

Your proposal will be in memo format. Use memo formatting on p. 133 of the textbook.

- One page of text
- One (or more) graphics – the graphics will increase the memo length

Your graphic must be original (no copying a pasting)  
and must be in the body of your proposal, not the introduction

Think about using visual elements to provide interest to your reader (see the last page of this syllabus). **Style.** Use the direct style and a persuasive approach for your message.

Attach a short note to me with any terminology or political issues that will help me understand your approach. The better your note, the better your grade!

**Save your document, in Microsoft *Word*, as yourlastname\_Proposal**

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## ASSIGNMENT: Team Peer Review Report and Transmittal Letter

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### PURPOSE

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**Correct formats for documents.** Demonstrate that you know how to format letters and reports appropriately. You may **not** use templates of any kind (i.e. Memo Wizard, etc.)

**Correct strategies for documents.** Design an analysis, conduct the analysis, and present the results informatively.

**Strategies for team work.** Show that you understand the basics of collaborative writing.

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**Scenario.** You are consultants whom I hired to help me. Recently, my “company” proposals have been rejected, and I am concerned. You are a professional writing firm, and will review my employees’ work. Your report will provide suggestions to ensure our future success (perhaps even offer to provide a class for a fee?).

You will be placed into three-person teams. As a team

- ◇ Review guidelines for collaborative writing in the textbook (p. 4)
- ◇ Decide on your roles
- ◇ Pick your company name/logo

*Feel free to invent any details you would like to make your documents more realistic.*

You might also set a standard for your writing choices: words, formats, etc.

Think of your team as a work-project team. If you do not actively participate in your team’s activities, you can be “fired” from your team and you will receive a “0” on the assignment.

**Assignment.** You will receive three classmates’ draft proposals to peer review. Decide on your criteria for evaluating the proposals and then evaluate them **as a team**. You will produce two documents:

1. a cover/transmittal letter to your client (me) (p. 128 of textbook)
  - Use correct business letter format with your team-designed letterhead
  - Use the direct style, thank client for her business, and summarize the attached report

Choose one team member to be your “lead” and to sign the letter

2. An analytical report to your client (me) reviewing “employee” writing, including an executive summary (**see next page**)
  - Decide on your criteria
  - Evaluate each proposal using your criteria
  - Explain your results (your reader is not educated about writing techniques, make your explanation a “teachable moment”)

Make sure your report has a singular “voice” (i.e. *reads as if one person wrote it with consistent word choice and formatting throughout*).

Save your document, in **WORD**, as **allyourlastnames\_peerreview**. Submit just **ONE** copy per team.

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## FORMAT of Peer Review Report

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**First, write a properly formatted business letter of transmittal. Design letterhead (see p. 128 for formatting)**

### TITLE PAGE

- page 181 of textbook (prepared by, prepared for, date, title)
- title → think "email subject line"

### NEXT PAGE

executive summary

- main points of your reviews (I could read the exec. summary and understand your review)
- 2-3 paragraphs (bullets are o.k.)

### NEXT PAGE

body of your report (2 pages of text)

- INTRODUCTORY paragraph: short explanation of evaluation criteria (executive summary, introduction, and conclusion will be very similar in content). Write as if the executive summary was missing.
- BODY paragraphs
  - Organize by writing issues (concision, formatting, tone) or by writer or both
  - Include other **visual** features like headings, bullets, and text boxes
- CONCLUDING paragraph: restate results and set some action (deadline, meeting, questions, additional services)
- NOTE: you will be graded on the consistency of your analysis and the quality of your writing, not the thoroughness of your analysis. Keep your analysis simple for this document.**

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## Jazzing Up the Appearance of a Report

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Few people will read a text-only paper, so provide visual relief; use one of these enhancements per page:

- **Bullets:** Use a small amount of text after each bullet; avoid lists of 7 or more bullets or several paragraphs of text after each bullet.
- **Headings:** Use two sets of headings, big and bold; write active headings to help people skim, scan, and skip.
- **Pull quotes:** Extract up to 20 words that give the key point from a page; format these quotes larger at the side; check magazines to see how it's done.
- **Sidebars:** Pull out nonessential side issues or lists and put them in a tinted box to keep readers focused on the main thread.
- **Tables:** Present numbers, options, or lists in a table to save words and make information easier to digest.
- **White space:** Leave breathing room at the top, bottom, and sides of each page; run text no more than 60 characters wide to make reading easier.

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<http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/white-papers-for-dummies-cheat-sheet.html>

Be sure to also make comments on the hard copy of the workshop proposal. You will return annotated proposals to the writers so they can adjust their proposals accordingly. Your goal is to help each other earn an "A" on the proposal assignment.